

Yuck Science – Animal scat Grades JK-6

Investigating the scat of different animals can tell a biologist a wealth of information about the animal’s health, the health of the ecosystem, and even its migration patterns! In this activity, students will learn about scat and make their own.

**Materials**

* Quick-cook oatmeal
* Cocoa powder
* Finely ground sugar (icing sugar or berry sugar)
* Water
* Seeds
* Pipe cleaners or cotton balls (fur)
* Paper plate
* Field guide to scat

**Background Info:**

The scat an animal leaves behind can give scientists information about their movement, behaviour, overall health and the health of the ecosystem they live in. They can learn what kind of plants live in the environment by looking at undigested materials within the scat. They would be able to tell if the animal has any kind of diseases or parasites living in their digestive tract. Their scat also acts as a mechanism to spread seeds of plants from one area to another.

**Action**

1. Have the students mix about 1 cup of oats with 1-2 Tbsp’s of cocoa and 1-2 Tbsp’s of sugar, in a cup or bowl.
2. The students can choose to add seeds or “fur” to their scat as well.
3. Slowly add water until the mixture comes together into a loose dough.
4. Have them form the “scat” into an appropriate shape, using the field guide provided.

**Conclusion/Wrap up**

Students are welcome to eat their “scat” as long as they didn’t put anything inedible into it (like cotton balls or pipe cleaners). This is a fun way to make this activity very memorable.