

NATURE KIDS



SCIENCE PROJECTS JUST FOR FUN...

MAKE A SNAKE

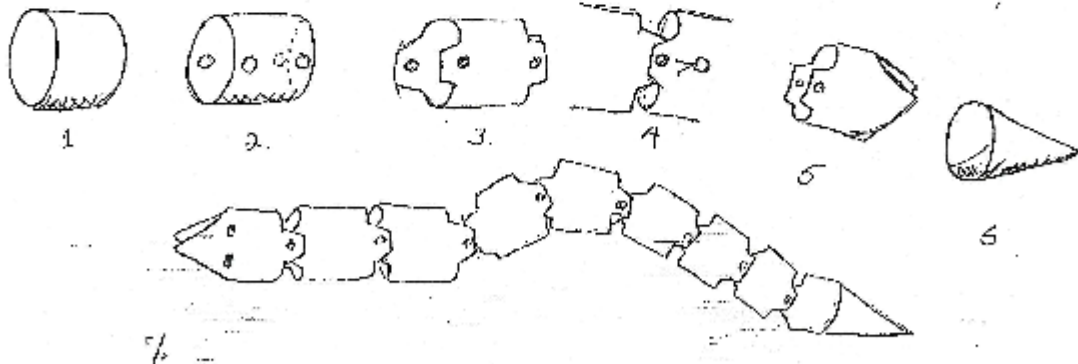
What could be more fun than your own slinky slidey snake!
Especially one you make yourself.

You will need:

- Several toilet paper or paper towel tubes (it's easy to save a few as the paper is used up)
- Brass paper fasteners available at office supply stores or drug stores
- Paints, markers, or crayons — for decorating

1. Cut the tubes into two-inch sections
2. Punch two holes opposite each other on each end
3. Snip away the sides, between the punched holes.
4. Connect the sections using the paper fasteners
5. You can make a head by cutting one section to a point.
6. Add a tail by rolling a piece of paper into a cone and taping it to the last section.
7. Decorate.

You can make YOUR snake as long and as fancy as your tubes and imagination will allow. Have a r-r-r-rrrr-r-rational time.



SING A SONG

I Am A Cricket

(Sing to "You Are My Sunshine")

I am a cricket,
A big black cricket.
I have six legs and
two pairs of wings.

My body's covered
With an exoskeleton,

And I rub my wings
to sing.

TEACHER'S CORNER

by Jenni Malone

Ectothermia

Helping children to really understand ectothermia or cold-bloodedness and not just mimick the word or the definition is always a challenge. We run into it when teaching about reptiles, amphibians, insects, even fish. Here is one idea that will get your students out, active and involved.

Collect a number of outdoor (or indoor/outdoor) thermometers. Mark each thermometer with a temperature range of about 5 degrees Fahrenheit. I used permanent marker on transparent tape. That way I could adjust the ranges to suit the day just by moving the tape. (See figure 1) Make some ranges hotter than the air temperature and some cooler. Each range represents the ideal temperature range of a particular ectothermic animal, such as a lizard.

Give each child or each team a thermometer. If your group is familiar with thermometers, they will know that the thermometer does not "make" its own temperature, but just records it. If your group is new to thermometers you may want to demonstrate how they work by dipping them in warm and cool water and having the kids watch the indicators move up (warmer) and down (cooler). They can experiment at this point with trying to keep the indicator within a certain range by moving their thermometer between the warm water and the cool water.

Take your children outside to a place that has both sun and shade. As an introduction, you might have them stand in the sun and the shade and note which location feels warmer and which cooler. Let each individual or team choose a place to start where they think the thermometer/animal will be able to maintain the right temperature. As you move from group to group you can check each thermometer and assist each team in obtaining their ideal range. Some will spend all or most of their time in the sun, as lizards do on a cool day. Some may need to be in the shade or even (if it is available) in the water to stay cool enough.

For added interest, I made felt lizard shapes with slits so that the thermometers could slip into them. (See figure 2) As an extension of this first activity you might have your groups try to maintain the same temperature using different colored "lizards". Is it easier to keep a green lizard hot, or a brown one? Which stays cooler more easily?

You could contrast the changing temperature of the "lizard" thermometers with the constant temperature of the children. Take the temperature of one or more children as they sit in the sun, and again as they sit in the shade. The outside temperature may change, but their internal temperature does not.

Have fun in the sun! (and the shade, too)

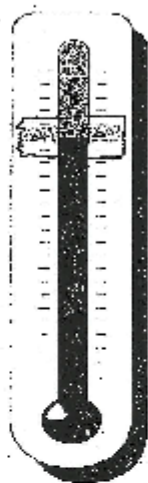


Figure 1

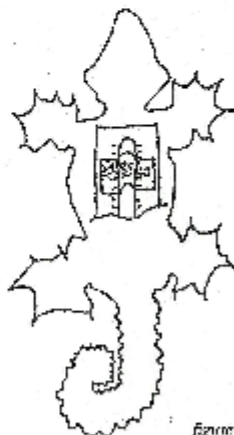


Figure 2

