

FIVE CREATURES

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by Emily Jenkins, illustrated by Tomek Bogacki
Themes: Animals, Families, Feelings, Science
Grade Level: preK–2 (ages 3-8)
Running Time: 7 minutes

SUMMARY

This program introduces five members of a single family and groups the family members by the traits they share. The groups include type of creature (three humans, two cats), size, hair color, eating habits and bathing preferences. The brightly colored, childlike illustrations show warm, colorful and often funny scenes from family life. Children will enjoy not only getting to know this family but also learning to look at families in unusual new ways.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will watch and listen to a description of an imaginary family and its pets.
- Children will count and group creatures according to their traits and characteristics.
- Children will appreciate the importance of families.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Introduce the title of the program and make sure children can define the word creature. Have

children help you list examples of creatures, making sure that people are included on the list. Explain that in this program they will meet a family that has five creatures. Ask children to watch carefully to learn what the five creatures have in common and how they are different from each other.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Go back over the program, scene by scene, to make sure children understand how each category was counted. For each scene, ask who the program is talking about and have children point to the visual evidence on which each count is based. Talk about the feelings of the people and cats as they cook, read and play together. Have children share their feelings about their own pets and to describe how people and pets help each other and live together.

To develop writing skills, ask children to write reports on the creatures in their own households, including both pets and people. Ask them to make comparisons similar to the ones in the program. Encourage children to illustrate their reports with pictures or photographs.

As part of a science lesson, have children compare the characteristics of people and cats, dogs or other pets. On the chalkboard, draw a grid chart, with names of creatures on one side and types of characteristics (such as number of legs,

types of tails, type of skin covering, food preferences and so forth) on the other. Challenge children to compare as many traits as possible. For more advanced science lessons, have children compare the traits of several different species of dogs, cats, or birds.

As part of a math lesson, make a master list of all the people and pets from all the households represented by your class. Have children make bar charts that show the total and average numbers of men, women, boys, girls, cats, dogs, etc. Older children can also make pie charts that show what percentage of the total population each type of creature represents.

Connect the program to music by singing favorite children's songs that list animals, such as "I Had a Rooster" and "Old MacDonald." Encourage children to write new words for the tunes, describing their own pets and the other creatures in their households.

Other related videos and films available from Weston Woods include:
MILLIONS OF CATS, by Wanda Gâg
ONE WAS JOHNNY, by Maurice Sendak
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