

Who Am I? SunWise Animals

Animals have special body parts and behaviors to protect them from the sun. Can you guess who these animals are?

SUNWISE CLUE:

From morning 'til evening, I avoid the sun's rays. Eucalyptus trees shade me and keep me cool through the days!

Who Am I?

SUNWISE CLUE:

I put dirt and sand on my back to block out the sun, and drink trunks full of water. Being thirsty is no fun!

Who Am I?

SUNWISE CLUE:

In water and mud I love to stay. My body makes an oily pink sunscreen to protect my skin so I can play!

Who Am I?

SUNWISE CLUE:

My black eye ring "sunglasses" protect my eyes from the sun's glare. I'm the coolest "kat" around with a social flair.

Who Am I?



Courtesy of Sunwise Stampede – San Diego Zoo

Who Am I? SunWise Animals

ESTIMATED TIME

20-30 minutes

SUPPLIES

- ✓ Paper
- ✓ Pens or pencils
- ✓ Crayons or markers

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

The aim of this activity is for students to learn the importance of protecting their eyes and skin from overexposure to the sun's harmful UV rays. By understanding animal adaptations for sun protection and drawing a sun-safe habitat for zoo animals, students will draw connections to the ways they can protect themselves from overexposure to the sun. Assess if they have learned how to protect their eyes and skin from UV radiation by asking what they should do when they play outside.

DIRECTIONS

Describe to the students the situation of Sammy the sea lion, who is living at the zoo without any shade in his habitat. Explain to the students that the sun can damage Sammy's eyes and skin if he doesn't have any shade, especially since the sun can reflect off the water of his swimming pool. Have the students draw an improved habitat that will help keep Sammy's eyes healthy.

Teach the students about animals that have specialized body parts or behaviors to protect them from the sun. Use the "Who Am I? SunWise Animals" student page as a guide. Have students learn about the animals and where they live, and then make associations about how all animals, including humans, need to protect themselves from the sun.

Ask the students to think of ways that they can keep their eyes and skin safe in the sun. Explain that some important ways to avoid overexposure to the sun include wearing sunglasses (appropriate sunglasses block 99-100% of UV rays), applying sunscreen with broad spectrum SPF 30 or higher, wearing a wide-brimmed hat, seeking shade when UV rays are most intense (between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.), paying attention to the UV Index when planning outdoor activities, and watching out for reflective surfaces, such as water, snow, and sand.

ACTIVITY ENRICHMENT

Connect this activity with a visit to your local zoo or aquarium. Plan a sun-safe animal tour to look for the animals on the "Who Am I? SunWise Animals" student page.

Student Page Answers: Koala, elephant, hippopotamus, meerkat

