

Activity 6: A Closer Look

Goals

- To identify some of the physical differences among chimpanzees.
- To inspire careful observation skills.
- To begin to work against stereotyping.
- To understand how societies are made up of and characterized by individuals.

Vocabulary

- characteristic
- data
- individual
- observation
- species
- unique

Overview

At first glance, many animals of the same species seem to look alike. This activity invites students to observe and compare chimpanzees more carefully, thus allowing them to see each as a distinct individual. By observing closely and collecting data, students recognize that members of a species are unique.

How To

1. Divide the class into groups of four or five. Supply each group with one page of chimpanzee images.
2. Have students cut out each photo.
3. Ask students to examine each photo and, on a separate piece of paper, list the facial characteristics of each chimpanzee. Remind students that they are looking for permanent physical features only, not hand/facial gestures or body positions.
4. Once the observations and lists are complete, have groups exchange their photos and lists. Students then match the lists with their corresponding chimpanzees.
5. Use some of the following questions to spark a class discussion:

Was it difficult to identify the chimpanzees described by your classmates? Why or why not?

What have you learned about chimpanzees during this activity?
What might you speculate about other animals?

What have you learned about making observations and recording data?

Warm-Up Discussion Tips

Before beginning the activity, try using some of the following questions and discussion topics to prepare your students.

- Have you ever seen a litter of puppies? Were you able to tell one from the other? How?



- Describe the physical differences between a St. Bernard and a poodle. Now describe the differences between a dog and a cat.
- Divide the class into pairs. Give each student paper and pencil. Have the partners sit back to back and describe each other without looking. Students should use only physical traits (not clothing, shoes, glasses, etc.) and be detailed enough so that a stranger could identify each individual using the descriptions.

Time Needed

- 1–3 class periods

Materials

- Activity 6 handouts
- Scissors, paper, pencils

Other Subject Connections

Math

Have students estimate the following: How many students in the class are over four feet tall? How many are under four feet tall? How many students have blue eyes? brown eyes? green eyes? How many students can curl their tongues? How many have attached earlobes? Graph your estimates. Then graph the actual numbers and compare graphs.

Social Studies

Does your school have an official dress code? Why or why not? What about an unofficial one? Are there certain kinds of clothes or shoes that are more accepted by your peers? Does the way we dress always reflect the kind of person we are? Why or why not?

— or —

Imagine that your teacher got word that a group of aliens is coming to your classroom. These aliens are anxious to meet every student but they are on a very tight schedule. They can only spend a few minutes in your classroom. The aliens don't speak our language but they can interpret visual communication. In order to introduce themselves to the aliens, students design hats that would reflect something important about themselves.

Home Connection

Have students work with one or more parent on the following activity:

Give your parent a pencil and paper and sit facing away. Pick an object in the room and describe step-by-step how you might draw the object. See how long it takes your parent to figure out what you are describing. Did it take a long time? Why or why not? How does describing the way you might draw something help or hinder your parent's ability to guess the object? Switch roles. How does the way your parent described drawing the object compare to how you might have described drawing the object? Bring your drawings into class and share your findings.



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Refer to the Activity 6 Lesson plan on page 60 for more information.



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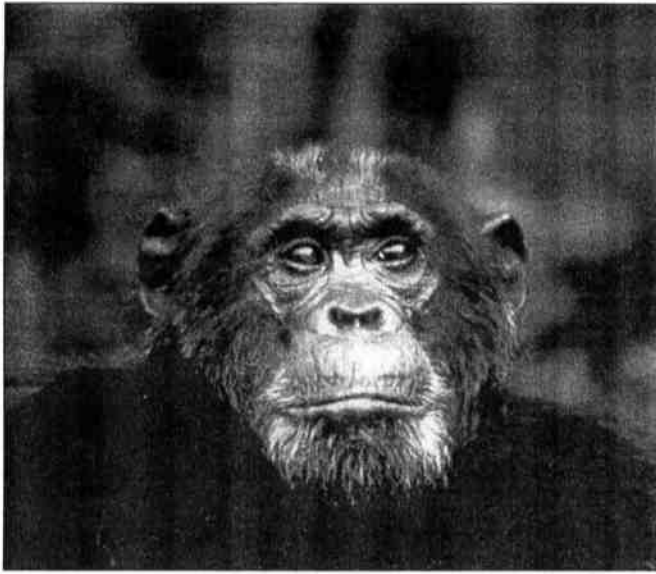
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Refer to the Activity 6 Lesson plan on page 60 for more information.



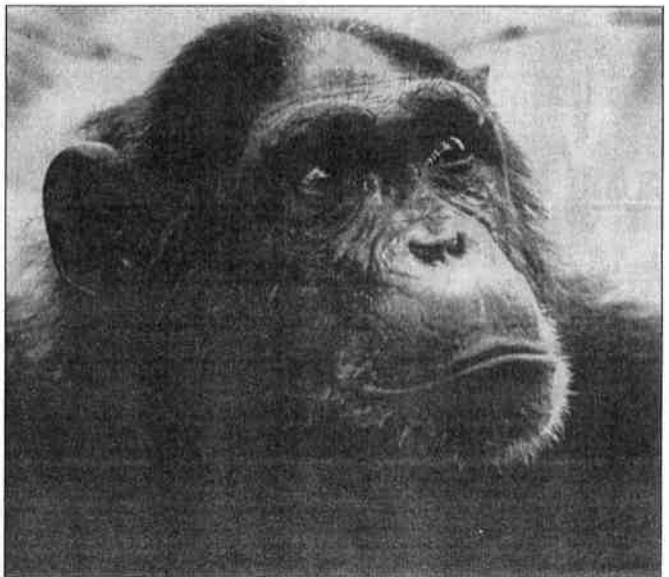
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