

Raccoon



Raccoons are likely to be found in children's literature books and discussed in science lessons.

Science

- Use the paper bag puppet or a puppet made of furry fabric to help teach about the animal.
- **Interview** a raccoon puppet.
- Interview the puppet and learn about why it is thought to be mischievous. (Robbing a corn field or eating chicken eggs.)
- Ask the puppet about its family. Raccoons may have from three to six babies in April or May. They are blind and need to be cared for by their parents.
- **Have a raccoon puppet tell** about its life style and family.
- Let the puppet talk about climbing trees and living in dens.
- Have the puppet talk about capturing frogs, crayfish, and other fresh-water animals to eat. Let it demonstrate berry picking, greedily eating corn, or washing its food before eating.
- Let the puppet tell what it is like to be hunted on a moonlight night.
- Learn about what raccoons do at night.
- Learn about why raccoons are thought to be related to pandas?
- Examine how it has been used in nature magazines to relay messages about ecology. Use the puppet to share important conservation ideas with others.
- Use the Internet to learn how raccoons have adapted to urban environments. Find out how people can keep them from doing damage to property.

Art

- Examine photographs of the animal to learn how to draw or color a picture or puppet so it looks realistic. Examine stylized versions drawn for popular children's nature magazines. Let them make their own stylized versions.

Social Studies

- Examine the use of raccoon fur throughout history.
- What political significance did the animal have? In early America it was the emblem of the Whig party.