

# Lesson Plan 1

# Introduction to Cheetah

## CRITICAL OUTCOMES

**CO #2:** Work effectively with others as members of a team, group, organization, community

**CO #3:** Organize and manage oneself and one's activities responsible and effectively

**CO #4:** Collect, analyze, organize and critically evaluate information

**CO #5:** Communicate effectively using visual, mathematical and/or language skills in the modes of oral and/or written presentation

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

**LO #2:** The learner will know and be able to interpret and apply scientific, technological and environmental knowledge.

**Sub-skills:**

- Understanding information
- Generalizing from given facts
- Seeing patterns

## ASSESSMENT STANDARD

- Categorizing information to reduce complexity and look for patterns

## TEACHING THE LESSON

Review the basic traits of a cheetah through selecting an activity from the Grade Four Lessons.



### **ACTIVITY 1 – track a cat (adapted from Cincinnati Zoos track my cat activity)**

This activity is designed to reinforce the differences between the different cats as shown in both Table 1: Comparison of General Information for Grade 4 and Table 1: Comparison of General Information for Grade 5. Learners will track the lion, leopard, cheetah, caracal, tiger and domestic cat through a simulated habitat, learning about each individual animal as they progress through the activity. They will also learn how to use and design field guides of their own.

For this lesson the educator needs to adapt the classroom or the outdoor environment into a series of “habitats” suitable to each species of cat. Divide the area (the teacher can decide which size) into four sections designated for a savannah, mountainous area, forest and urban settlement. These can be shown as separated simply by using some string to mark off each area or placing representative props within the areas (to show trees, grass, bushes, rocks etc). Use a sign to show what each area is to represent (savannah, forest etc).

Each cat has six different cards with information about that species. In addition, there are extra cards, which simply state that a cat was seen. These cards can be copied if you choose they act as “blanks” to make it more difficult to find the aforementioned six cards that provide additional information about the cats. In addition, they make the tracking more realistic since many animals are often spotted briefly but cannot be identified. Distribute the Cat Tracking Cards throughout the classroom in their respective habitat area as follows:



Lion, Cheetah, Leopard, Caracal savannah  
Tiger, caracal, leopard forest  
Leopard mountain  
Domestic cat urban settlement

There are three sets of cards for the leopard, two for the caracal and one each for the cheetah, lion, tiger and domestic cat. Place one set in the above areas. It is more fun if the cards are spread out through different levels of the room rather than simply on the floor. For example, lion and leopard can sometimes be found in trees, cheetah will try to hide in the shade of trees and bushes and domestic cats can be found everywhere within the urban settlement.

Divide the class into nine groups. Each group will track one of the cats through one of the environments. Explain that the students are scientific research teams who have the task of finding out more about these cat species. They are going to create a field guide to help themselves and others identify these cats. A field guide is a booklet designed to help identify animals from a picture with a brief description, including habitat, range, diet and behaviour so that the possessor of the guide can learn more about the animal they have seen. Students only know what each cat looks like. Even the name of the cat is unknown. The students need to follow, or track, the cats to discover more about them. Cat Tracking Cards have been distributed throughout the room in the specific location where people have spotted the cats. The goal is for each group to collect all six of their Cat Tracking Cards, identify their cat, and create a field guide using the attached field guide formats.

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### Did you know?

**Lion, Cheetah,  
Leopard &  
Caracal all live  
in a savannah  
environment**

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Assign each group of scientists a different species of cat to track; each group receives an incomplete field guide to their cat, which only gives information about the appearance of the cat, including an outline of its body. As the blanks indicate on the incomplete field guides, the students need to discover their cat's period of activity, diet, social behavior, hunting behavior, reproduction etc. Tracking is carried out in the following way: Students move through the room looking for the tracking cards that match their cat's physical description. Although there is other information on the tracking card, the only way the students can be certain that the card applies to their cat is to match it with the description on the provided Field Guide. Each group should collect six cards specific to their cat. If a student finds a card that describes a cat other than their own they should put it back in the exact same spot where they found it! However, if they find one of the blanks that states an unidentified cat was spotted, they can pick it up.

Once the students have found all six cards, they should come to the teacher. The teacher will help the students identify their cat by name through use of the Table of Comparisons found in Grade Four Lessons on page 7. After tracking is complete and groups are settled, the group must take the information from their cards and fill in their Field Guide for their cat. They must write as neatly as possible so that other students can use this as an identification guide. Explain that hunting behavior will include the time of day, how the cat hunts etc. When each group has finished their Field Guide, have each group present their cat to the classroom. They should explain where their cat lives and what it eats as well as aspects of reproduction, hunting etc. After students present their cats, encourage them to make comparisons between cats. Discuss differences and similarities between some or all of the categories listed in the Comparison Tables found in Grade Four Lessons on page 7. Finally using the groups field guides, compile a class field guide of the cats.





**Field Guide Cards**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Lion</b></p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Cheetah</b></p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Caracal</b></p> 
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tiger</b></p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Leopard</b></p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Domestic Cat</b></p> 

Field Guide Cards: Photostat onto back of silhouette cards.

**Lion set**

<p>A group of adults: both male and female seen lying under a tree</p>	<p>Seen feasting on a kill of large antelope during the night</p>	<p>Group of females seen during the day stalking a kudu, finishing off with a short chase bringing the prey down</p>
<p>Group of females seen with a litter of four cubs, about 6 months old, feeding on a rabbit</p>	<p>Young male of about 5 seen attempting to court a female</p>	<p>Confronted by a large male, growling and hissing</p>





### Cheetah set

Solitary female spotted under a bush	Female with a litter of three young cubs seen chasing down an impala at high speed during the early morning	Young male of about two years seen courting a female
Pair of males seen stalking a springbok during the late afternoon	Confronted a solitary male, which ran away	Mother seen leaving cubs of about 18 months

### Leopard set

Seen with kill up a tree	Seen at night pouncing on a antelope and killing by strangulation	Female seen with two cubs during the day
Young male of about 3 years seen courting female	Mother seen leaving cubs of just under two years of age	Confronted by a solitary male, which attempted to attack





### Tiger set

Solitary male seen stalking and pouncing on a wild pig	Group seen sharing a meal a night	Seen stalking a fellow scientist
Seen dragging a deer under cover at night	Young male of about 5 years seen courting female	Mother seen leaving her cubs of about 2 years of age

### Domestic cat set

Small cat of indeterminate colour seen playing with a mouse	Black and white cat with a litter of four kittens seen playing in a garden	Small ginger tabby seen killing a small swallow
Young male of about one year seen courting female of similar age	Small grey, long haired cat seen playing with a group of children	Small black cat seen pouncing on locusts a suburban field





### Caracal set

Mother seen leaving cubs of one year of age	Seen pouncing on a bird in flight at night	Solitary male seen walking at night
Seen taking baby antelope up a tree	Ran away when approached by fellow scientist	Young male of about 14 months seen courting female

### Incomplete Field Guide Sheets



**Your Cat's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Appearance:** This large cat has a uniform tawny / sandy coat with some having a black tip to their tails. The males have a long mane.

**Habitat:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Diet:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Hunting Behaviour:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Social Behaviour:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Age of Sexual Maturity:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Threat to Man:** \_\_\_\_\_