

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD CSI

AGES

Children 8–12 years

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Children explore their powers of observation and deductive reasoning to expose the truth about Granny! To her horror, Little Red Riding Hood walks into a crime scene in progress. She dons her investigative skills and scientific knowledge to uncover the truth. A similar idea could also be adapted for “Goldilocks and the Three Bears.” Suggested runtime: 60 minutes

As participants arrive, let them explore the crime scene and clues with magnifying glasses. You could also have volunteers in animal costumes as potential suspects. Then go through clue picture cards as a group, giving taxonomic information along the way. Optionally, end the program by reading a CSI-themed version of “Little Red Riding Hood” (such as *Little Red* by Bethin Woolvin or *Little Red Riding Hood* by Jerry Pinkney). Then point participants to the library’s other CSI-themed children’s resources.

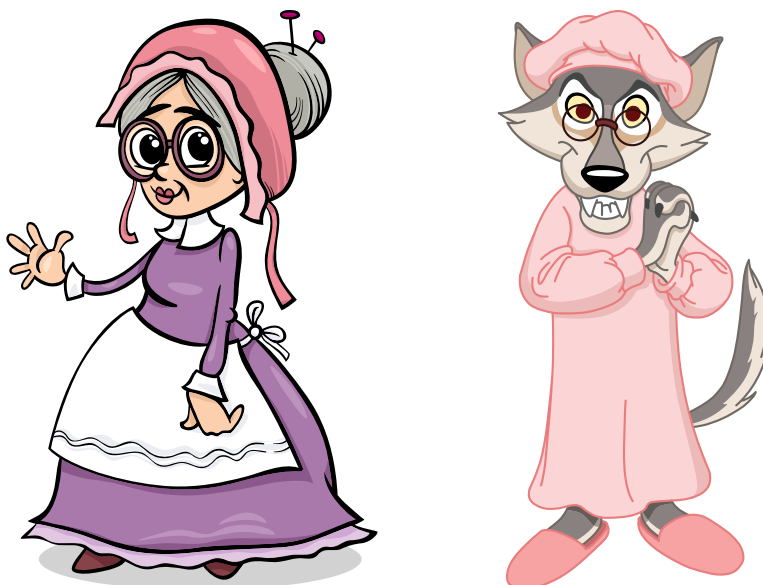


Image source: Shutterstock

Outcomes

- Learn principles of taxonomy
- Learn animal tracking and identification
- Make and record crime scene observations

TIP:

Older children might be bored by already knowing that the wolf killed Granny. To keep the CSI flavor, play the game with a twist: Have the clues point towards another predator (e.g., a bear or a lion) as the culprit.

TIP:

This could also be modified into a passive program. Set clues around the library or on a bulletin board for children to solve at their own pace.

TIP:

Little Red Rhyming Hood (2019) or any Mitzi Tulane: Preschool Investigator book are good options for early literacy variations on this program.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

You will need:

- Clue cards
- A crime scene area or bulletin board
- Crime scene clues (see below)
- Caution tape
- Magnifying glasses
- Taxonomic identification cards
- A digital camera and printer

Set up a crime scene (or a bulletin board) with props to look like Granny's house. Tracks, scratches, and teeth marks are the most important clues for later taxonomic identification. Other clues might include scattered fur, a broken dish, spilled tea, a drop of blood, torn curtains, torn clothes, or an unlocked door left open. Take before and after pictures of the crime scene. Remember the caution tape and magnifying glasses!

For group taxonomic identification, prepare large cards with different animal tracks, ears, eyes, and teeth. Prepare clue cards to go along with each characteristic (i.e., a close-up of claw marks on the door). These might include before-and-after pictures of the crime scene or close-ups of body parts, such as wolf teeth, ears, eyes, and fur (see Printables).

Helpful facts for taxonomic identification:

- You can tell animals apart by just a few characteristics. Animal tracks, eyes, ears, and teeth are used to classify species. It takes generations of gene errors and corrections, with changes to external conditions, for bones or features to change.
- What big feet you have: Wolf tracks show four distinct toes and claw marks. They are between four and five inches long and look similar to dog tracks.
- What big ears you have: Predator ears are directional and usually forward-facing. Animals that hunt using hearing must be able to hear very quiet sounds.
- What big eyes you have: Predator eyes are often placed forward on the face. Prey animals, on the other hand, need a wide range of vision and often have eyes on the sides of their heads. Cat eyes have a vertical iris, but goats have a horizontal iris. Wolves have a circular iris like humans.
- What big teeth you have: Many fossils are identified only by their teeth. Carnivores such as wolves have sharp, pointed incisors for cutting and tearing food. Carnivores also have canines for cutting and scraping. Herbivores have incisors as well as flat, broad molars for grinding and mashing food. Humans have all three types—incisors, canines, and molars.

TIP:

Consider making observation booklets for each participant. These could include spreads of animal tracks, eyes, ears, teeth, and fur; children circle the appropriate clue on each page.

TIP:

For wolf-loving audiences, consider inviting wolf education/resource groups, such as Ohio-based Ironwood Wolves at <http://www.ironwoodwolves.com/>. See Seacrest Wolf Preserve (www.seacrestwolfpreserve.org/resources) or Endangered Wolf Center (www.endangeredwolfcenter.org) for more resources.

UNIQUE SPACE AND PERSONNEL NEEDS

Volunteers could help set up the program or act as animal suspects.

RESOURCES

Little Red Riding Hood Fiction

Honestly, Red Riding Hood Was Rotten! (2011) by Trisha Shaskan (picture book)

Little Red by Bethin Woollvin (2016) (picture book)

Little Red Rhyming Hood (2019) by Sue Fliess (picture book)

Little Red Riding Hood (2007) by Jerry Pinkney (picture book)

Ninja Red Riding Hood (2014) by Corey Rosen Schwartz (early reader)

Red Riding Hood (1993) by James Marshall (picture book)

Taxonomy/CSI Nonfiction

Picture Books

What Do You Do with a Tail Like This? (2003) by Steve Jenkins

Who Was Here? Discovering Wild Animal Tracks (2014) by Mia Posada

Early Readers

Everything Predators (2016) by Hoena Blake

Wanted! Criminals of the Animal Kingdom (2020) by Heather Tekavec and Susan Batori

What If You Had Animal Feet (What If You Had...#2) (2015) by Sandra Markle and Howard McWilliam

Middle Grade

CSI Expert! Forensic Science for Kids (2008) by Karen Schulz

How to Become a Crime Scene Investigator (2008) by Sue L. Hamilton (or any Crime Scene Investigation book)

Nose Knows: Wild Ways Animals Smell the World (2019) by Emmanuelle Figueras and Claire de Gastold

Wild Tracks: A Guide to Nature's Footprints (2008) by Jim Arnosky

GAME/ACTIVITY

Variations on the Theme/Animal Detectives

Picture Books

The Detective Dog (2017) by Julie Donaldson

The Secret Ingredient (2017) by Lauren McLaughlin (or any Mitzi Tulane, Preschool Detective book)

The True Story of the Three Little Pigs (1996) by Joe Scieszki

Whobert Whoever, Owl Detective (2017) by Jason June

Early Readers

Hamster and Cheese (Guinea Pig: Pet Shop Private Eye #1) by Colleen AF Venable

The Lost Treasure of the Emerald Eye (Geronimo Stilton #1) (2004) by Geronimo Stilton

The Nocturnals: The Mysterious Abductions (Nocturnals #1) (2017) by Tracey and Kate Liebman

Spy Penguins (2018) by Sam Hay and Marek Jaguicki

What Really Happened to Humpty? (2010) by Jeannie Franz Ransom

Middle Grade

Dog Man (Dog Man #1) (2016) by Dav Pilkey

InvestiGators (2020) by John Patrick Green

Kat Wolfe Investigates (Wolfe and Lamb #1) (2019) by Lauren St. John

Mr. Penguin and the Lost Treasure (Mr. Penguin #1) (2019) by Alex T. Smith

Owl's Outstanding Donuts (2019) by Robin Yardi

Woof (Bowser & Birdie #1) (2016) by Spencer Quinn

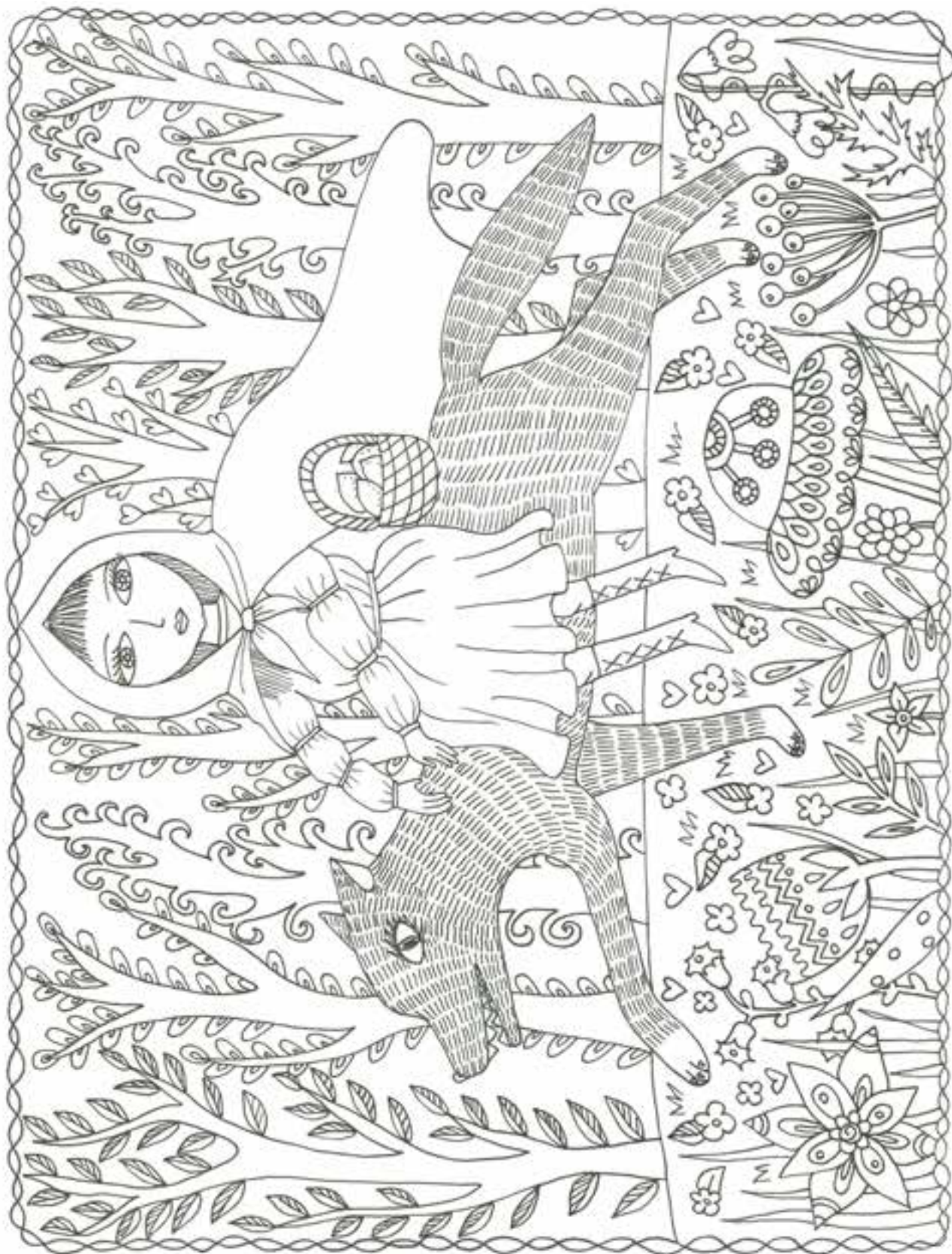
PRINTABLE

Wolf Granny Coloring Sheet



PRINTABLE

Wolf Riding Coloring Sheet



RESIZABLE DOWNLOADS

(SEE ONLINE MANUAL OR USB)

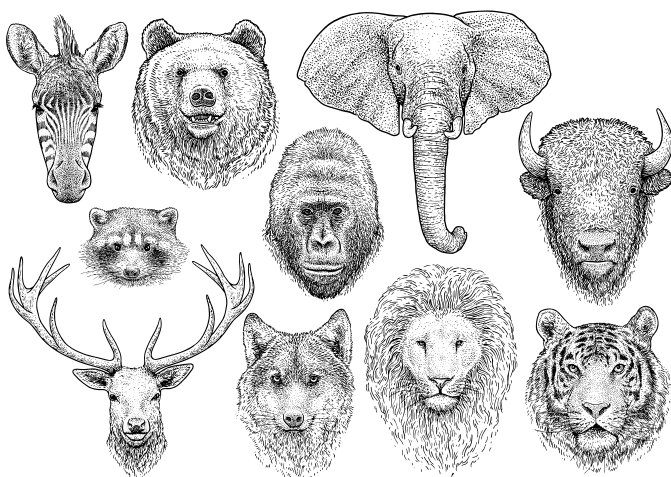
Predator Scratches



Animal Teeth



Animal Suspects



Wolf Granny

