



Dress up a Sheep

WHAT'S THE Big Idea? Community

Materials

Gather the following materials into a large bag:

- **udder:** butter or cottage cheese container with 2 baby bottle nipples for the teats
- **horns & ears:** headband with cardboard ears and horns attached
- **hooves:** 4 socks with hoof prints on the bottom
- **stomachs:** four under-inflated balloons tied together
- **tail stub:** cardboard with cotton balls glued on to it

continued

Enduring Understandings

- Communities are made up of the people, animals, and plants that live in them.
- Many domestic animals provide food or fibers for humans.
- Sheep are one type of domestic animal raised by humans.

Objectives

- Children show interest and curiosity in learning the parts of a sheep by dressing up one of their classmates.
- Children consider the similarities and difference between human bodies and sheep bodies.
- Children develop an awareness of the relationship between sheep and humans.

Directions

1. Ask students to imagine a farm community. What animals might they find there? Explain to the children that they are going to dress up

Vocabulary (Bah, Ram, Ewe)

Udder: a female sheep has an udder that produces milk after she has had her first lambs. The udder has two teats from which the lambs nurse.

Teats: Any of the projections from the udder through which milk is discharged.

Tail: All sheep are born with tails, but most farmers “dock” or remove them when the lambs are about one week old.

Horns & ears: Both male and female sheep are born with horns (unless they are a polled breed), and the farmer has the veterinarian remove them—many farmers do this themselves (called dehorning). Sheep have ears to help them hear.

Hooves: A sheep has four legs with hooves on the bottom. Each hoof has two toes.

Stomachs: Unlike humans, a sheep is a ruminant, which means it has four parts to its stomach to help it digest its food.

Fleece: A sheep grows thick fur called fleece on its body. Farmers can shear off the fleece and turn it into wool yarn or felt. This is usually done in the spring. The sheep’s fleece grows thicker in fall to provide warmth in winter.



one of their classmates as a sheep. Ask them to try to imagine what a sheep looks like and what special parts it has. What makes a sheep different from other animals?

2. Pick a volunteer from the class to be dressed up. Have the child stand somewhere everyone can see.
3. Ask the children to suggest how to make the volunteer look more like a sheep. As they come up with ideas, pull the appropriate prop from your bag, and dress up the volunteer. Alternatively, if the children are not sure of a sheep's anatomy, have a child pull a prop from your bag and guess what it might be, then dress up the volunteer.
4. After you have dressed up the volunteer with all the sheep props, ask the children what they could add to make the volunteer look even more like a sheep (e.g., eyes on each side of their head, teeth, etc). Discuss how different we are from sheep. How are we similar?
5. Process and reflect on the experience with the children by engaging in a conversation guided by the discussion questions.

Discussion Questions

- How are our bodies similar to a sheep's body? How are they different?
- Where do sheep live?
- Why do farmers keep sheep?
- Who else lives in a community with sheep?
- What role do sheep play in our community?

Materials *continued*

- **fleece:** Sheepskin or a wool sweater (Check online for sources for buying sheep fleece, e.g., www.pitchfork.org sells raw, dirty fleece; www.zwool.com sells clean roving for spinning or felting batt for felting projects.)

Extensions

- **Emma's Lamb** by Kim Lewis
- **Feeding the Sheep** by Leda Schubert
- Sing sheep songs, "Mary Had a Little Lamb," or "Baa, Baa Black Sheep."
- Combine this activity with "Farm Barnyard," p.111.
- Visit a sheep farm or have a sheep farmer visit your class.

