


TEACHERS ACTIVITIES**Theme:**


Sometimes “Mama do allow”...and sometimes “Mama don’t,” but the real key to success is dependent on the amount of time and effort we invest in pursuing a chosen interest.

Topics For Discussion:


Have the class brainstorm lists—both home and school—of things they are not allowed to do. Discuss reasons why these are items are on “don’t allow” lists.

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Discuss the importance of practice in learning how to play a musical instrument. Extend the discussion to include any skill one might be trying to master (e.g., a sport, dancing, reading, drawing, cooking, etc.)

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In the story, no one liked the Swamp Band’s music except the alligators. Talk about why the alligators wanted the band to play at their ball.

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Before viewing the program, see how many different kinds of music the students can think of. List their ideas on the board. Discuss what each type of music they mention sounds like and whether it is usually played loudly or softly. After they watch the program, ask if they want to add other types of music to their list.

Curriculum Extension Activities:

Have students do some research on alligators. In what kind of habitat do they live? What do they eat? To what animal group do they belong? How are their young born? What do they look like? What are their enemies?

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Locate the Mississippi River on a map of the United States. Have a group of volunteers find information about the Mississippi, such as how long it is, why it is an important river in history and in the present, etc.

With students working in small groups, use manipulatives to demonstrate the mathematical concept of doubling. Pinto beans or dried peas work well. Provide containers of varying sizes, such as nut cups, margarine tubs or other containers that come in 8-ounce and 16-ounce sizes, plastic quarts, half-gallon, and gallon containers. Designate the number of times to double the items. (For example, doubling beans ten times is 512 beans.) Students will need to estimate the size of container they need to hold the items they are doubling. At some point, they may decide to double the containers rather than individual beans. Read *One Grain of Rice* by Demi (Scholastic) or *The King's Chessboard* by David Birch (Dial) to accompany this activity. "ama Don't Allow" is an old traditional song. Obtain a recording and sing the song in the classroom. It is also ideal for having students make up additional verses. They might use the list of "don't allows" they generated above.



Invite someone who plays a saxophone into the classroom to demonstrate how to play the instrument and play some tunes for the students.



Enlist the aid of the music teacher in helping the students understand various rhythms. Have them snap, clap, or tap out the rhythms of different types of music.



Have students experiment with making their own mouthsounds. Revisit the segment in the program featuring Fred Newman's mouthsounds. After they have had the opportunity to practice, tape record the sounds they generate so they can listen to their creations.



The characters in the book, *Mama Don't Allow*, speak in word balloons. Obtain a copy of the book and show the students how the word balloons are incorporated into the illustrations. Provide students with strips of construction paper (6 x 18 inches) and have them make a four-frame cartoon strip, featuring the characters from the story.



Have a class talent show. Students who play musical instruments or dance can perform. Others can sing, tell jokes, read poetry, do puppet shows, do magic tricks, and a variety of other talent acts. Have students make posters and invitations advertising the show. Invite parents, school personnel, and other classes to see the show (more than one performance may be necessary). In planning the show, stress that all of us have talent.

With the help of the library media specialist, have students gather some resources that show pictures of swamps. Ask them to pay special attention to the animals and plants that live and grow in a swamp. Have students make a mural of a swamp, using the pictures they found as models. Provide construction paper and other materials, and encourage them to think of ways they might make the mural three-dimensional.

SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKLIST:

ALL ABOUT ALLIGATORS
by Jim Arnosky (Scholastic)

NEVER KISS AN ALLIGATOR!
by Colleen Stanley Bare (Cobblehill/Dutton)

WILLIE JEROME
by Alice Faye Duncan, illus. by Tyrone Geter (Atheneum)

LITTLE LIL AND THE SWING-SINGING SAX
by Libba Moore Gray, illus. by Lisa Cohen (Simon & Schuster)

SPOONBILL SWAMP
by Brenda Z. Guiberson, illus. by Megan Lloyd (Henry Holt)

WHO LIVES IN—ALLIGATOR SWAMP?
by Ron Hirschi, photos by Galen Burrell (Dodd, Mead)

BEN'S TRUMPET
by Rachel Isadora (Greenwillow)

GERTIE AND GUMBO
by Matt Novak (Orchard)

IF I ONLY HAD A HORN: YOUNG LOUIS ARMSTRONG
by Roxane Orgill, illus. by Leonard Jenkins (Houghton Mifflin)

CHARLIE PARKER PLAYED BEBOP
by Chris Raschka (Orchard)

SATCHMO'S BLUES
by Alan Schroeder, illus. by Floyd Cooper (Doubleday)

WILLIE BLOWS A MEAN HORN
by Ianthe Thomas, illus. by Ann Toulman-Rothe (HarperCollins)

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Alligator Two Step



Key Words: alligators, reptiles, dinosaurs, movement

Concept: Reptiles walk with their legs held out to the side of their body.

In this episode, alligators remind LeVar of dinosaurs. Alligators and dinosaurs are similar in many ways, but one important way in which the two are different is in how they walk. Reptiles walk with their legs held out to the side of their bodies, but dinosaurs walked with their legs directly under their bodies, similar to how dogs or cats walk. Because dinosaurs walked in this way, their legs were able to carry greater body weight.

Materials: Oil-based modeling clay, toothpicks.

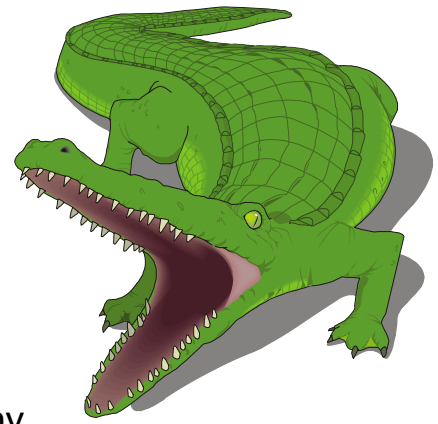
1. Have students roll a stick of clay into a cylinder shape that is about 4" long x 1" in diameter.
2. Ask them to imagine that the clay cylinder is the body of a dinosaur. Have them insert four toothpick legs into the clay, positioning the legs directly under the body of the dinosaur. Stand the models up on a flat surface.
3. Now ask them to imagine that the clay cylinder is the body of an alligator. To make it an alligator, the four toothpick legs must be moved to the sides of the clay cylinder. Have them stand the model up on a flat surface and describe what happens. (*With the legs in this position, the model will not be able to support the weight of the clay body.*) Ask students to reduce the size of the clay cylinder until the model can be supported with toothpicks in this position.

Extension: Have students mimic a dinosaur by walking on all fours with their legs and arms directly under their body. Then ask them to mimic an alligator walking on all fours with their arms and legs held out to side of their body. Ask them to describe how each position feels. (*It will be much easier and less awkward to support their weight with their arms and legs under their body than with them out to the side.*)

The Point Of Teeth

Key Words: alligators, teeth

Concept: Alligators have cone-shaped teeth.



The naturalist, Heather Burden explained that alligators can replace lost teeth—some have as many as 3,000 teeth in a lifetime! One reason alligators need to replace so many teeth is that they use their teeth for grabbing and holding onto their prey. They don't use their teeth for chewing food as we do. In fact they generally swallow their food whole or in large chunks. Their teeth are shaped like tiny cones—a great shape for grabbing and holding on.

Materials: Large tube-sock, plastic bags, string, index cards cut into strips that are 1" x 3", tape, scissors.

1. Have students compare the ability to grab and hold things with pointed and flat teeth shapes. They can begin by making something to grab. Fill a sock with plastic bags, and tie the end closed with string.
2. To make pointed teeth, have each group of students make 8 cone shapes.
 - Hold a strip of paper vertically.
 - Fold the strip diagonally in the middle to make an "L" shape.
 - Fold the bottom of the "L" behind and over to make a cone.
 - Tape the edge down to secure the shape.

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