

Materials Needed:

- Picture cards of common woodland animals (deer, rabbit, squirrel, bird)
- Picture cards of corresponding animal tracks
- Letter flashcards (especially D, R, S, B, T)
- Chart paper or large drawing pad
- Markers or crayons
- Simple, large-print sentences on strips of paper or whiteboard (e.g., "I see the deer.", "A rabbit hops.", "Look at the tracks.")
- Optional: Binoculars (real or toy), magnifying glass

Lesson Activities:

Introduction: Nature Detectives! (5 mins)

"Hunters are like super detectives in the woods! They look carefully for clues, like animal tracks, to understand which animals have been nearby. Today, *we* are going to be Nature Detectives and use our reading skills to find clues! Are you ready?"

Activity 1: Track Match & Sound Hunt (10 mins)

Spread out the animal picture cards. Hold up one track card at a time. "Hmm, whose track could this be? Let's look closely." Guide the student to match the track to the correct animal. Once matched, say the animal's name clearly, emphasizing the beginning sound. "It's a **D**eer! What sound does **D**eer start with? /d/ /d/ /d/!" Find the letter 'D' flashcard. Repeat for other animals (Rabbit - /r/, Squirrel - /s/, Bird - /b/).

Activity 2: Reading the Clues (10 mins)

Show the simple sentence strips one by one. Read the first sentence aloud slowly, pointing to each word: "I see the deer." Ask the student to point to a specific word you say ("Can you find 'see'?"). Then, focus on the animal word: "What animal does this sentence talk about? Deer! What sound does 'deer' start with? /d/!" Repeat with other sentences, practicing sight words and beginning sounds.

Activity 3: Spotting in the 'Woods' (5-10 mins)

Hide the animal picture cards around the room or outdoor space. Give the student the (optional) binoculars. Say, "Let's go exploring! Can you spot the deer?" When they find it, encourage them to say, "I see the deer!" Practice the beginning sounds again. You can add track cards near the animal cards for them to 'discover'.

Wrap-up: Detective Report (5 mins)

Gather back together. On the chart paper, draw simple tracks and write the first letter of the animal name next to them. "Great work, Detective! We found tracks for D-d-deer, R-r-rabbit, S-s-squirrel, and B-b-bird! And we read clues to help us! You are becoming a great reader and nature detective!" Review the sounds and sight words briefly.