

Pe/MOVEMENT activities

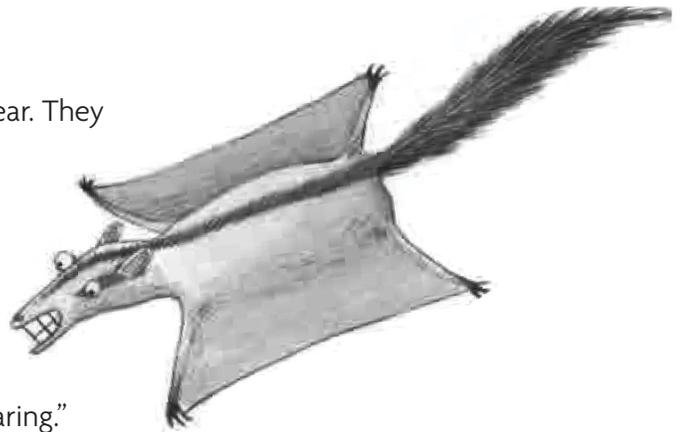
for *Around the World on Eighty Legs*

Arctic Tern Migration

Arctic terns fly great distances, over 40,000 miles each year. They hug the coasts, but also fly long stretches over the open sea, swooping down to the sea to feed. How do they conserve energy?

Run a relay race, with one team in the “Arctic” and another across the field in “Antarctica.”

Try flapping your arms, or holding them out and “soaring.” Which is more tiring?



Hop Like a Kangaroo

How can kangaroos keep going and going and going? Kangaroo legs work like pogo sticks – their tendons act like springs, storing up energy from one bounce to power the next one. Bounding along takes much less energy than hopping and stopping. The kangaroo’s long tail provides balance, helping them bound more quickly.

Your legs are not spring-loaded like a kangaroo’s, but give hopping a try: is it easier to hop and stop, or to keep going?

First try hopping on two feet in an upright position. Then try holding one leg out behind you like a kangaroo’s tail. Is it easier or more difficult?

Try it with a kangaroo stuffed animal in a tote bag. Is it easier to hold it in your hand, or tightly in front of you, like a joey in a pouch?

“Monkey” Bars

Gibbons are actually apes, not monkeys – like all apes, they have no tail. When gibbons brachiate, or swing from branch to branch, they seem to fly through the treetops. Why are gibbons so much more nimble than humans? Their shoulders are incredibly flexible – their long arms can rotate almost all the way around in their sockets. Unlike humans, their wrists also contain ball-and-socket joints, adding for greater range of movement.

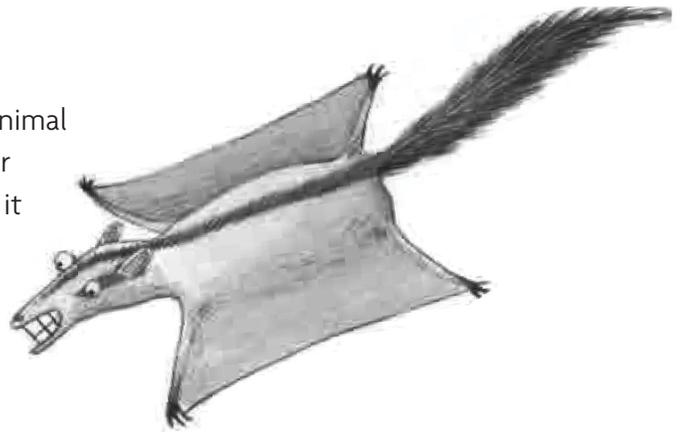
Try relays on the “monkey” bars to imitate the gibbon.

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Host an Animal Olympics Field Day

Hold a field day to imitate your favorite animals. (Some animal feats are harder to replicate than others – the sugar glider leaps 300 ft., and the basilisk runs on top of water.) Make it non-competitive, or award hand-made “medals” in a variety of categories.



Races – Sprint short distances like a cheetah or longer distances like an ostrich.

Penguin Egg Transfer – Emperor penguins do not sit on nests. When a female lays an egg, she must transfer it to the top of her mate’s feet. The transfer is critical, as eggs left on the ice will freeze. The male balances it there, keeping it safe in a brood pouch, while the female goes to the sea to feed. Hold a relay race, waddling with a ball on top of your feet and transferring it to your classmate’s feet without dropping it.

Capture the Egg – In the vein of Capture the Flag, form two teams of skuas who are trying to steal the “penguin egg” from the other team’s side without being caught.

Agouti Nut Hunt – Agoutis plant new Brazil nut trees by scattering seeds around. Hide real Brazil nuts (or plastic eggs) for students to find.

Tug of War – Hyenas have incredibly strong jaws. Play tug of war, using hands instead of teeth.

Obstacle Course – Mouse deer trip through the rainforest on their teeny, tiny legs. Tiptoe through an obstacle course like this diminutive ungulate.

Move Like an Animal

Try this sure cure for the wiggles. Put on some international (or animal-themed) music and move! Call out animals for students to imitate – anaconda, sloth, kangaroo, hippo, etc.

Quetzal Pretzel

Untangle a human knot. Have the class (or groups of 8-10) form a circle. With the right hand, each student takes the hand of another student not standing next to him/her. Repeat with the left hand. Now try to untangle the knot without letting go.