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# IMOGENE'S ANTLERS

Author: David Small

Publisher: Crown

## THEME:

Animals, like people, come in different sizes, shapes, and colors; and these differences make each of them unique.

## PROGRAM SUMMARY:

In *Imogene's Antlers*, narrated by Imogene Coca, a young girl wakes up one morning to discover that she has grown antlers overnight! What transpires is a hilarious adventure showing how her antlers can be put to practical use. LeVar takes a trip to the Philadelphia Zoo where he gets a close-up look at various animals strutting their horns, antlers, feathers, colors, stripes, and a multitude of other "animal fashions," and learns the difference between horns and antlers. A bird specialist introduces viewers to unique features of birds, and participants in the Philadelphia Mummer's Parade display their choreography, music, and ornate costumes.

## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

Before viewing the program, discuss what it would be like to wake up some morning with an elephant's trunk or a camel's hump or some other animal characteristic. What would be the advantages and disadvantages of having this characteristic? Ask students what animal characteristic they would like to have.

In the program, LeVar makes an important scientific statement about animals and their habitats when he states that the way an animal looks says a lot about how and where it lives. Discuss with students factors that determine where an animal lives (i.e., there must be food, shelter, and protection from enemies).

The Mummer's Parade is a New Year's Day tradition in Philadelphia. Discuss other traditional New Year's Eve and Day activities. Invite students to share some of their own family's New Year's traditions.

Discuss the unique features of birds that make them different from other members of the animal kingdom.

Brainstorm alternative endings to the story. What might Imogene wake up with on the day after the peacock feathers?

## CURRICULUM EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

Give each student an outline drawing of a set of antlers (make sure they have several "branches"). Have students draw how they would use the antlers. Display the pictures under the heading, "Here's How WE Would Use Imogene's Antlers!"

The end of the book suggests a continuation of the story. Compose a class story that is the sequel to *Imogene's Antlers*. Take dictation of the students' ideas. Edit the story together and type the text on a sufficient number of pages so that each student may make an illustration for the book. Read the finished book together and place it in the classroom library.

Make a class "peep-hole" book. Have students search nature magazines (e.g., *Ranger Rick*, *Owl*, *National Wildlife*, and others) for pictures of animals that show distinguishing characteristics, such as coat, antlers, etc. Have them cut out the picture and glue it onto an 8½ x 11-inch piece of construction paper. Using a different piece of construction paper (same size) have them cut out a simple shape (circle, triangle, or square) and position it over a portion of the animal picture. (They will need to make sure their peep-hole is lined up over the picture before they cut out the shape.) Other students look through the hole to guess the animal and then lift the top piece of paper to check their guesses. Bind all of the double pages into a book. For a model, these books by children's book author and photographer Tana Hoban are excellent examples: *Look Again!*; *Take Another Look*; *Look! Look! Look!* (all published by Greenwillow).

Brainstorm a list of birds. Write the words on small pieces of tagboard.

Discuss a variety of categories in which the birds can be placed (e.g., water birds; birds that migrate; "backyard" birds; birds that live in the desert, mountains, rain forest, and other habitats; songbirds; etc.), and have students sort the cards into the appropriate groups.

Have students make a mural depicting a parade of animals headed for the library to check out books. At one end of the mural, they will need to draw the library. Have each student draw a picture of an animal (determined by possibly drawing animal names out of a hat) and glue it onto the background in single file. Leave space above each animal's head for a word balloon. In the balloon, have students write the title of a book that their particular animal might enjoy checking out of the library. (**Reading Rainbow** feature and review books might be a good place to start looking for book titles!) For example, a panda might want *When Panda Came to Our House*; a dog might want *Martha Speaks*; a gorilla might want *Koko's Kitten*; and many other ideas.

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Have students draw a portrait of themselves with one animal characteristic, such as antlers, horns, wings, various snouts or ears, feathers or fur, hooves or feet, tails, etc. Have them label the pictures appropriately (e.g., Heather's Ears or Adam's Wings), and display them for all to enjoy.

As a class, compile a list of books about animals that the students enjoy and would recommend to others. Write the titles on charts and have students make borders for the charts with pictures they have drawn or magazine cut-outs of different animals. Ask the library media specialist if these charts can be displayed in the library. Title the charts, "Room \_\_\_\_ Gives These Animal Books Two Paws Up!"

Have students locate information about animals with horns and animals with antlers. Down the side of a chart, have them list all the animals they can find that have one of these two characteristics. Across the top of the chart, title three columns: "Horns," "Antlers," "Interesting Facts." Next to each animal's name, students place an "X" under the appropriate heading of "Horns" or "Antlers." In the third column, they write an interesting fact about the animal that they learned through their research. A fourth column might be added to the chart for a picture.

**RELATED THEMES:**

animal camouflage  
habitats  
hats

**RELATED READING RAINBOW PROGRAMS:**

Program #41 — A Three Hat Day  
Program #11 — Gregory, The Terrible Eater  
Program #14 — The Day Jimmy's Boa Ate The Wash

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

David Small grew up in Detroit, studied art and English in college, and completed graduate study in art at Yale. He made a decision fairly early in life to become an artist and presently does freelance commercial art work in addition to writing and illustrating children's books. His illustrations for *The Gardener*, written by his wife Sarah Stewart, received Caldecott Honor Book status. David and Sarah live in Michigan.

**BOOKS REVIEWED BY CHILDREN:**

GEORGE SHRINKS  
by William Joyce (HarperCollins)

THE TREK  
by Ann Jonas (Greenwillow)

WHEN PANDA CAME TO OUR HOUSE  
by Helen Zane Jensen (Dial)

**SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKLIST:**

CRINKLEROOT'S GUIDE TO KNOWING THE BIRDS  
by Jim Arnosky (Bradbury)

ANIMALS SHOULD DEFINITELY NOT WEAR CLOTHING  
by Judi Barrett, illus. by Ron Barrett (Atheneum)

ARTHUR'S NOSE  
by Marc Brown (Little, Brown)

I TOOK MY FROG TO THE LIBRARY  
by Eric A. Kimmel, illus. by Blanche Sims (Viking)

OWL EYES  
by Frieda Gates, illus. by Yoshi Miyake (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard)

THE BIRD ALPHABET BOOK  
by Jerry Pallotta, illus. by Edgar Stewart (Charlesbridge)

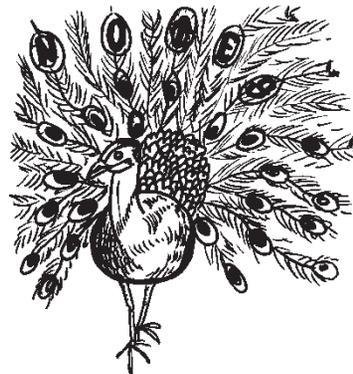
ANIMAL CAMOUFLAGE: A CLOSER LOOK  
by Joyce Powzyk (Bradbury)

HOW THE ANIMALS GOT THEIR COLORS  
by Michael Rosen, illus. by John Clementson (Harcourt Brace)

A BAD CASE OF STRIPES  
by David Shannon (Scholastic)

YOU LOOK RIDICULOUS, SAID THE RHINOCEROS TO THE HIPPO-  
POTAMUS  
by Bernard Waber (Houghton Mifflin)

THE WING SHOP  
by Elvira Woodruff, illus. by Stephen Gammell (Holiday House)



IMOGENE Thanks Lucy. You're really good at that. LUCY Yeah but it just takes so long to dry em. IMOGENE What if you hang them on my antlers? LUCY Great idea Imogene! As Lucy hangs towels on antlers. You can be my new drying rack! I'll be able to do 20 towels at a time! Thanks Imogene. Imogene smiles. Reprint of the original story, including title page, with "Behind the scenes" and "Activities" sections added. Paperback printing by Scholastic Inc. One Thursday Imogene wakes up with a pair of antlers growing out of her head and causes a sensation wherever she goes. Read "Imogene's Antlers" by David Small available from Rakuten Kobo. This whimsical story of a little girl who wakes one morning to discover she has grown antlers has delighted children since it was first published 15 years ago. The perfect Christmas present for any kid looking forward to a visit from Santa's reindeer--or any reader looking for some year-long fun! "Young Imogene wakes up one morning to find she has sprouted antlers. Unflappable, Imogene takes the whole thing in stride; the same cannot be said for her mother, who faints every time her daughter comes into view....The effervescent, softly colored illustrations incorporate all the humor inherent in the tale." -Publishers Weekly , "Small maximizes the inherent humor of the absurd situation. Hilarious, with a subtle lesson in acceptance."--(starred) School Library Journal.