

‘Noses’ – A Wildlife Game – KS1, KS2 & KS3

Overview

Description	The game is designed to awaken enthusiasm and act as a ‘hook’ to excite interest in pupils’ learning about the landscape, animals and plants of the Avalon Marshes.
Time	20+ minutes
Curriculum	KS1 science - Simple food chains and habitats. KS2 science - Classify living things; food chains; life cycles of plants and animals; evolution and adaptation. KS3 science – relationships in an ecosystem.
Aim	To facilitate thinking about different wetland plants and animals To engage pupils with the wetlands, through interesting and awe-inspiring facts
Learning	At the end of this activity all pupils should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell at least one fact about a wetland plant or animal
Avalon Marshes resources	Introduction to the Avalon Marshes Pick & Mix – Wonderful Wetland Wildlife; Avalon Marshes Timeline; Awesome Adaptations; Water in the Wetlands; Colouring the Marshes; Creative Response to Landscape; Avalon Marshes Quiz.



Photo: Lynne Newton

Teachers' notes –

'Noses' is a game created and widely used by the internationally renowned American environmental educator, Joseph Cornell, founder of the 'Sharing Nature Foundation'. This activity is an adaptation of that game made by Avalon Marshes volunteer Marian Logie.

The game is designed to awaken enthusiasm and act as a 'hook' to excite interest in children's learning. It can be used as a standalone activity to focus a class, or to complement the other Avalon Marshes resources.

Each animal or plant in this 'Noses' game can be found within the Avalon Marshes landscape. It is hoped that playing the games will encourage children to look more closely and to ask more questions about our amazing surroundings!

'Noses' – the rules

From Joseph Cornell's *Sharing Nature with Children*, adapted by Marian Logie

- 1) I am going to read you ten clues for an animal or plant that lives in the Avalon Marshes and you are going to try and guess its identity. Of course, if you say the answer out loud, it will give the answer away.
- 2) When you think you know what it is, I'd like you to give me a signal. The signal is putting your finger on your nose. This will tell me and everybody else, that you know the answer.
- 3) Let's say, for example, that in the first clue you have spots Oh, it's a baby deer, you think. So you put your finger on your nose. You find out in the second clue that you are swimming to lay eggs. Oops – wrong! So ... pretend to cough and cover your mouth. Pretend that your finger wasn't anywhere near your nose. That way, no one will know that you were wrong!
- 4) Don't worry if you don't know the answer right away; the clues get easier and easier. After I have given the tenth clue, we will all shout-out the answer together on 'one, two, three'.

To end the activity:

Ask your pupils what their favourite animal or plant was in the game and why? What were the best facts? Was there anything that surprised them? Was there anything that they didn't know before today?

Extension:

- Give pupils time to research another Avalon Marshes plant or animals to create their own set of 10 'noses' clues to read to the class.
- Ask pupils to draw their favourite animals or plant. Create a wetland scene on the classroom wall and add the plants and animals to the scene.

Avalon Marshes Wildlife

Noses 1

Beautiful birds - Swan

- (1) My ancestors lived during the last Ice Age.
- (2) I am highly intelligent. I remember who has been kind to me and who hasn't!
- (3) A group of wild birds of my kind is called a herd.
- (4) I have over 2,500 feathers on my body.
- (5) My wings make a loud throbbing sound when I fly: not surprising, as I can weigh over 11kg!
- (6) I have a wingspan of up to 2.5 metres. I can fly at 60mph!
- (7) When I scare away other birds from my young, I flap my wings and call out to my mate – our bird version of a 'high five'!
- (8) I mate for life. As a male, I am a 'cob' and my mate is called a 'pen'.
- (9) I can sleep quite easily, either standing on one leg or lying in the water.
- (10) When I touch beaks with my mate, our long graceful necks make the shape of a heart.

Extra facts

- * All swans belong to the queen. In Tudor times, swans were served up at royal banquets! But now they are protected.
- * The fairy tale about the 'Ugly Duckling' is partly true, since young swans (cygnets), stay grey or brown until they are two years old.
- * Swans at the Bishop's Palace in Wells were taught to ring a bell for food by a bishop's daughter over 150 years ago. Their ancestors still do it today!



Photos: Lynne Newton

Avalon Marshes Wildlife

Noses 2

Ingenious insects - Dragonfly

- (1) I have lived on earth for over 300, 000000 years; long before the time of the dinosaurs.
- (2) My ancestors had wingspans of up to 75cm. They could have easily eaten any small pets!
- (3) I am called 'water dipper' in England and 'old glassy' in China. Ancient Celts knew me as 'big needle of wings'.
- (4) I have three stages in my life cycle; egg, water nymph (for two years) and adult for just a few weeks.
- (5) As a nymph, I am the terror of the underwater world! My huge, hinge fanged jaws shoot out and devour insects, tadpoles and even fish!
- (6) Some might call me rude, as I breathe through my bottom, taking in oxygen through my cleverly designed gills!
- (7) To change into an adult, I crawl out of the water onto a reed stem. My exoskeleton cracks, my stomach unfolds, and then my wings harden and dry in the sun.
- (8) Now I'm an amazingly beautiful adult! My huge eyes, seeing far more colours than humans can, use up to 80% of my brain power! I can see in every direction, except for right behind.
- (9) My four wings help me to fly from side to side, to hover and to fly up and down. I can whiz along as fast as a racing cyclist; 18-30mph!
- (10) My name rhymes with 'wagon' and 'sky'.

Extra facts

- * In some countries, it is considered good luck if a dragonfly lands on your head!
- * As an adult, I catch food with my feet, as I fly at speed. I eat hundreds of insects each day!
- * Engineers are so impressed with my flying skills that they are working to design a dragonfly robot! (A helicopter is a basic human copy of me!)



Photos: 'Emperor' dragonfly by LB Tettenborn; Four 'Four Spotted Chasers' by Lynne Newton

Avalon Marshes Wildlife

Noses 3

Precious plants – Common reed

- (1) In some places people eat my roots and young stems.
- (2) I grow well in shallow water.
- (3) I can grow really tall - sometimes up to 5 metres!
- (4) Lots of birds use me to make their nests on the water's edge.
- (5) Some water creatures, like pond snails, eat my leaves and stems. Birds eat my seeds. In the winter starlings roost on me because they like to eat my seeds.
- (6) I have been used for thousands of years to make waterproof roofs for houses
- (7) People often mistake me for wheat or barley in the autumn and winter, when I change to a sandy brown colour.
- (8) I am used to make parts of some woodwind instruments.
- (9) I have feathery clusters of flowers and seeds that look beautiful blowing in the wind.
- (10) My name rhymes with the words seed, weed, and feed.

Extra facts

- * The word for roofing made from reeds is 'thatch'.
- * Thatch made from reeds from the Avalon Marshes was used on the roundhouses in the Glastonbury Lake Village.
- * In Romania people use reeds to make paper, and in the Philippines people make brooms out of reeds.



Photos: AMLP; AMLP; Joy Russell

Noses 4

Magical mammals – Otter

- (1) The Latin name for my species is *Lutra lutra*.
- (2) I live in fresh water, and I don't like polluted water. I have big lungs so I can stay underwater for four minutes!
- (3) I like to eat fish, and that's why I like living in the Avalon Marshes, where there are lots of fish. Sometimes I eat other water creatures too, but fish is my favourite.
- (4) I am very territorial, meaning that I protect the area of my home, and I don't like others of my species coming in to it. My territory can range up to 25 miles, though more commonly it's around 11 miles.
- (5) My poo is called 'spraint', and I use it to mark my territory.
- (6) I find hollow trees or dense bushes on river banks to make my den which is called a 'holt'. I come out of my holt at night to look for food.
- (7) My young are called 'pups' – they drink milk from their mother for the first year of their lives.
- (8) I am related to weasels and badgers too – but I'm not stripy!
- (9) Sometimes people think I look like a beaver, but my tail isn't flat and wide like a beaver's, and I don't like eating wood! I am also not a rodent, but a beaver is!
- (10) My name rhymes with Harry Potter, James Henry Trotter, and a train-spotter.

Extra facts

- * Instead of blubber otters have very dense fur that traps air to keep them warm.
- * Otter were threatened with extinction in the 1950s. But since the banning of some harmful pesticides, and also a ban on hunting otters, their populations have grown again. They are now found in every county in England.
- * The species of otter found in the Avalon Marshes is the European otter. Collective nouns for otters include 'family' and 'romp'.



Photos: Lynne Newton

Avalon Marshes Wildlife

Noses 5

Astounding amphibians – Common/Smooth Newt

- (1) My Latin name is *Triturus vulgaris*.
- (2) I am nocturnal.
- (3) I am very spotty and have an orange belly.
- (4) I am a carnivore, and love to eat insects, slugs, worms, tadpoles, water snails and shrimp.
- (5) I lay eggs – up to 400 in a breeding season.
- (6) I am an amphibian, meaning that I live in water and on land.
- (7) I could get eaten by predators like fish, grass snakes, ducks and kingfishers.
- (8) My young are called ‘tadpoles’ and they could get eaten by water beetles, dragonfly nymphs and fish.
- (9) My paddle-like tail and 4 legs make me a very good swimmer.
- (10) Often people think I look like a lizard, but a lizard is a reptile and has scaly skin!

Extra facts

- * Common or smooth newts can grow up to 10cm long. Their cousin, the Great Crested Newt, is the biggest newt species in the UK and can grow up to 16cm long.
- * Male newts grow a crest to attract a female, and also perform a courting dance before mating.
- * Newt tadpoles have feathery gills, which is how you can tell them apart from frog and toad tadpoles.
- * Great Crested Newts are fully protected in the UK. It is illegal to kill, injure, capture, disturb or sell them, and also to damage or destroy their habitats. They are present in the Avalon Marshes along with the common newt and palmate newt.



Photos: Creative Commons

Noses 6

Remarkable reptiles – Adder

- (1) I can grow up to 60cm long.
- (2) It is illegal to kill, injure, harm, or sell me.
- (3) I am 'diurnal' (active during the day), and love to bask in the sun.
- (4) Over the winter I hibernate for 5-6 months.
- (5) Females of my species release an odour to attract males. If more than one male is attracted to her, they have a 'dance-off' to compete for the female mate!
- (6) When the female gives birth, between 3 and 18 babies will be born in one litter.
- (7) I am a carnivore, and eat voles, shrews, mice, lizards, newts, frogs, small birds and insects.
- (8) I am venomous, and use my venom to immobilise my prey. I am not aggressive to humans and I shouldn't be feared. I am timid and I only bite humans if someone steps on me or tries to pick me up. My bite can hurt but is not fatal.
- (9) I have zigzags and diamonds all along my back and I am scaly. I shed my skin twice a year.
- (10) My name is derived from an Old English word that meant 'serpent'.

Extra facts

- * Adders can live for up to 15 years in the wild.
- * The adder is the only venomous snake that is native to Britain.
- * Adders do not lay eggs. The young snakes are born about the size of an earthworm, a miniature of the adult.



Photos: Creative Commons

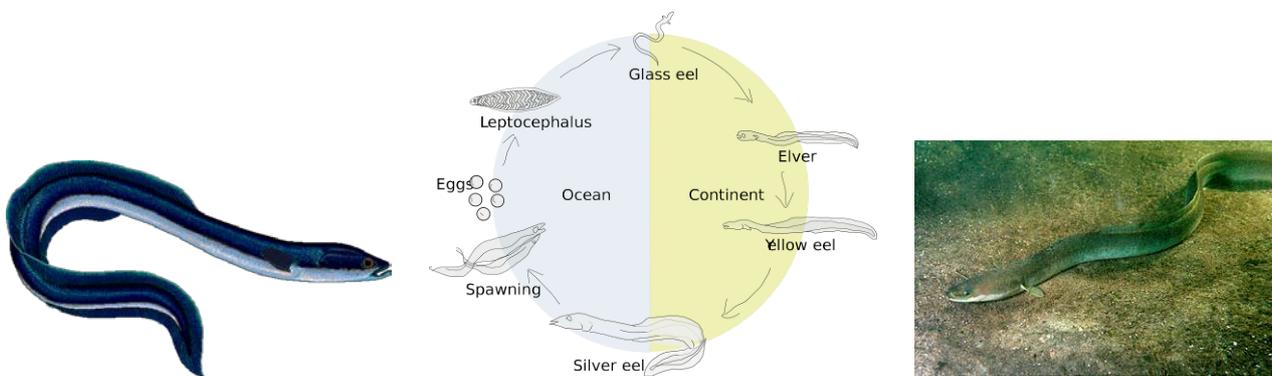
Noses 7

Fantastic fish – (European) Eel

- (1) My Latin name is *Anguilla anguilla*, and I have one of the most mysterious and unusual life cycles of any animal in the Avalon Marshes; of any animal in the world.
- (2) I am critically endangered, and numbers of my species have declined drastically.
- (3) In the early 1900s a Danish researcher identified the Sargasso Sea, near Bermuda (!) as the most likely breeding place for my species.
- (4) I spend most of my time in fresh water, but I do return to the Sargasso Sea to reproduce before I die.
- (5) In Somerset the local term ‘ray-balling’ used to mean going out to catch my species!
- (6) In the East End of London people traditionally eat me in jelly.
- (7) Reasons for the decline in my population include over-fishing, parasites, dams and natural changes in the Atlantic (that I have to cross coming from, and going back to, the Sargasso Sea).
- (8) In the Avalon Marshes conservation organisations put special ladders up for me, so that I can travel between ditches when gates are closed to spot the movement of water.
- (9) My young are called elvers.
- (10) My name rhymes with peel, deal, feel, wheel.

Extra facts

- * Eels spawn their eggs in the Sargasso Sea. Their larvae are called ‘glass eels’, and they begin the 300 day journey to Europe. They arrive in Europe as small, translucent ‘glass eels’. Once they enter fresh water they turn into ‘elvers’ - small versions of the adults – before growing into ‘yellow eels’ then eventually ‘silver eels’. This last stage happens after 5-20 years (!), when they become sexually mature. At this point they can swim all the way back to the Sargasso Sea to reproduce!



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