

Dr. Dan Dombrowski, Veterinarian

North Carolina Museum of Natural Science

Podcast length: 16:14



LESSON PLAN

SYNOPSIS

The Walking Classroom's Laura Fenn gets to know [Dr. Dan Dombrowski](#), Chief Veterinarian at the [North Carolina Museum of Natural Science](#). Dan discusses what a veterinarian does at a museum and the observation and learning opportunities for the public.

VOCABULARY

Review key vocabulary (included definitions are limited to the context of today's podcast)

- **vertebrate:** (noun) an animal of a large group distinguished by having a backbone or spinal column; includes mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fishes.
- **invertebrate:** (noun) an animal lacking a backbone, such insects and crustaceans.
- **anesthetize:** (verb) to administer an anesthetic so that no pain can be felt during procedures
- **symmetrical:** (adjective) having halves or sides that are the same

QUESTIONS FOR THOUGHT & DISCUSSION

1. Dr. Dombrowski explained that a big part of his job at the museum is making sure that new animals coming into the museum and animals leaving the museum are healthy. Why would it be important for him to make sure they are healthy before entering or leaving the museum's collection?
2. Dr. Dombrowski talked about the viewing window, which is an opportunity for the public to watch operations and check ups on animals in the collection. Why is it important or valuable for the public to be able to view what the veterinarians and scientists are doing?
3. Dr. Dombrowski talked about the importance of having good observational skills so you can notice when animals are sick and not feeling well. He shared that even people with no scientific training can notice a lot. What does it mean to have good observation skills? Look out the nearest window. What kind of observations can you make about the world you see outside?

BOOK SUGGESTIONS

Consider reading aloud or making some of these titles available to students to reinforce and extend some of the concepts covered in today's podcast.

[I Want to Be a Veterinarian](#) by Stephanie Maze

This book provides a great overview of what a variety of veterinarians do, where they work, and a two page spread on famous veterinarians.

[Animalium](#) by Jenny Broom

Take a look at the animal kingdom represented by more than 200 specimens illustrated with great detail and accompanied by informative text. This book introduces students to the variety and diversity of animals around the world.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

The following activities are ways to build on and extend some of the topics discussed in the podcast. We strongly encourage you to always preview videos prior to showing them to your students.

[The Science of Symmetry](#) <http://bit.ly/1JSavP4>

Video from TED-Ed

This video explains different kinds of symmetry (~5:00)

[Vertebrates Study Jams! Slideshow](#) <http://bit.ly/1KYutq1>

from Scholastic

[Invertebrates Study Jams! Slideshow](#) <http://bit.ly/1LUrPCs>

from Scholastic

[Mystery Bags to Develop Observation & Inference Skills](#) <http://bit.ly/1dOQjiH>

from Scholastic

This science activity requires students to hone their observation and inference skills as they attempt to figure out what is sealed in the “mystery bags”. They can use sound, touch and smell to help them make inferences

[MedMyst Animal Alert Game](#) <http://bit.ly/1KRXiG9>

from BrainPOP

Students try to identify an illness impacting people and animals in a tropical region and stop a major outbreak.