

LION TONGUE ACTIVITY

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| Mammal: | Lion |
| Concepts Addressed: | Habitats; Nutrient Density; Adaptations |
| Materials: | Antelope coloring page (on following page, one ½ sheet per person), Crayons, Sandpaper |
| Shopping List: [for class] | Crayons Sandpaper sheets |

Background Information:

Prides, or groups of lions, have amazing social structures. The females do all the hunting and share tasks and motherly duties within the pride, while the males protect them as a whole. They hunt antelope, wildebeest, and buffalo, which are eaten by the whole pride. Hunting is serious work with a low success rate, requiring a lot of risk. When an animal is felled, it is essential to gain all the nutrients possible from the animal. Lions have an adaptation in their tongues that allows them to leave no waste behind. Their tongues are like sandpaper, and efficiently scrape all the flesh off the bones.

Instructions:

Using a dark-colored crayon, have students color in a section of the antelope. Then have them take a piece of sandpaper and rub it on the section they colored. Tell them to look at the sandpaper. The crayon has lifted off the paper and attached itself to the sandpaper. This is how a lion's tongue works. The scratchy tongue catches the remaining flesh and pulls it off the bone.

Discussion:

Cats are known as the only true carnivores, because they feed solely on meat. You may see a cat eating grass, but they cannot digest plant material; eating grass helps them bring back up the fur they may have swallowed while grooming themselves. Most meat-eaters are actually omnivores. They can feed on meat and plant matter. Omnivores have teeth adapted for eating both.

It is not surprising, then, that cats are the only mammals with a scratchy tongue since it is specifically adapted for scraping flesh off bone.

When you notice something distinct about an animal, it is always interesting to ask why...



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Antelope Coloring Page

