Down on the Farm

Sorting out the Animals

Primary learners can sort animals into 2 categories in this activity: those found on a farm (domesticated) and those not found on a farm (wild).

Materials Needed
o Paper
o Pen, pencil, crayon
o Scissors
o Old magazines

Grade Range
Pre-K

Topics/Skills
Animals; Farming; Sorting & Classifying

Learning Standards
NGSS: Biological Diversity

Duration
20 – 30 minutes

Prep Time
10 - 15 minutes

Activity Challenge
Sort animals into categories based on type.

Preparation
1. Gather materials and select workspace. Workspace should have a smooth surface, such as a table, countertop or floor.
2. Draw a table on a piece of paper with 2 columns. Write "Farm Animal" at the top of one column, and "Not Farm Animal" at the top of the column. Use words, pictures and/or shapes. Examples could be the word "cow", a drawn or cut-out picture of a cow, and/or paper cut into the shape of a cow. See the next page for an example table.
3. Look through magazines and cut out pictures of the animals found. If magazines are not available, draw and label different animals on paper and cut them out.
4. Optional: Write the classification: (farm, not farm) on the back of each animal shape so that students may check their work.

To Do
1. Lay out the animal pictures or shapes on a table or floor alongside the prepared table.
2. Sort the animals into the 2 columns, guessing when not sure where they best belong.
3. Place the animals in the correct location in the table according to their classification. Determine correct locations via a written code or verbal instructions.

Observations
What type of animals are domesticated? Why are these animals domesticated?

Extensions
To make this activity challenging for more advanced students, include animals that are unusual or might spark questions or conversations, such as the camel (non-local domesticated animal), the ostrich (recently cultivated for meat), and the black bear, (a common zoo animal, but not domesticated). Add another category for pets. Are there any animals that may belong in more than one column?

The Content behind the Activity

Humans differ from other animals in that they make large changes to their environment to suit their needs; this includes cultivating and domesticating plants and animals. In cultivation, people deliberately sow or raise species that are, or were, once wild. Domestication occurs when humans selectively breed a plant or animal, resulting in offspring with genetic traits selected to benefit humans. Animal domestication began about 15,000 years ago, around the same time that farms and towns also first appeared, for example, in Jericho and Catal Huyuk). People have domesticated an amazing array of animals throughout history for transportation, moving equipment or other objects, food, and other products (hides, wool, dung). The first domesticated animal was the dog, a mutually beneficial partnership for raising food animals and for safety.

Example of Simple Table

Sample Animal Shapes or Pictures	
Farm Animals	**Not Farm Animals**
dog	alligator
cow	bear
pig	zebra
turkey	tiger
goat	monkey