



## Animals Mysteries and Fun Facts

### Materials:

Tape measures, rulers, glue sticks, markers, scissors, copies of the gorilla hand from *Actual Size*, blank paper for kids to trace hands, dimes, plastic egg or hardboiled egg

Start with ***Where in the Wild* by David Schwarz**—encourage kids to find the camouflaged animals.

Next get ready to read ***Actual Size* by Steve Jenkins**.

Measure the tallest kid and the smallest kid at the Read-Aloud for comparison. Use masking tape on floor to mark their height. (You can also measure them as they arrive to the Read-Aloud and are getting their name tags)

Give kids a copy of the gorilla hand (copied from a page in *Actual Size*), talk about how big it is in relation to their own hand, and have them measure it. Have them trace around their own hand. Have a volunteer cut it out if kid scissors are not available. Then have each child glue their hand on top of the gorilla hand for comparison. Have them measure their own hand too.

Pass around dimes for the kids to feel their weight. The animal on the title page of *Actual Size*, the pygmy shrew, weighs less than a dime. Pass around the egg for kids to compare with the ostrich egg picture. Measure the two eggs and compare.

Then, read *Actual Size* and as you are reading, have kids and volunteers use a tape measure to show how big or small things are, and mark those sizes on the floor with tape too. You don't have to read the whole book—you can jump around and choose different animals the kids are interested in.

Then measure out some of the bigger or smaller animals in the book and mark them on the floor. Then see how many kids will fit in a bigger animal—like an Alaskan Brown Bear—or how many of their hands or feet would fit in a smaller animal like a giant moth.

**\*\*Be sure to remove all the masking tape from the floor at the end of the Read-Aloud.**

If you still have time, invite kids to divide up with volunteers based on what they want to do:

- Little kids can guess which animals are being described in ***Is Your Mama a Llama?*** by Deborah Guarino or ***Who is the Beast?*** by Keith Baker. Get little kids to act out the animals' movements or make animal sounds. *Who is the Beast?* has a snail hidden in every double-page spread. ***Life Size Zoo*** by Teruyuki Komiya is great for seeing how big or small animals are with the younger kids.
- ***Animalia*** by Graeme Base: kids can search the pictures for things that start with each letter
- Use reference books or Steve Jenkins books to look up animals kids are interested in. Many Jenkins books have extra info about the animals in the back.
- Do "Mad About Animals" Mad Libs