

Pre-Class and Post-Class Activities

Tracks & Trails

Note: The following discussions are completely optional and are not required for participation in the Tracks & Trails class. This information is provided as ways to build on this class and to be used at your discretion.

Vocab to know:

- Retractable
- Non-retractable
- Feline
- Canine
- Stride
- Track
- Trail
- Direct Register
- Indirect Register
- Gait
- Evidence
- Adaptation

Pre-Class Discussions:

Before class, encourage students to think about how scientists can learn about animals without directly seeing them. Discuss what clues animals leave behind, focusing on tracks/ paw prints. Have them make predictions about what information can be learned from a paw print and how tracks from cats and canines (dogs) might be different from each other.

Post Class Discussions:

Have students share how they used measurements, patterns, and other clues to identify different animals and compare feline and canine tracks. Reflect on how paw structure, claws, and walking patterns help animals move and survive in the wild. Conclude by asking students what new information they can learn from an animal track and why wildlife tracking is useful to scientists.

Applicable CA State Content Standards

California Next Generation Science Standards (CA NGSS)

- 2-LS4-1
- 3-LS3-1
- 3-LS4-3
- 4-LS1-1

Common Core State Standards

- 3.MD.B.4
- 4.MD.A.1–2
- SL.2.1–SL.5.1
- RI.2.7–RI.5.7