

Wolf Awareness Week

WOLF DEN DIORAMA CRAFT (Grades 2-6)

A diorama is a realistic scene using figures of animals with true to life natural surroundings. Many lifelike details are used to create a miniature display, and sometimes a painted background is included to complete the scene.

Objectives: Students will be able to ...

- build a model of a wolf den.
- describe a wolf's ecosystem.

Materials

- Den form - shoe box, half gallon milk or juice container, brown paper lunch bag (need 1 per wolf den). If using a half gallon container, cut-away either one side of the container or the top; the open end will be the front of the diorama. (In the newspaper announcement, the children may be asked to bring their own shoe box and lid. Brown lunch bags can be used as a back-up if children do not bring their own den form, cut the excess off the top of the bag and turn it sideways so the bottom of the bag is used as the back of the den.)
- Materials to construct den - - rocks, pebbles (various shapes and sizes but not larger than 2 inches), sticks, leaves, plastic plants, Popsicle sticks, toothpicks, brown/gold/other earth-toned yarn, brown/gray/other earth-toned felt or tissue paper or other type of paper large enough to fill inside of den, anything else you can think of that would help make the den realistic.
- Large storage baggies in which to put materials (need 1 per wolf den).
- Poster board or cardboard (can be front or back of large cereal box or corrugated cardboard from a larger box) on which to attach den form (need 1 per wolf den). The top of a shoe box can be used to hold the shoe box.

*Sort out materials into plastic baggies, enough in each to make a den. Enough for each den being created. You may want to have extra materials available on the day of creation.

- School Supplies: Double-sided tape, craft glue, markers (must be washable), crayons, scissors
- Paper: Photo-copy page with alpha female wolf and 3 pups (need 1 per wolf den). Index card per group.

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Wolf Awareness Event Day

- 1) Bring your imagination!
- 2) Read the paragraph about The Wolf Den on the next page.
- 3) If there is a place to display the wolf dens, tell children about the wolf den diorama project and that the den dioramas will be displayed so that others can also learn about wolves.
- 4) Pass out the materials to each child: one den form, one plastic storage baggie filled with materials to construct the den, one piece of cardboard or poster board on which to attach the den form.
- 5) Make supplies readily accessible to the children.
- 6) Help children assemble dens using instructions below.
- 7) When den is complete, pass out copy of the alpha female and pups for children to color, cut out and affix in their den.
- 8) Pass out index cards that says "Gray Wolf Den by" and have children put their name and any information about gray wolves that they wish to pass along to others. Children can choose to name their wolves, name the wolf pack and choose a geographic location for their den. Tape the card to their wolf den diorama for exhibit in the library ..
- 9) Tell the parents when they should pick up the wolf den dioramas: beginning _____ but no later than _____

Directions to Make Wolf Den Diorama

There are many variations to making a diorama. The following are directions for one variation using a shoe box and paper. Remember that the shoe box will be put on its side so that the open side of the shoe box is the front of the diorama.

- 1) Color the paper with earth tones –browns and golds –using crayons or markers. Blend the colors together.
- 2) Glue the paper inside the shoe box bottom, sides and top. Paper can be crumpled or flat.
- 3) Glue sticks and pebbles along 3 sides and bottom of box. Leave one side smooth. (This is the place where the alpha female lies and nurses her pups.)
- 4) Arrange larger stones at entrance of Den. Use double stick tape or craft glue to hold them in place.
- 5) Use short pieces of yarn inside den along roof, sides and bottom to look like sandy soil.
- 6) Color the copies of the alpha female and 3 pups and cut them out. Arrange the animals inside the den and glue tabs to hold them in place.

Additional ideas:

- 7) Color outside of shoe-box or glue paper and sticks to outside.
- 8) Set den on top of cardboard (or inside the top of the shoe-box) colored with earth tones.
- 9) Glue leaves, sticks and pebbles around outside.

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Update in 2017 by Angela Lee Rivera Rautmann

The Wolf Den

Most wolf dens are burrows dug into low rising hills or banks. The hill is usually no more than 3-5 feet high. The den is easiest to dig if the soil is sandy.

Once she locates the perfect spot, the "alpha" female digs horizontally into the edge of the hill, which makes it much easier than if she were to dig straight down into the soil. The alpha female makes a $1\frac{1}{2}$ foot circular opening about the size of a hoola-hoop. With her powerful paws she scratches and claws at the ground, making a tunnel that may reach up to nine feet long. The tunnel is narrow so larger animals cannot enter.

At the end of the tunnel, she digs out an area where she will give birth to her pups. This area is called the terminal chamber and it is just big enough for the female to stand up and stretch, or turn around in. The terminal chamber is very clean with no bedding material. As she nurses her pups, she rests against one side of the chamber causing her body to rub the wall smooth. This makes a very comfortable area for her to lie and care for her young.

Safe and sound in their den, it will be nearly 11 days before the pups begin to open their eyes, and close to three weeks before they venture out to explore the natural world awaiting them.

2004 Wolf Awareness Week



Color and then cut out the Alpha Female and pups.

Fold the tabs back and tape in den.

