

Games for winter

Deer Ears

Deer have some pretty cool adaptations to survive the winter:

- Their fur changes from a reddish-brown to a grayish-brown color in the winter to aid with camouflaging
- Hairs covering the body are short, thin and wiry in summer and become long, thick and hollow in the winter. Air filled hairs in winter provide insulation against the cold.
- Deer have large, cupped, maneuverable ears to help them detect predators.

In this game, we will focus on deer ears.

1. Have students collect a small stick (wrist to elbow in length)
2. Students will create a deer yard (stomp down all the snow in a large circled area)
3. Have students circle up in the “deer yard” and choose one student to be the deer. The “deer” will go to the centre of the circle and be blindfolded. The rest of the students will place their stick somewhere beside the “deer”.
4. Once sticks are placed on the ground, circle up again. Let students know that when you point at them, they need to, as quietly as possible, move to the centre of the circle to “steal” a stick. If the “deer” points at them while they are attempting to grab the stick, they must leave the stick and go back to the circle. Continue the game, switching up the deer, every few rounds.

Move like That!

Talk a little about the different movement patterns of animals who stay and cope during the winter. Students line up on one end of a “playing field” and when you yell out one of the below movement patterns, students need to imitate it to get across to the other side.

Walking (felines, canines, ungulates) Move right hand and left foot at same time (and likewise their left hand and right foot). As hand moves forward, foot goes onto the spot where their hand just was.

Galloping (rabbits, snowshoe hares, squirrels, chipmunks, mice, voles, shrews) - larger hind feet land in front of the smaller front feet.

Bounding (weasel family- otter, mink, marten, fisher, weasels) Front feet hit first, and then the back feet land where the front feet were.



Waddling (heavy-set mammals such as beaver, porcupine, raccoon, skunk)- weight shifts to the right as both the left hand and foot move forward at the same time. Then shifts to the left as the right hand and foot move in their turn.

Snowflake Tag

Have students spread out in a large playing area. Choose two students to be snow, and two students to be the sun (could be identified with white and yellow pinnies, but it's not necessary) When a player is tagged by “snow” they turn into a snowflake, spreading their arms and legs out in snowflake form. They must stay this way until they are melted by the “sun” at which point they can join the game again. Play can continue for a predetermined time, allowing new students to take on the role of sun and snow.

Hibernaculum

This is like hide and seek – only in reverse! One person hides and everyone else searches for the hidden person. Whenever a person finds the hidden person, they quietly join them in their hiding spot. Soon, the hidden group starts to look like a bunch of sardines, but you can change the animal to be more in line with the theme of hibernation by saying they're bats, snakes, ladybugs or other animals that hibernate together.



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