

EARLYPOLY

NAT_308_EN

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Formal / non-formal setting:

Most relevant age group (for example: **5–6 years**)

Description of the idea / problem / exercise: **Visit to the ZOO**

Materials: Small animal toys from different living environments, Poly-Universe set, natural sources (grass, sand, water, rocks etc.), papers and pencils.

Game Description & Rules:

Setting 1:

Talk with children about different animals and where they live. Example: Fish live in the water, bear in a forest, camel in a desert and lion in savannah.

- Children choose the main color of a Poly-Universe toolkit based on the living environment. Example: Blue for water and snow, Green for forest and grass, Yellow for sand and Red for warm rocks.
- Talk with children about what each animal eats. Example: Lion and bear eat meat, camel and hippo eat plants.
- Children have to find a secondary color on the shape to correspond to the diet the animal has. Example: red for meat, green for plants, blue for water, yellow for grain.

Now children place animals on the right shapes and colors making for each their own little enclosure.

Setting 2:

- Children can practice putting 2 enclosures together by connecting the same size secondary colours. Teacher observes and talks with children if these animals can really live together in the same enclosure. Would a lion and a cheetah be happy living together when they eat the same and are living in the same environment? Can fish and hippo live in the same enclosure, do they eat the same things?

Setting 3:

- Children collect natural sources based on the enclosure where they put the animal. Example: Sand for main colour yellow, grass/leafs for main colour green, red rocks for main colour red and water/snow for main colour blue.
- They draw the same shape of enclosure as the selected Poly-Universe shape and start placing the natural resources to the drawn picture, making their habitat real. Plastic lids can be used as water holders.

Competence Area(s) and Learning Goals:

Identify and name different animals and their basic characteristics

- understand the concept of a habitat (an animal's home environment) and link specific animals to their correct habitats (e.g., fish/water, bear/forest).
- understand the concept of a diet (what an animal eats).
- recognize that animals have specific needs for survival (food, water, shelter, space)

Working with attributes like color, shape, size, and classification

- Recognize, name, and match colors (primary: red, blue, yellow, green; and secondary colors on the shapes).
- Recognize, compare, and match shapes and sizes (the different geometric shapes and their scaling in the Poly-Universe set).
- Understand and apply a classification system and practice visual discrimination based on two attributes (first by main color/habitat, then by secondary color/diet).
- Understand connection and fitting by matching shapes along their secondary-colored edges (early geometry and spatial reasoning).

Refining both fine and gross motor control through hands-on activities

- Fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination through precise placement of small animals, natural materials, and Poly-Universe shapes.
- Practice the pincer grip and controlled movements when drawing (tracing) and placing small items.
- Gross motor skills by moving around to collect natural materials (e.g., bending to pick grass, carrying a small cup of water).

Making creative choices and representing ideas through art and design

- Choosing a specific type of leaf for the forest.
- Express an understanding of an animal's world through a visual and tactile creation.

Empathy, collaboration, and confidence

- Develop empathy by considering the needs and feelings of the animals ("Would the fish be happy with the hippo?").
- Practice collaboration and sharing of materials if working in a small group.