

Appearance of the Timber Wolf

Age: 2nd Grade

Objectives: Students will be able to...

- Describe the appearance of the timber wolf.
- Compare and contrast how a wolf and a dog are different.
- Identify a wolf paw print and make comparisons.

Standards

NGSS 2-LS4-1 Make observations of plants and animals to compare the diversity of life in different habitats.

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.2.MD.A.1: Measure the length of an object by selecting and using appropriate tools such as rulers, yardsticks, meter sticks, and measuring tapes.

Background information

The wolf belongs to the scientific family Canidae, species is Canis Lupus, which includes wolves, dogs, foxes, and jackals. Wolves have many similarities to dogs: there are some breeds of dogs that resemble wolves. The major difference is that a wolf is larger. A wolf stands about 2.5 feet tall. The average male timber wolf weights between 70-100 pounds and is approximately 5-6 feet from nose to tail. The female is smaller, weighting from 55-70 pounds and is about 4.5-6 feet. The wolf also has larger feet and longer legs.

The coloring of the timber wolf is a blend of many shades- gray, tan, white, and black. Other markings include a band of black tipped hair across the shoulders and along the back. This is usually seen in the winter.

Wolves move differently than dogs. Wolves move in a single path with each foot moving in a straight line in front of the other. Dogs move with their feet side by side.

Materials

- Wolf Poster
- Pictures of Dogs and wolves
- "Get to Know Me" Worksheet
- "Let's Shake Hands" Worksheet
- Rulers
- Yardstick (optional: large paper)

Before the lesson

You may want to request that students bring in magazines or pictures of dogs or wolves they can find. You may also check out our reading list to rent wolf texts from your local library.

Introduction

Let's Play Clue: "Today we are going to learn more about an animal that many of you have heard of or seen in books, on the computer, or on the TV. Listen to my clues. When you know what animal I am talking about raise your hand. Keep your guess to yourself."

Clues:

- The animal has four, long legs
- The animal has fur that is gray, tan, brown, and black.
- The animal sometimes lives in a den.
- The animal has babies called pups.
- The animal needs a lot of space in which to live
- The animal stays away from people
- The animal eats many things- mice, rabbits, deer...
- The animal has good vision and hearing
- The animal was gone for a long time in the lower US but not it has come back in some place
- The animal looks like a dog

Allow for students to guess. "The animal is a wolf. Today we are going to learn about what the wolf's appearance."

Lesson

1. Pictures (10 minutes)

- a. Allow time for students to look at wolf and dog pictures in small groups or individually. Have them come up with a list of the similarities and differences between dogs and wolves. Note that there is a lot of different types of dogs, but not wolves, coloring, size, etc.
- b. Have students share out from their groups about what they noticed. Record these observations for the whole class to see.

2. Coloring of the Wolf

- a. Ask the students what colors the wolves were: black, tan, white, and gray.
- b. Discuss that wolves are usually multiple colors. Ask if anyone can show a picture of a wolf that has multiple colors. Also let them know that there are sometimes wolves that are pure white or black, ask if anyone has an example of this. Show the class.
- c. Tell students that Timber wolves are the wolves that live in Wisconsin/Michigan and usually they are these multiple colors. Ask students why these multiple colors may help them survive? (camouflage- lives in the woods that has a lot of colors too). Could explain how white wolves are most common in Alaska where there is a lot of snow.
- d. Activity (choose one)
 - i. Hand out coloring page and allow for students to try to color it in like a timber wolf using multiple colors.
 - ii. Enlarge the coloring page and cut out strips of the wolf colors. Have students attach these strips to the large poster to make its fur.
 - iii. Make a dog and wolf collage of photos.

3. Size of the Wolf

- a. Use a yardstick to provide the "visualization" of the size of the timber wolf. You could record this on a large piece of paper. Compare this to the size of a student.

- b. Could use these measurements for inequalities or comparisons in a math lesson
 - i. 2.5 feet tall
 - ii. 50-70 lbs
 - iii. 5-6.5 feet long (nose to tail)
- c. Discuss why a wolves have an advantage of being so large. Examples could be:
 - i. Walk through snow or deeper vegetation
 - ii. Attack larger prey

4. Wolf Movements

- a. Have students get down on all fours and move across the room. Ask one student to come up and show what their tracks would be like in the mud or snow. (left)
- b. Now have students try to walk leaving only one path behind. Have them try on two feet or all fours. (Right)
- c. Explain that wolves have a smaller frame than most dogs, leaving a less wide track path. This also helps them in the winter while walking through snow. Wolves tend to follow



Dog Tracks



Wolf Tracks

- the footsteps of leader while traveling. Have students try walking like a wolf follow an alpha female or male. Provide worksheet to show size of the wolf's track. Have the
- d. students measure the length and width of the track. Have trace their own had and measure it. (You could also compare this to other tracks (cats, dogs, footprints, etc.)).

Closure

Have students remind you about the differences between wolves and dogs. The students may come up with topics not shared here.

- Bigger (body and paw)
- Coloring
- Move differently
- Not many types of wolves compared to dogs

Extension Activities

Art

- Experiment with modeling clay to make a wolf paw print
- Design a Timber Wolf Poster
- If can put tracks in ground, use plaster of paris to extract print.

Science

- Find other paw prints and compare to wolves
- Research other species of wolves and compare them to the Timber Wolf
- Research the shedding of the wolf's winter coat and share back with class.

Literacy

- Write a story about a dog who looked like a wolf or a wolf that looked like a dog
- Make up a song about the way a wolf looks
- Write a poem about the timber wolf

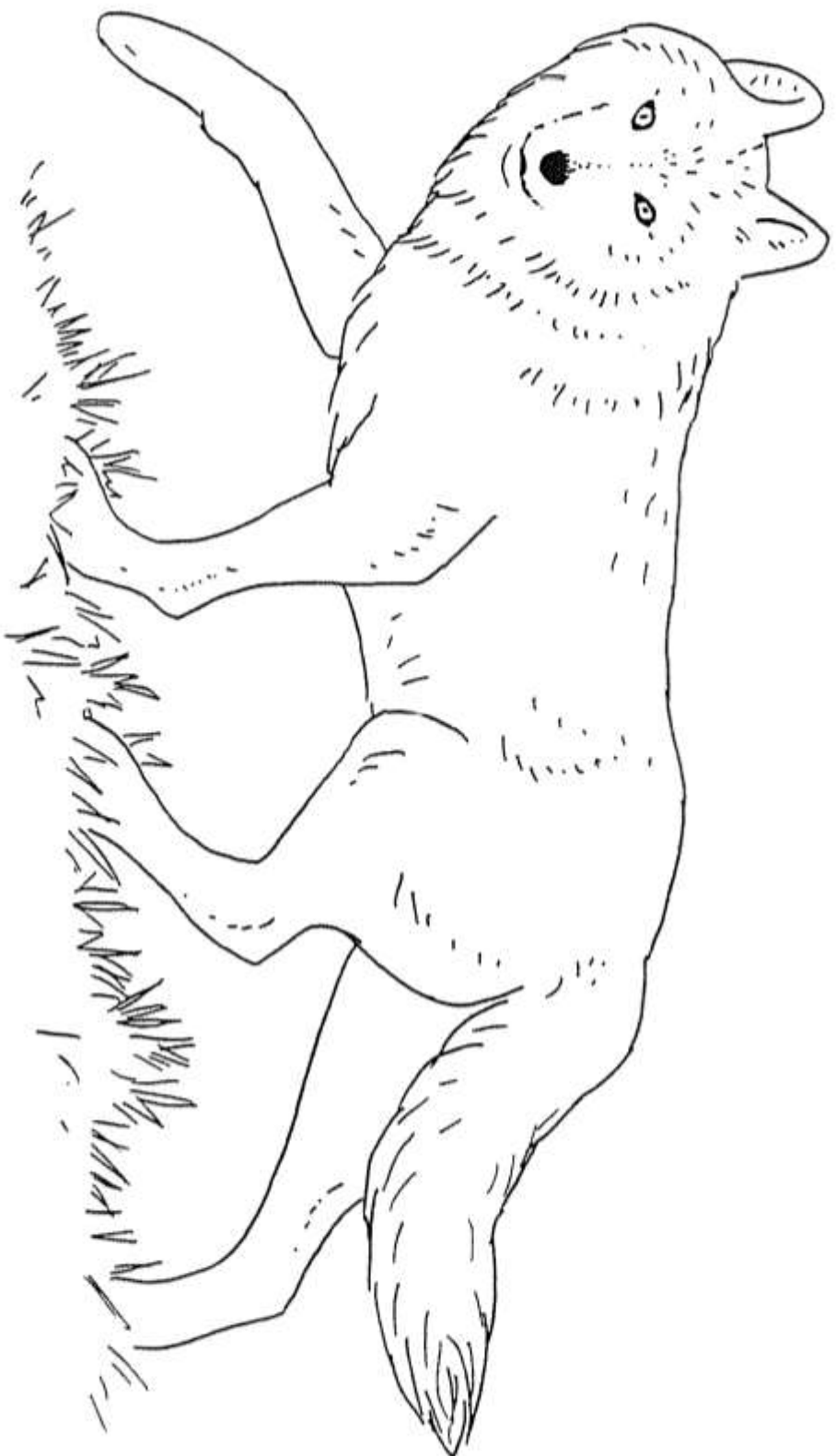
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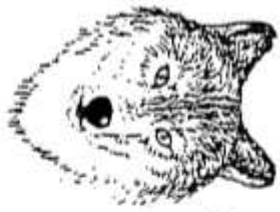
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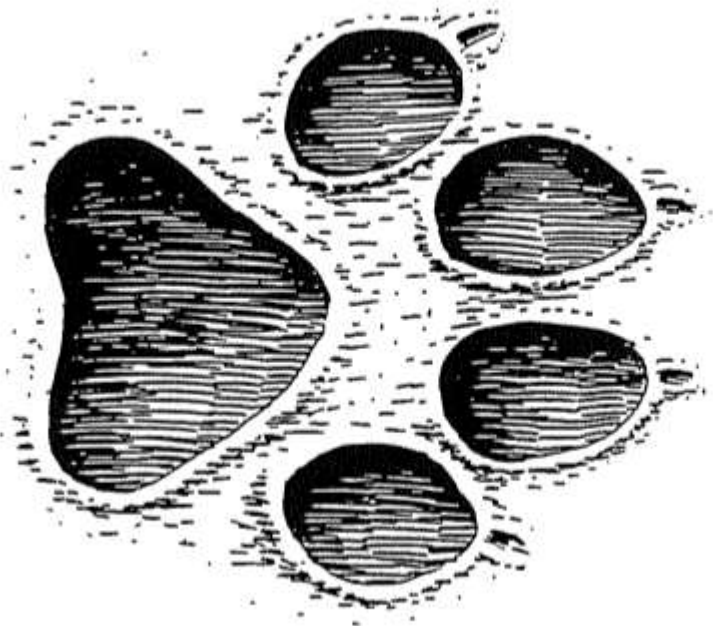
"Get to know me."



Color the Timber Wolf.



"Let's shake hands."



Track of the Timber Wolf

Trace the outline of your hand here
to compare size.

B

Length: _____

Length: _____

Width: _____

Width: _____