

WATER RIDDLES

Students will solve animal mysteries at the NC Zoo to emphasize the connections between water and all forms of life.

Grade Level
3-8

Theme:
Habitat
Conservation

Curriculum Connections:
S, LA

Materials:
Water Riddles
Worksheet

No matter where one lives or travels, there is always a need for water. Although water is the most abundant compound on Earth, only a very small percentage is actually usable. As you travel through the Zoo, see if you can solve the animal riddles below. Animal riddles are grouped together by the exhibit in which they can be found. Once you've solved each riddle, consider how that animal depends on abundant, clean water. When you finish all the riddles, fill in the blanks at the end of this worksheet to reveal a special message about water conservation. Place the letters you find in the numbered spaces in the blank slot that corresponds to each.

Rocky Coast Exhibit

1) I really don't have a mane, although you might be confused by my name. I can swim and play, using flippers all day. Boy - I've got nice whiskers, I'd say!

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Why is water important to me? What might happen if the water I use disappears or becomes polluted?

2) With hair that looks white and quite a strong bite, I'm the largest in my animal family. If I'm not by the pool trying not to get hot, you might catch me swimming to stay cool!

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Why is water important to me? What might happen if the water I use disappears or becomes polluted?

WATER RIDDLES

3) Behind my eyes you'll see a surprise - yellow-white plumes that point back. My beak is cone-shaped and orange-red in color - I use it to feed on small prey. In my home at the Zoo, I'm the smallest of three and I might just swim up to you!

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Why is water important to me? What might happen if the water I use disappears or becomes polluted?

Cypress Swamp Exhibit

4) It might look like I have a Mohawk, but it's really just part of my style. With a sharp pointed beak, I'm quite slender and sleek. I swim on the pond and dive down deep in search of fish I can keep!

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Why is water important to me? What might happen if the water I use disappears or becomes polluted?

5) Though slow when I walk, I use surprise to stalk, and I'm equipped with a long snout of teeth. Reaching lengths several feet and with scales you can't beat, in the swamp you would not want to meet!

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Why is water important to me? What might happen if the water I use disappears or becomes polluted?

WATER RIDDLES

9) Fully in water, I'm the only of my kind in this hot and dry climate out west. You'll find me living in small desert pools, where I typically swim, play and rest. I may be blue, or a silvery tone, and rarely am I ever alone!

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Why is water important to me? What might happen if the water I use disappears or becomes polluted?

Forest Aviary

10) I've got a long neck and long legs, to boot, so I can skim water and find food to suit. My food gives me color - which pleases the eye so stop and say hi before you pass by!

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Why is water important to me? What might happen if the water I use disappears or becomes polluted?

11) Releasing toxins from my skin and with fingers so thin, you'll usually find me by water. Streams in the forest help keep me wet and hide me from predators just yet. Look for the color of the bright clear sky - you won't miss me I bet!

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Why is water important to me? What might happen if the water I use disappears or becomes polluted?



WATER RIDDLES

Watani Grasslands

12) Largest of land mammals, my size is unique. If it's tiny you want, somewhere else you should seek. I use mud to protect my coarse, dark skin, and travel in herds to stay close to my kin. On the plains I will roam, leaving footprints behind. My ears and long trunk, make me one of a kind!

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Why is water important to me? What might happen if the water I use disappears or becomes polluted?

13) You'll find in my name a clue to this game, as it tells you I'm fine when I'm wet. I hang around lakes to find lots of food and to steer clear of beasts - goodness sakes! With long spiraled horns I'm a sight to be seen, but no need to worry, I'm not at all mean!

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Why is water important to me? What might happen if the water I use disappears or becomes polluted?

Fill in the blanks with the corresponding letters and share this important message with your friends!

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WATER RIDDLES ANSWER KEY

1. Sea lion
2. Polar bear
3. Parakeet auklet
4. Hooded merganser
5. American alligator
6. North American otter
7. Eastern cottonmouth
8. Vampire bat
9. Desert pupfish
10. Chilean flamingo
11. Blue poison dart frog
12. African elephant
13. Common waterbuck

Coded Message

w	a	t	e	r	c	o	n	s	e	r	v	a	t	i	o	n
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