

The Truth About Pigs

Summary: Students explore many interesting facts about pigs and discover that people may have misconceptions about them.

Objectives:

The students will:

- Identify pigs as a common animal on Pennsylvania farms.
- List at least three products or by-products of pigs.
- Describe at least two misconceptions about pigs.
- Identify at least three characteristics of pigs.

Materials:

Activity #1:

- KWL chart
- marker
- book, All Pigs Are Beautiful by Dick King-Smith

Activity #2:

- pig pattern from Appendix
- construction paper
- laminator (optional)
- coins/counters
- marker

Activity #3:

- KWL chart fact list from Activity #1
- paper and pencils
- story scenarios (optional)

Getting Started:

Activity #1:

- Create KWL chart so that it is ready to fill out.

Activity #2:

- Copy or trace and then cut the pig pattern for piggy banks ahead of time. Decide if each student gets one or if there will be a set amount at a math center.
- Laminate pigs (optional).
- Gather coins and math counters.

Activity #3:

- Keep the KWL chart from Activity #1 so you can review the facts you listed in the "L" section.
- Write possible story scenarios for students who need ideas for their pig story plots (optional)

Background:

There are many misconceptions about pigs for some reason. They are actually very social, intelligent and clean animals that provide us with many useful products. A male is called a boar, a female is a sow, and a young pig is called a piglet. A young female that has not had piglets is a gilt, and a young,



Grade Level: K-6

Topic: Common animals on Pennsylvania farms

PA Environment & Ecology Standards Addressed:

Agriculture and Society:

4.4.4.B: Identify the role of the sciences in Pennsylvania agriculture.

- Identify common animals found on Pennsylvania farms.
- 4.4.4.C: Know that food and fiber originate from plants and animals.
- Identify agricultural products that are local and regional.

Teaching Methods:

- Lecture/Discussion
- Hands-on Activities
- Investigation

Multiple Intelligences Utilized:

- Naturalistic
- Interpersonal
- Intrapersonal
- Logical/Mathematical
- Verbal/Linguistic

castrated male is known as a barrow. Some popular breeds of pigs are Yorkshire, Duroc, Hampshires, Berkshires, and Chester Whites.

Pigs are very clean animals. They do roll in mud, but this is because they cannot sweat like humans do, so the mud keeps them cool. They are very particular about keeping their sleeping area clean and designate a place away from this area for waste. It is common for newly born piglets to leave the nest to relieve themselves.

Pigs are social animals that form bonds within their species and with other species, including humans. They also enjoy close bodily contact and will often lie together when resting. They will let familiar humans pet and scratch them just like dogs do. However, pigs are known to be much more intelligent than any breed of dog. Like dogs, they learn their names by two to three weeks of age and respond when someone calls their name. They are very inquisitive and active.

Pigs are omnivores that eat all kinds of things. In a pasture they will eat roots, grubs, nuts, and plants. In a pen they usually eat corn, other grains, root vegetables, alfalfa, potatoes, milk, pumpkins, and leftovers from the dinner table. They have also been known to eat things like orange juice, potato chips and candy.

Almost every part of the pig can be used in some way to make the products we use every day. Some examples of the edible products we get from pigs are pork chops, bacon, ham, roasts, spare ribs, sausage, salami, pepperoni, tongues, and feet. Non-edible products include gelatin, leather, glue, fertilizer, anti-freeze, some pet food, insulin, soap, makeup, chewing gum, and heart valves for medical use.

Activity #1: All Pigs Are Beautiful

- Begin to create a KWL chart with the students to find out what they already know about pigs. Some of them might not have accurate information because there are a lot of misconceptions about pigs.
- Then ask them what they want to know and list those items.
- Read the book All Pigs Are Beautiful by Dick King-Smith.
- Discuss what the students have learned and fill in the rest of the chart. Now what do they think of pigs? Were there any surprises?
- Make a list of facts about pigs that you can review and refer to as needed.

Activity #2: Piggy Banks

- Practice money and other math skills with this activity. Copy or trace the pig graphic in the Appendix to make one for each student (or several if having this activity at a math center, etc.). Laminate cutouts.

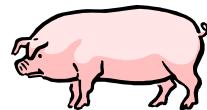


- Label each pig with a value (such as monetary amounts, numerals, or number words; math facts could work as well).
- Give each student coins or counters and ask them to place the proper amount of money or counters on the "piggy bank" that equals the amount listed.
- Adapt this activity to fit the skill levels and needs of each of your students.

Activity #3: **"If I Were A Pig..."**

- Introduce your students to the concept of writing in the first-person context through this creative writing activity.
- Review the list of facts about pigs that you discovered in Activity #1.
- Challenge students to think like a pig and write a story about "If I Were A Pig..."
- For extra inspiration, create several scenarios on slips of paper that you can hand out to the students. This will help them get started. Would you wallow in the mud all day or try to break out and go on an adventure? How realistic but creative can the story be?
- Ask students to share their stories.

Evaluation:



Rubric: The Truth About Pigs

3	2	1	0	The student can identify pigs as common Pennsylvania farm animals.
3	2	1	0	The student can list at least three products or by-products of pigs.
3	2	1	0	The student can describe at least two misconceptions about pigs.
3	2	1	0	The student can identify at least three characteristics of pigs.
12	8	4	0	Total Score: /12

Resources:

King-Smith, D. (1993). All pigs are beautiful. Candlewick Press: Cambridge, MA.

Miller, S. (2000). Pigs. Children's Press, Grolier Publishing: NY.

www.porkboard.org (National Pork Board)