

IntelliPics

Backyard Animals

Introduction

Using *IntelliPics* as an interactive tool, educators and families can present information to young children in meaningful ways. As part of a theme or unit on animals, an activity can be created using digital pictures of animals which children see in their own backyard. Children will enjoy interacting with these familiar animals and participating in a variety of related activities.

Materials

- Computer
- IntelliKeys
- *IntelliPics*
- “Backyard Animals” overlays

Ahead of Time

- Create an *IntelliPics* “Backyard Animals” activity using four digital pictures of animals seen in the local environment. One example includes butterfly, cat, dog, and squirrel.
- Copy each picture into *IntelliPics* and add animation.
- Record each animal’s sound if possible, otherwise, record a child’s voice or an adult voice saying something about each animal.
- Make an overlay with the four pictures. If fewer pictures are desired, Save the activity under a new name and delete pictures not needed. After renaming the new activity, make a new overlay which has this same new name.
- Print the overlays in color and laminate for durability.
- Open the *IntelliPics* activity and place the appropriate overlay on the IntelliKeys.



Introductory Activity

Read a book about animals seen in the local environment. Ask children about animals they see in their backyard. Make a chart of the various animals, record the number of children who have seen each animal. Encourage the children to talk about what they already know about these animals and what they would like to know. Record the children's thoughts as a group to revisit later.

Computer Activity

Ask the children about the animals they see on the "Backyard Animals" overlay. Encourage them to talk about how these animals live, what they eat, where they sleep and which ones are in their yard.

Present the IntelliKeys with the overlay to the children. Encourage them to explore the overlay to find out what happens when they press on a picture. Use the overlay in combination with off-computer materials, such as play animals, puppets, and books.

Extended Activity

- Make a book by printing each picture from the overlay and adding text. If words are spoken on the computer which correspond to the picture, then these same words should be used in the book. Display the book in the Reading Center for children to explore during free play.
- Encourage children to draw pictures of animals they see in their yard. Display their drawings in the classroom.
- Focus on the sounds that animals make. Compare the sounds according to characteristics, such as loudness and pitch. Encourage children to imitate their favorite animal sound.
- Take a walk outside the school and observe animals in the schoolyard. Take digital pictures and make a new *IntelliPics* overlay with the children.
- Take a field trip to a park or someone's backyard and observe the animal life there. Take digital pictures and make another *IntelliPics* overlay with the children.
- Compare the animals on the different overlays noting similarities and differences. Make a chart showing commonalities and another one showing the differences.
- Make books from each of the overlays. Circulate a copy among families so children can share their experiences at home.
- Print two copies of each animal picture from the overlay. Use the pictures as cards for matching or concentration games.
- Ask families to send pictures of animals from their backyard to school. These can be used to make an *IntelliPics* class overlay featuring all of the different animals.

Summary

Many activities can be generated from the topic of backyard animals. By using *IntelliPics* with digital pictures of animals seen in the environment, children are provided with content which is meaningful to them. This activity can then serve as the starting point for extended activities which reach into the local community.