

Bear Essentials

Rangers in the Classroom—Post-visit Lesson Plan



Grade Level: 4th

Setting: Classroom

Duration: 45 min - 1 hour

Standards Addressed:

- ° Science—Life Sciences:
2.a, b
- ° Reading—Word Fluency:
1.1
- ° Writing Applications:
2.1, 2.2
- ° Writing Strategies:
1.1, 1.2

Introduction:

Thank you for joining us on an exciting adventure into the world of black bears with our Bear Essentials program. We created this post-visit activity to review, reinforce and enrich your students' understanding of these unique creatures. Please refer to the program outline we provided during our visit to your class for additional sources of information. We hope you enjoyed the ranger visit and invite us back soon. Have fun!

Materials:

- ° “Why Black Bears Have Stumpy Tails” folktale worksheet
- ° “Fashion a Folk Tale” worksheet
- ° Lined paper
- ° Pencil

Instructions:

1. Discuss what a folk tale is.
2. Read the folk tale, “Why Bears Have Stumpy Tails,” together as a class.
3. Students will brainstorm ideas for their own folk tale about why bears have big, long noses.
4. Students will write their own folk tales using the “Fashion a Folk Tale” worksheet as a guide.

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WHY BEARS HAVE STUMPY TAILS

A Scandinavian folk tale



Long ago, bears used to have long, bushy tails, much like foxes. One winter day, a bear met a fox who was carrying a string of fish. "Where did you get those fish?" asked the bear.

Actually, the fox had stolen the fish. Not wanting to admit to theft, he quickly made up a story, saying, "I caught them in that pond over there. There are many more, if you would like to catch some. Come with me, I'll show you how it is done."

When they reached the pond, which was frozen, the fox pointed to a small hole in the ice. "All you have to do is sit down and put your tail through the hole. When you feel it sting, it means a fish is nibbling at your tail. Do not pull your tail out of the ice, however. Wait until you feel many stings, and then pull your tail out, and you will have a string of fish like mine."

Thanking the fox for the lesson, the bear sat down on the ice, and put his tail through the hole, as he had been told to do. After a while, his tail began to sting. "I must have a fish on my tail," he thought, but remembering the fox's words, he did not pull his tail out of the ice. A bit later, his tail hurt again, but he still sat without pulling it out. Finally, he could stand it no longer. He pulled - but his tail was frozen into place in the pond ice. He pulled harder and harder, until his frozen tail snapped off! The long, beautiful tail stayed in the pond, and he was left with a little stump. From that day to this, all bears have had very short tails.



