

JOJO'S BACKYARD SAFARI



## JOJO'S BACKYARD SAFARI

*Recommended for ages 3-6*

*PreK to Grade 1*

### **A Reproducible Learning Guide for Educators**

This guide is designed to help educators prepare for, enjoy, and discuss **JOJO'S BACKYARD SAFARI**. It contains background, discussion questions, and activities appropriate for ages 3-6.

**Programs are made possible, in part, by generous gifts from:**

**The Nora Roberts Foundation**  
**Smithsonian Women's Committee**



Smithsonian Associates

[www.DiscoveryTheater.org](http://www.DiscoveryTheater.org)

## ABOUT THE PLAY

It's time for high adventure as Jojo goes on the lookout for all kinds of fascinating flora and fauna in the wilds of his very own yard. What will he find hidden in plain sight? Come along on the trek as we learn, create, and play in this musical mini travelogue about the **hidden natural world** close to home.

These learning plays were created as part of in-school residencies promoting **creative approaches to curriculum elements** in early childhood classrooms. We are proud to present them now at our museum theatre location at the Smithsonian to encourage everyone to "get in on the act."



Playing 'pretend' as characters in stories encourages **sequencing** (*What comes next?*), **verbal skills** and **vocabulary** (*What color flowers? Why did it happen like that?*), **math** (*How many cupcakes? Let's count the pennies we need to buy the balloon!*), **pre-science** (*What do we need to get these clothes clean?*) and **problem solving** (*Oh no! How can we help?*). Each of these skills is highlighted in plays that surround different themes (zoos, field trips, veterinarians, habitats, etc.).

## CREATE YOUR OWN BACKYARD ANIMALS!

What kind of animals would you see in your backyard? Let's try a butterfly!

### MATERIALS

- A square sheet of paper, we used origami paper, but printer quality paper or thinner works great too.
- Scissors
- A piece of ribbon, wire or thread

### DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by cutting your square piece of paper in half
2. Take one piece and fold it in half LENGTH ways.
3. Open it up and fold in the corners, so you have a rectangle with pointy ends.
4. Fold in half again – colored side facing out.
5. Now you need to "concertina each side". Our concertinas are approximately half a centimeter wide.
6. Now take the second strip of your origami paper and start folding it into a concertina across the short width.
7. Fold both pieces in half.
8. Tie with a ribbon or thread and secure.



Find this activity and more online at: [www.redtedart.com/easy-paper-butterfly/](http://www.redtedart.com/easy-paper-butterfly/)

## HUNGRY? LET'S MAKE SOME TIGER CUPCAKES!

### INGREDIENTS

- White cake mix (of your choice)
- 1 Tablespoon cocoa powder
- Black food dye/gel
- Orange food dye/gel
- Plastic ziploc bags
- Cupcake Liners
- Crushed Oreos
- Chocolate frosting
- Gummy worms



### DIRECTIONS

1. Mix your white cake batter and divide it in half. Add orange food coloring to one half until the desired shade of orange, then add cocoa powder and black food coloring to the other half until black.
2. Put the batter into two separate Ziploc bags and cut a tip. Once the liners are in the pan, start by piping orange batter into the center of liner.
3. Pipe black batter into the center of your orange batter, then alternate these steps until your liner is 2/3 filled.
4. Bake according to the directions on the box. Once cool, either eat or decorate!
5. Put chocolate frosting and crushed Oreos on top to make "dirt"
6. Add gummy worms on top for an extra treat!

## SMITHSONIAN CONNECTION

### National Postal Museum's Beautiful Blooms



Visit the virtual exhibit.

[Beautiful Blooms | National Postal Museum](https://postalmuseum.si.edu/exhibition/beautiful-blooms)

[https://postalmuseum.si.edu/exhibition/beautiful-](https://postalmuseum.si.edu/exhibition/beautiful-blooms?utm_source=si.edu&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=MyVisitSI)

[blooms?utm\\_source=si.edu&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_campaign=MyVisitSI](https://postalmuseum.si.edu/exhibition/beautiful-blooms?utm_source=si.edu&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=MyVisitSI)



## EXPLORE...

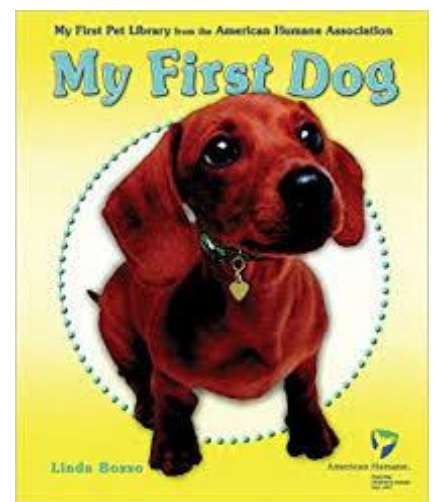
Explore the National Geographic Kids website, you can see all of the different kinds of animals you can find in your backyard and in the wild! You can look up the grey squirrel, the skunk, or the hedgehog! Click on any animal you want and it will tell you tons of cool facts including where they live, what they eat, and if they are endangered!

Check it out at: [www.kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/](http://www.kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/)



## READ...

This collection of "My First Pet" books from the American Humane society also has a bilingual option! Learn how to choose, take care of, groom, and keep your new friend healthy in your home!

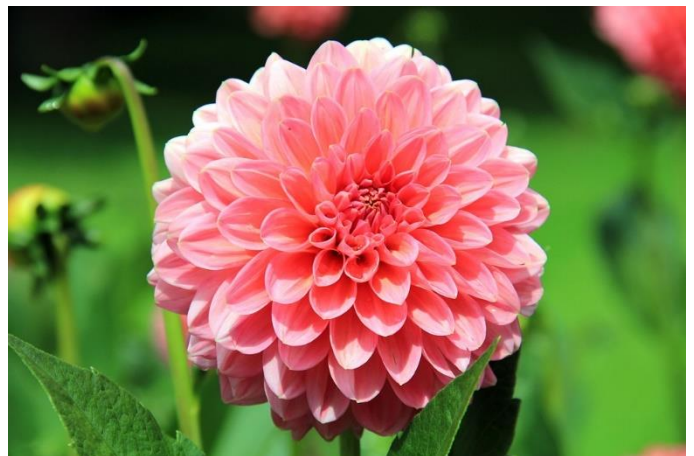


## WATCH...

Journey through a blooming garden of dancing flowers in this incredible four-minute short film. Visual effects artist and filmmaker Jamie Scott spent three years shooting the stunning springtime imagery in this continuous motion time-lapse.

Watch it here.

<https://twistedsifter.com/videos/spring-timelapse-by-jamie-scott/>





Since 1979, Discovery Theater, the unique, DC-based museum theater has served as a gateway to Smithsonian exhibitions, collections, and themes. Through the joy of live stage performances, students from pre-K through 6th grade are immersed in global cultures, eco-science, living history, and traditional arts. Discovery Theater performances are created to complement students' classroom-based learning; to enrich audiences' knowledge of the arts, history, sciences, and cultures of the world; to foster a love of live theater; and to provide entertaining, educational museum-based interactive experiences.

**Thank you for coming to Discovery  
Theater this year.  
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**For more information about our 2025 – 2026 season,  
visit our website!**

**[www.DiscoveryTheater.org](http://www.DiscoveryTheater.org)**