

## Class 1

### Zoo Animal Poetry

*Overview:* Many classes plan trips to the zoo to see the animals. Classes may study the animals in books and read many stories, or write original stories, but to really bring the facts alive using a video camera and poetry is very powerful. This activity was formulated to bring the animals into the classroom and in the homes of the students.

*Resources/Materials:*

*Teacher materials:* video camera, chart paper, marker, dubbing machine.

*Student materials:* paper, pencils

#### What to Do:

1. Plan and take an exciting trip to the zoo after reading books and having many discussions about zoo animals. Be sure to point out that students are to look for details and facts about the animals they see. Following the trip, students are asked to share the facts they noticed about the animals.
2. During the trip to the zoo, the teacher or a volunteer will videotape the animals. (Be sure to take long shots of each of the animals you want, at least 30 seconds on each animal. This will be important later as you voice over on the tape with the poetry performed by the students.)
3. After the trip, the teacher brainstorms with the students some facts about one of the animals she/he saw at the zoo. She models by writing these facts and descriptions on a chart in front of the class. (Tiger— huge cat, gold and black, loud roar, large padded feet, rubbing up against a lonely tree, prowling around habitat.) Next, the class is divided into cooperative groups and each group selects one of the animals which were filmed at the zoo. The entire class watches the tape and each group is careful to focus on the animal they are going to write about.
4. The entire group helps the teacher fill in the blanks of a poetry form.

## Tiger!

You have a roar like thunder.

You are fuzzy, gold, and black.

You roam around on padded feet.

You scratch your back on a lonely tree.

You are the biggest cat I have ever seen.

You are my favourite zoo animal because you look so lovable.

The class is taking facts and fitting them into the form, this pattern can be used to review facts about any topic.

5. Now in cooperative groups, the students brainstorm facts about the animal they have chosen. One of the students is the scribe and makes a list of the ideas. After all the facts are listed, the most descriptive details are selected or modified and put into the poetry pattern.

(Name of Animal)

You .....

You .....

You .....

You .....

You .....

You are my favourite zoo animal because you .....

6. Each group practises reading their poem aloud and then they take turns reading it for the teacher, as they are being videotaped. The voices of the children will then be copied over the video of the animals.

*Tying it All Together:* The completed product will be a delight to hear and see as the poetry describes the animals. Copies of the tape can be made and checked out by students to share with their parents at home. Poems written by the student groups are also perfect to place on a bulletin board or in a big book for others to read, illustrate, and enjoy throughout the year.