

SOME QUICK IDEAS FOR ACTIVITIES BASED ON LYN HANCOCK'S ANIMAL BOOKS – then think of your own, the scope is endless...

There's a Seal in my Sleeping Bag, There's a Raccoon in my Parka, Love Affair with a Cougar, An Ape Came out of my Hatbox/Gypsy in the Classroom, Tabasco the Saucy Raccoon – (watch their resurrection later as Gypsy the Gibbon, Sam the Seal, Tom the Cougar, Ding Dong the Otter, Scarlett the Macaw, Rocky the Raccoon et al)

- 1. Books Begin in Backyards. Write a story, a daily diary, or captions to a series of photos on what happens in YOUR backyard, either right in front of your home, or a backyard of your choice. Imagine Lyn's animals live in YOUR backyard and describe their adventures in a poem or story.**
- 2. Read or learn about one of Lyn's animals then put them in a story of your own. For ideas, you or your teacher may want to read The Morning of Another Day, the last chapter of There's a Seal in my Sleeping Bag.**
- 3. Pretend that you had one of Lyn's cougars in your home for a day or a week and write the story of what happened. Who did you take? Where did you go? What did you do? Remember the 5Ws and How to help you get from sentence to sentence - Who, Where, When, What, Why, How.**
- 4. Imagine Lyn has gone on a trip. Write her a postcard – in postcard style – with information on your species, photo or illustration, and address.**
- 5. Write a Day in the Life of – one of Lyn's animals. Perhaps you brought one of Lyn's animals to your school.**
- 6. Write a What If story – e.g. What if Rocky the Raccoon had escaped from Lyn on their trip up the Alaska Highway and?**
- 7. Write a What Happened When story – eg What happened between the time Sam got lost on a highway in Oregon and when he ended up in jail?**
- 8. Choose animals you would like to have as friends and prepare a story or a book of your own on their lives.**
- 9. Write an interview story for the newspaper –questions and answers – on one of Lyn's animals? An animal of your choice? An idea of your own? Or stage the interview in pairs in front of your class.**
- 10. In a group where each person has a part to play, prepare a radio broadcast from a certain location e.g. your own radio station, a zoo, a circus, a pet shop, an aquarium, a game farm, the jungle or a boreal forest. Include a weather forecast, news items, interviews, a brains trust of expert opinions on researched animal themes, animal poems, commercials, how-to sessions, a guide to a place, a panel discussion, an In Town Tonight session, songs, music. Listen to the radio and include ideas of your own, the opportunities are endless. Write out your part, tape it. You can do the same at a TV station.**
- 11. Make a tape or video to portray your own community. Study other community profiles or guides first then prepare your own. Send the tape or video to another community and ask for theirs in return.**

12. Keep a journal on what interests you, what you think is cool, what is not, how you feel on certain days, what you like on tv, what you don't, what you learn on a certain day that you would like to remember ... Or keep a journal from the viewpoint of one of Lyn's animals for a day or several days?
13. Write a description of an animal but don't identify it. Let your partner or the class guess what it is.
14. What animal does your partner remind you of – and why? Be respectful.
15. Divide into groups, give everybody a job and prepare a newspaper. Perhaps from a zoo? A circus? A game farm? A forest? An island? A fishing lodge? A hunting camp? Your community? An elders' facility or friendship centre?
16. Remember Tell Me, Grandmother, the book that was written about Sam and Jane Livingston, the first settlers in Calgary, by Lyn and the family of Marilyn Dowler in Gypsy's class? Marilyn was fascinated by the unusual ring on her Dad's finger. It said "In Memory Of" the life and love of his grandparents, Sam and Jane Livingston. Look for something interesting from your home, perhaps a shoebox of photos or clippings, perhaps a piece of clothing, perhaps a memory or story, and ask your family about it. Tell or write a story or a newspaper report or an interview that happens as a result.
17. What are some jobs that need good speaking and writing skills then write or act out little plays at the job site – perhaps at a department store, in an airport, in a court, at a meeting of a club or government office, in an office, in a school, in a tourist location, at a newspaper office, at a bus station. Perhaps you will be an announcer, a receptionist, a politician, a guide, a teacher.
18. Tell or write about a fishing trip, a hunting trip, a boating trip, a camping trip. Perhaps you had one of Lyn's animals along with you.
19. Collect pictures of animals and let them give you ideas for a story.
20. Role play opposing viewpoints. Have a debate between someone who hunts and one who doesn't, someone who has animals in captivity and one who doesn't, someone who believes in catch and release of fish and one who doesn't, someone who eats meat and one who doesn't, someone who wants to poison wolves and one who doesn't, someone who?
21. Work in groups to prepare a class magazine, to publish your own books
22. Collect already published poems and stories about various animals and act them out? Recite them? Mime them? Make a video of them?
23. Prepare a Paper Zoo, Animals from A – Z, or a Noah's Ark. Perhaps one page of writing and one page of illustration. Perhaps each student is responsible for one or two particular animals.
24. Perhaps collect pictures of various animals and write captions or stories on what they are thinking or feeling
25. Listen to such music as Carnival of the Animals or The Sorcerer's Apprentice or Peter and the Wolf and move, mime, write or paint your reaction to the music.
26. Act out animal movements then list verbs to describe them.
27. Describe an animal that sends shivers up your spine, that makes you laugh, that makes you sleepy, that...