

# WHAT DO YOU DO WITH A TAIL LIKE THIS?

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By Steve Jenkins and Robin Page

Ages: 4-8

Themes: Animals, Growth and Change, Science, Seasons and Nature

Running Time: 6 minutes

## SUMMARY

Almost all animals have ears, eyes, mouths, noses, feet, and tails, but they certainly don't all look alike! Nor are all their similar body parts used for the same purposes. This artistic movie teaches viewers basic facts about the physical characteristics of many different animals from humpback whales to bush babies. Children will love guessing which animals the different body parts belong to, and will marvel at some of the unusual ways that these parts are used.

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will identify the body parts of various animals.
- Students will sort animals based on physical characteristics.
- Students will write poetry about different animals.

## BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Give students outline drawings of different types of animals. Have students fill in the drawings in colors that they think are realistic. Then, using one of the drawings as an example, guide students through labeling the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, feet, and tail of the animal. Then, students can work together to label these parts on their other animal drawings.

Follow up on the first activity by eliciting the students' background knowledge about the body parts of animals. Guiding questions:

- What do animals use their eyes for? Can eyes be used for anything else? (*Repeat this question for ears, nose, mouth, feet, and tail*).
- Why do you think some animals have bigger eyes/ears/noses/mouths/feet/tails than others?
- What are the most unusual or craziest looking eyes/ears/nose/mouth/feet/tails that you can think of?

## AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Set up an Animal Sort for students. Identify 2-3 characteristics for students to use as sorting groups, for example: long tails, big noses, hidden ears. Using either cards with pictures of animals on them, or animal figures, have students sort the animals according to which group they fit into best. As a follow-up activity, students can list or draw other animals that share characteristics with the ones on the cards. Additionally, students can think of other categories that the animals could be sorted into.

Help students do research about the animals featured in the movie. A good starting place is the information at the back of the book *What Do You Do With a Tail Like This?* Help students locate other resources in the school or local library, or on the internet. After students have noted about three distinguishing characteristics of their chosen animal, they can make a mini-book. Students should make detailed drawings of their animal, including close-ups of unusual body parts. Students who are just learning how to write should copy the name of the animal and body part under each picture. Students who are more proficient writers can also write 1-2 basic facts on each page.

Guide students through writing a "Who Am I?" poem. Using the movie as inspiration, have students brainstorm all of the characteristics of an animal of their choice. Provide a graphic organizer with a table that includes characteristics such as size, color, warm or cold blooded, land or water, unusual features, etc. Once students have listed all of the characteristics that they can think of, give them a poem template or example to work from. See the example below:

Who Am I?

I am the size of cat,  
But I hop on two legs,  
I can be brown or white,  
And have a nose that twitches,  
You'll be able to recognize me by  
My long, tall ears  
I am a \_\_\_\_\_!

Work as a class to create poems about other animals using this template. Once students have completed one or two poems together, encourage them to write one on their own or with a partner. As an extension, they can draw a picture of the correct answer and glue it onto the poem at the bottom, under a flap. Then students can exchange poems and try to guess each other's animals.

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