

Swift Of Foot And Flipper



Objectives

Students will compare the speeds of aquatic animal Olympians, human Olympians, and themselves.

Materials

- animal cards
- pencils
- chalk board and chalk
- access to library or Internet to research aquatic animal and human athletic records

Action

1. Pick two of the aquatic animals and write their speeds on the board. The students should look at the speeds and determine which animal is fastest and which is slowest. Do this for all the animals. Which animal is the fastest/slowest?
2. Write the human athletic records in swimming and running on the board. Which aquatic animals swim faster and run faster than humans? Which animals don't?
3. Coordinate with your school's Physical Education teacher to have the students perform the 100-meter run. If your school has access to a pool, have students perform the 50-meter freestyle swim. Ask for student volunteers to record the times of each runner and swimmer.
4. Compare the class times to those of the aquatic animal Olympians and the human Olympians by creating a chart on the board. Ask students about the adaptations of both animals and humans which make them run or swim in different ways and at different speeds.

Deeper Depths

The Olympic diving platform is 10 m high. Have students look up animal diving records (usually measured from the water's surface downward). Are the dives deeper or shallower than 10 m?

Select student volunteers to show how different aquatic animals move in a game of charades. Make a card for each of the animals listed. Give each volunteer one animal card and ask him/her to act out his/her animal for the class, one at a time. The class will guess what type of animal each student is acting out. After the animal is named, ask the class to describe how the animal moves when it's traveling and hunting. For example, killer whales swim and dive; penguins swim, dive, and run; sharks swim; sea lions swim, dive, and run.