

WEIRD AND WONDERFUL ANIMALS

Lesson Plan

Tapping Like an Aye-Aye

Lesson Plan for *Aye-Ayes*

Grade 2

Objective

To help students conduct an experiment to explore how aye-ayes find food.

Things Needed

- *Aye-Ayes* book
- Several flat surfaces (tables, desks, the floor, etc.)
- Paper and pencils

Before the Activity

Read Chapter 3 (“Tapping on Trees”) of the *Aye-Ayes* book out loud to students.

Activity

Chapter 3 (“Tapping on Trees”) describes how aye-ayes hunt. Aye-ayes tap on trees with their long middle fingers. They listen for insects moving inside the trees. Aye-ayes press their ears onto tree trunks to listen.

To find out why aye-ayes do this, have students conduct the following experiment. First, each student should find a flat surface in the classroom. It can be a table, a desk, or any other surface with enough room for students to lay their heads down. Each student should tap on this surface with one finger and listen, keeping his or her head up. Then, students should place their ears flat against the surface and tap again. Ask students to pay attention to how the sound changes.

Invite students to go back and forth between having their heads up and heads down. Then, have students return to their desks and record their findings on a piece of paper, writing a complete sentence to answer each of the following questions:



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- What surface did you choose to tap?
- What did it sound like when you tapped with your head up?
- How did the sound change when your ear was pressed to the surface?
- How do you think pressing their ears close to tree trunks helps aye-ayes find food?

Evaluation

Collect the papers at the end of class. Give each student up to 5 points:

- 1 point for each question answered with a complete sentence
- 1 point for correctly inferring that placing an ear on a tree trunk would make insect movements louder and easier for an aye-aye to hear

Standards

This lesson plan may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' writing standards, grade 2 (W 2.8), and the National Science Education Standards' Content Standards A and C, grades K–4.

