Whole Group Dramatization ~ Polar Bears Past Bedtime

Adaptation in the Arctic Tundra Part II

Visualize...
- The Arctic tundra. What can we see? What can we hear?
- I see … (teacher repeats some of the things she hears children say to each other and models the kinds of things she wants them to imagine) … ice and snow all around, an arctic wolf and an arctic fox, a snowy owl and polar bears.

Dramatize:
- Let’s pretend that we are a carnivore or an omnivore in the Arctic tundra. What carnivores or omnivores live in the Arctic tundra? Did you think we could be an arctic wolf or an arctic fox or a snowy owl or a polar bear? All of these arctic animals change to white in the winter. Do you remember why? Yes, they are the color of the snow so they can sneak up on their prey. Let’s pretend that we are a snowy owl, spread your wings, fly and look for food. Do you see something? Tell your friend how a snowy owl uses his beak and talons. Yes, he uses them to capture his prey and tear his food. Then he swallows them whole. Show me how you look when you pretend to swallow your food whole like the snowy owl.
- Arctic foxes, wolves and polar bears all have… paws. Let’s pretend we are a polar bear walking on big furry paws. We have to go out in the water to look for some prey and our webbed feet help us swim. Ahhh! There is a seal our favorite food. If we find one how will you eat it? What will you bite with? Yes, you will capture and bite through with your canine teeth and use your sharp incisors to tear off pieces of meat and blubber.
- There is a hungry arctic wolf. How do you walk like a wolf? On your paws? Are your claws out? What kind of teeth does your wolf have? Pointy canine, sharp incisors, molars and a strong jaw. What is your favorite herbivore to capture? We don’t see any caribou here. I guess we will just have to eat those berries over there.
- Look! An arctic fox. He is jumping up in the air? What does he hear? A vole or a lemming? Let’s jump up and pounce on the ground with our front paws to break the ice just like the arctic fox. Did you capture it or did he get away in his hole in the ground? An arctic fox has incisors, canine, premolars and molars so he can eat meat and some plants so he is an… omnivore. Snowy owls, arctic wolves and arctic foxes and polar bears are all… carnivores. So that means they eat meat. Do you think they find a lot of food in the snow and ice?

Extend:
Children will make another page for their Arctic Riddle book. Individual or pairs will draw and write riddle clues focusing on camouflage, feet, teeth and adaptations for a carnivore. They or their partner will draw and write the answer including the animal’s name and its unique characteristics and add it to the herbivore riddle page.
Planning for Play: With children, brainstorm the materials that will help them play. Some suggestions:

Blue paper and white paper children use to represent water, ice and snow, small stuffed animals, puppets or drawn and cut out paper arctic animals.