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### Pandas!

*This lesson plan is an introduction to pandas – one of the world's rarest mammals!  
The kids will become familiar with interesting facts about these beloved  
animals, their environmental adaptations and their endangerment status!*

### Material List

- Printouts of pandas – *baby pandas (pink), pandas in their natural habitat, pandas eating bamboo, sixth toe.*
- Speakers – *Kung fu panda soundtrack*
- Markers
- Paper plates
- Scissors
- Black and white A4 sized paper
- Tape (to stick the shapes and make the panda)
- Glue sticks
- Lots of cut-out face shapes
- Space large enough to move/dance
- Small printed map with the countries (China marked)
- Googly eyes
- Bamboo

#### Key Words

- Bamboo
- Omnivores
- Endangered
- Adaptation

### Activities

#### Introduction [15-20 mins]

Does anybody else here loves pandas?

## Activity 1

[Pass around the pictures of the pandas for all the children to see] – *The pictures will be printed and laminated.*

*Divide kids into smaller groups for trivia questions.*

Okay so we're going to do a few Trivia questions so we can see how much we know about pandas! The questions will be multiple choice so raise your hand if you know the answer!

**[Use these worksheets and fill in the blanks with the correct answers]**

- 1) Are giant pandas a type of bear?
  - **Yes**
  - No
- 2) Where do giant pandas live in the wild?
  - The Sahara Desert
  - **The bamboo forests in China**
  - The Amazon Rainforest
- 3) What do you think pandas like to eat the most?
  - **Bamboo**
  - Fish
  - Fruit
  - Bugs
- 4) What is the typical life span for a giant panda in the wild?
  - 120 years
  - **20 years**
  - 2 years
- 5) Do you know which part of the bamboo contains the highest level of protein?
  - The stem
  - **The leaves**
- 6) What color do you think baby pandas are born?
  - Blue
  - **Pink**
  - White
  - Black

→ *Bolded responses are the correct responses.*

Giant pandas are my favorite animals! They live high up in the cool, snowy mountains in the bamboo forest of central China. [Point out on map]

They have bodies covered with fur to protect them from the cold and they have an oil on their fur which helps them to stay dry during the rains. A giant panda's fur is white and black – the black color is mainly around the eyes, ears arms and legs of the panda. Their fur helps them blend into the forests and snow so they can hide from **predators**.

### Activity 2 – [5 minutes]

Pass around the bamboo for them to touch and feel.

*[You can write your observations down in the little box]*

Pandas are **omnivores**, which means that they eat both plants and animals – which include small animals and fish but they much prefer bamboo! The giant panda spends most of its day searching for and eating bamboo and they use the remainder of their day to rest and relax. Unlike other bears, they do not **hibernate** during the winter (they just head down the mountains to warmer temperatures) and since food is an exceptionally big part of their life, they have **genetic adaptations** that allow them to easily look for, consume and digest bamboo all year round. In addition to the standard 5 toes that you see on a bear's paw, the pandas have a “**sixth toe**” which helps them hold the bamboo more easily when eating. *(Show picture of 5 toes of normal bear paw and show picture of 6<sup>th</sup> toe)*. This toe gives the panda the extra strength that it requires to tear the bamboo shoots and leaves from the stems. This is very necessary because 99% of their diet consists of bamboo shoots and leaves. They eat and fill their tummies for nearly 12 hours!

Since the bamboo plant is so durable and hard to chew, the giant panda has developed strong jaw muscles to help it eat the bamboo. Therefore, they need a big jaw and a big head to be able to support this constant chewing for extended periods of time. They have also developed **molars** that are smoother and larger than the molars of normal bears. They don't use their **canines** as much because they don't really engage in **predation** (have to tear through the flesh of other animals).

Unfortunately, there are only about 1000 pandas left in the world – which is a very small number!! This is primarily because of changes in land use and the construction of roads and other such things. Therefore, they are considered “**endangered**” which means their numbers are **depleting** and they need to be protected from **extinction** [occurs when there are no more individuals of that species anywhere – the species has died out].

### Activity 3 – [20 mins]

Now is the best part! We are all going to make our very own pandas with easy materials! Here's what we're going to try to make it look like.

Hand over 2 dessert paper plates, googly eyes, cut out shapes to each child.

Instructions (if necessary):

1. *Use scissors to cut out the shapes on the black paper (Help the kids with this)*
2. *Use the tape to stick the two paper plates together such that they are only slightly overlapping (just close to the edges)*
3. *Use the glue stick and stick the two black ears (bigger black circles) on either side of the head*
4. *Stick the 2 smaller squares (arms) on either side of the paper plate (the bottom one)*
5. *Stick the 2 larger rectangles (legs) on either side of the paper plate (the bottom one)*
6. *Draw and color the 2 black eyes on either side of the paper plate (the upper one)*
7. *Stick the googly eyes on top of these black circles*
8. *Use a marker to draw the nose and smile onto the panda!*



#### **Activity 4 - [5 minutes]**

Have all of you watched kung fu panda? So you must know Po Ping the giant panda! Want to pretend to be pandas and dance for a few minutes?

Speaker: Play kung fu panda soundtrack.

You can dance with your own pandas if you like!!! 😊 - Do your best panda dance!

*Instruction: Connect to speaker (Name: JBL Flip 3)*

*Play last song on Spotify album of kung fu panda – Kung fu fighting*

#### **Conclusion**

Pandas are super cute animals, who eat and sleep – two of the best things in life, don't you agree?! Unfortunately, human beings are taking over a lot of their land/their homes for their own selfish reasons which is damaging these habitats. So, we are losing these beautiful animals too quickly! Think about small things you can do to help save these animals – like not waste paper because bamboo trees are cut for this paper or make small efforts to raise money that you can donate to WWF that is trying to protect these animals. I hope you enjoyed learning about pandas!



**Instructor comments**

*Make sure they enjoy themselves and understand that these animals, like all animals, are precious. The bolded words should be explained in case the children do not know what they mean. Remind them that unfortunately they are threatened by human irresponsibility and behavior. Spread the love.*



## PANDAS

- 1) Are giant pandas a type of bear? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Wild giant pandas live in \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Pandas love eating \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) A typical giant panda in the wild lives for \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_ of the bamboo contain the highest level of protein.
- 6) Baby pandas are born \_\_\_\_\_ in color.



Observation box for  
bamboo



























