

# Zoologist: Communicating With Animals

NGSS Standard: 1-PS4-4



## Adventure Description:

In this adventure, you will think like a zoologist and design a tool to communicate with animals.



## Activity

### Step 1: Background Information on Zoologists and Sounds (5 minutes)

- Show [Video: Call of the Wild](#).
- Ask students why a zoologist would use sounds to talk to an animal.
- Explain that animals do not speak languages that humans speak. Animals use sounds to communicate, which means zoologists must use sounds to talk with animals.
- Next, ask students to give some examples of why a zoologist would want to use sounds to talk to an animal. Examples include: To get the animal to come towards the zoologist so the zoologists can feed the animal or check to make sure the animal is healthy.

### Step 2: Communicating with Animals (5-10 minutes)

- Explain to students that they will create an instrument or a device to create sound to communicate with either a dolphin or elephant.
- Provide each student with [Handout: Choosing an Animal](#). Discuss what types of sounds these animals make. Discuss how a dolphin whistles, clicks, and squeaks to communicate. Have students act out these sounds! Then, explain that an elephant trumpets (meaning he loudly pushes air through his trunk), rumbles (quiet grumbly noises), and hit its ears against its head (making a slapping sound). Have students act out those sounds.
- Explain to students that zoologists make devices that make the same sounds that animals make. That way, the zoologist can communicate with the animals and not scare them.

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- Next, explain to students that zoologists always have a specific reason why they want to communicate with animals.
- Have students volunteer to share ideas about why they would make a new device to communicate with their animal (e.g., giving food to an animal, moving an animal to a new home at the zoo, giving an animal a toy).

### **Step 3: Building a Device or Instrument (15+ minutes)**

- Explain to students that they will now use art supplies and building materials to build a device or instrument that will make a sound. Here are some supply suggestions: paper plates, balloons, styrofoam cups/bowls, plastic wrap, rubber bands.
- As students are working, ask them the following questions: How will your instrument make a noise that a dolphin or elephant will like? What supplies will help you make the right noise?

### **Step 4: Testing Devices (10 minutes)**

- When students are done building their devices and instruments, have them play their device and see if they can produce the sound they intended it to!
- Have students split into small groups and test whether their instruments work.
- Note: If students get upset that their instrument didn't work as intended, explain that zoologists have to change their designs many times when they make a new tool to help animals.

### **Materials List**

#### **Provided online:**

- Video: Call of the Wild
- Handout: Choosing an Animal

#### **Not provided (each pair of students needs):**

- Building Materials (paper plates, balloons, styrofoam cups/bowls, plastic wrap, rubber bands)

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