



## Spring Is Near!

### SCIENCE

Teach students about groundhogs and other animals that live underground.

#### National Standard

Science (NSES)  
Organisms and environments

#### Goal

Students will learn about the Groundhog Day story. They will also learn about animals that live underground.

#### Objective

Students will be able to identify animals that live underground.

#### [www.weeklyreader.com/prek](http://www.weeklyreader.com/prek)

Find Groundhog Day-themed activities and crafts.

#### Literature Connection

- *Double Trouble Groundhog Day*, by Bethany Roberts
- *Go to Sleep, Groundhog!* by Judy Cox
- *Gregory's Shadow*, by Don Freeman
- *Groundhog Day!* by Gail Gibbons
- *Groundhog Weather School*, by Joan Holub

#### A Poem to Share

The Groundhog  
The groundhog poked his head up  
And peeked all around  
And saw his little shadow  
Lying on the ground.

The groundhog knew that winter  
Would last for six weeks more,  
And so he pulled himself back down  
Inside his little door.

—Margaret Hillert

#### Before Reading

**Think Critically:** Invite children to think of animals that live underground. Create a class list of those animals.

#### Background Information

- Share the Groundhog Day story with children: A legend, or story, says that every February 2, a groundhog wakes up from its deep sleep and comes out of its hole. If the day is sunny, the groundhog sees its shadow and is frightened. It runs back into its hole, and winter will last six more weeks. If the day is cloudy, the groundhog does not see its shadow and stays outside. Then, the story says, spring will come early.
- Groundhogs, also known as woodchucks or whistle-pigs, are ground-dwelling rodents.
- Groundhogs have a warning call that sounds like a whistle.
- Groundhog young are called kits or cubs. A litter usually produces four or five young.
- Share these facts about the other animals in this issue:
  - **Rabbits** are long-eared animals that eat mostly grass and weeds.
  - **Meerkats** are small animals that live in Africa. They live in groups called mobs.
  - **Moles** have very small eyes that are sometimes covered by their fur.

#### During Reading

**Think Critically:** Ask: If the groundhog saw its shadow on Groundhog Day, what do you think the weather was on that day? What do you think the weather was if the groundhog did not see its shadow?

#### After Reading

**Teach Genre:** Tell the Groundhog Day story to the class. Then ask: Do you think that story is real or pretend? How do you know?

**Science Extension:** Hang a large white sheet in the classroom. Shine a bright light at the sheet. Invite four children to go to the side of the sheet where the light is. Seat the rest of the class on the other side. Invite one child at a time to stand in front of the light. Encourage the children on the other side to guess whose shadow they are looking at. Ask: What creates shadows outside?

**Classify and Categorize Extension:** Cut various shapes from paper of different colors. Then cut the same shapes from gray construction paper. Laminate the shapes, and place a piece of reusable adhesive on each shape. Invite children to attach the colored paper shapes to their gray paper shadows.

**Dramatic Play/Kinesthetic Learning:** Create a "burrow" by joining several large cardboard boxes for children to crawl through. Cut some holes in the top of the structure so children can poke their heads out. Encourage them to pretend to be groundhogs or other underground animals.

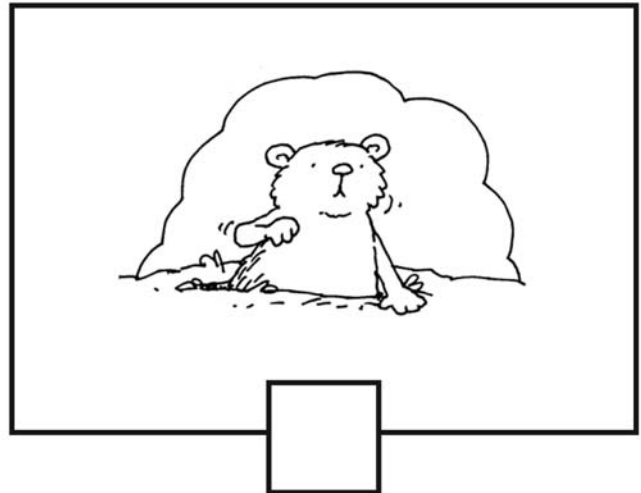
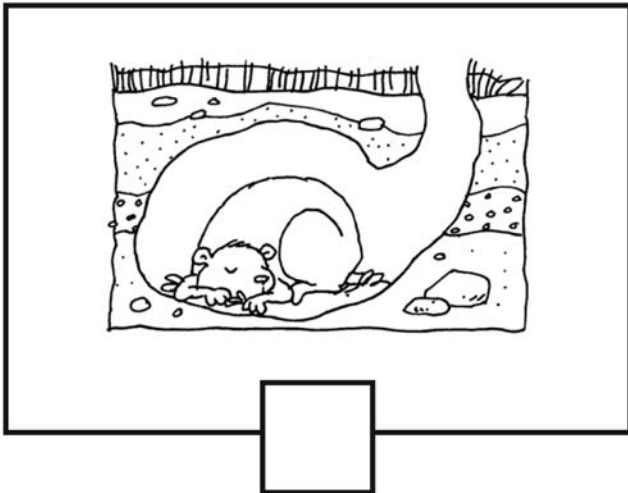
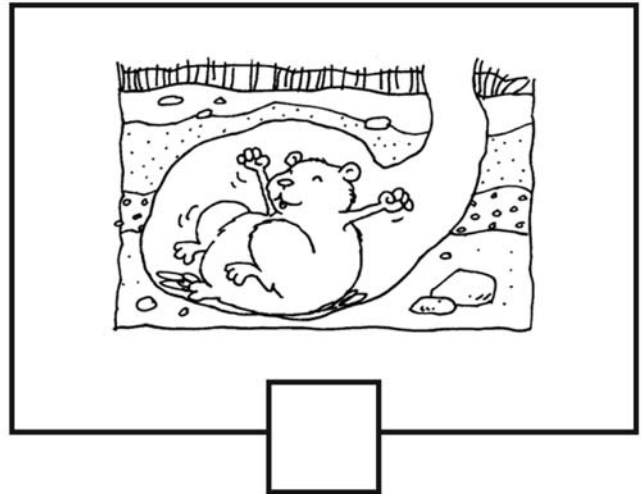
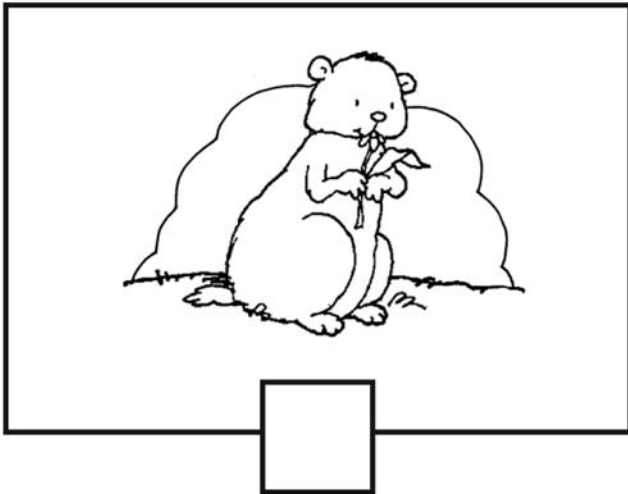
**Adaptation:** Cut out the photos and names of the animals from an issue. Laminate the pieces, and put them in a learning center. Invite children to match the names with the photos.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Get Ready for Groundhog Day!

Write the numbers **1**, **2**, **3**, and **4** to show how the groundhog wakes up.

1. The groundhog sleeps all winter.
2. The groundhog wakes up.
3. It comes out of its burrow.
4. It eats grass and weeds.



Patrick Grouard

**TRY THIS**

What does the groundhog do after it comes out of its burrow?

**eat      sleep**



## I Have Healthy Teeth

### SCIENCE

Explore ways to keep teeth healthy.

#### National Standard

Science (NSES)  
Personal health

#### Goal

Students will learn ways to keep their teeth clean and healthy.

#### Objective

Students will be able to identify the pictures that show children taking care of their teeth.

#### [www.weeklyreader.com/prek](http://www.weeklyreader.com/prek)

Invite children to play dental health-themed online games.

#### Literature Connection

- *ABC Dentist: Healthy Teeth From A to Z*, by Harriet Ziefert
- *Bear's Loose Tooth*, by Karma Wilson
- *Clarabella's Teeth*, by An Vrombaut
- *Pony Brushes His Teeth*, by Michael Dahl
- *Sweet Tooth*, by Margie Palatini

#### A Poem to Share

A Bright Smile  
Our teeth are important.  
They help us chew.  
They look nice when we smile  
And say, "How do you do?"  
We must care for them,  
Morning and night,  
Because brushing and flossing  
Help keep smiles bright.  
—Marie E. Cecchini

#### Before Reading

**Tap Prior Knowledge:** Review with children that a dentist is a doctor who helps take care of teeth. Ask children whether they have ever visited a dentist. Invite volunteers to share their experiences.

#### Background Information

- February is National Children's Dental Health Month.
- Dentists say people should brush their teeth at least twice a day—once in the morning and once again before going to bed.
- It is recommended that everyone visit a dentist twice a year for a checkup.
- Children should gently brush with a soft-bristled toothbrush and a pea-sized amount of toothpaste.
- Brushing teeth regularly helps prevent plaque buildup. Plaque is a clear, sticky substance that can cause tooth decay.
- Children can also fight plaque by flossing daily. That helps clean between teeth. Adults should help children younger than 6 with flossing.

#### During Reading

**Think Critically:** Review that a dentist cares for people's teeth by examining them and helping to keep them healthy. Ask: Why might visiting a dentist be important? How can a dentist help you?

#### After Reading

**Make Connections:** Point out that children should keep their teeth clean and healthy. Ask: What things can you do to make your teeth healthy? What should you avoid to keep them healthy?

#### Social Studies Extension:

Display the issue. Invite volunteers to act out what is happening in each picture. As the children act, ask questions such as: What kinds of things can you do in a waiting room? What should you not do there? What should you do after the dentist gives you a new toothbrush?

**Science Extension:** Explain that sweet foods are not healthy for teeth. Early in the day, divide the class into pairs, and give each pair one hard-boiled egg with a white shell and a jar filled with a brown soft drink. Explain to children that the eggs represent their teeth. Ask the pairs to put their eggs in the jars. Ask: What might happen to the eggs? On a chart, record the children's predictions. The next day, remove the eggs from the soft drink. (The eggshells should be brown.) Ask: What happened to the eggs? Why, do you think, did that happen? What can we do to keep that staining from happening to our own teeth?

**Adaptation:** Provide the children with toothbrushes, or have them bring in toothbrushes from home. Display photos from the Big Issue to remind students how to care for their teeth. Encourage children to use their new brushes to brush their teeth twice a day.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Listening Activity

This *Weekly Reader* listening activity is designed to help assess and improve children's listening, recall, vocabulary, and comprehension skills.

**Directions:** Ask children to listen carefully as you read the story. Then read each question. Ask children to circle the correct picture answer.

### Mingo Brushes His Teeth

Mingo gets his toothbrush.

Then he gets the toothpaste.

Mingo squeezes toothpaste onto his toothbrush.

He brushes his teeth and rinses his mouth with water.

Mingo puts away his toothbrush.

He puts on his pajamas.



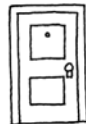
1. What does Mingo get first?



2. What does Mingo put on his toothbrush?



3. What does Mingo use to rinse his mouth?



4. What does Mingo put away?



Where might Mingo go next?

TRY THIS



# Presidents' Day

It is time to celebrate two important presidents.



**Engage students in a lesson about two past presidents and some places that they can see them.**

## National Standard

Social Studies (NCSS)  
Power, authority, and governance

## Goal

Students will learn about two past U.S. presidents as well as our current president.

## Objective

Students will be able to answer questions based on what they learn in the issue.

[www.weeklyreader.com/prek](http://www.weeklyreader.com/prek)

Get more Presidents' Day activity ideas.

## Literature Connection

- *Duck for President*, by Doreen Cronin
- *Grace for President*, by Kelly DiPucchio
- *The Story of Abraham Lincoln*, by Patricia A. Pingry
- *The Story of George Washington*, by Patricia A. Pingry

## A Poem to Share

Presidents' Day

George Washington was our first president;

He was a soldier too.

Washington, D.C., was named after him,  
When our country was brand-new.

Abraham Lincoln was our 16th president.

He said people should be free.

He made our country strong for all,  
Even for you and me.

Mr. Washington and Mr. Lincoln  
Were both quite famous men.  
They both lived long ago,  
We think of them now and then.

—Linda Ruggieri

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## Presidents' Day

### SOCIAL STUDIES

### Before Reading

**Activate Thinking:** Remind children that a president is the leader of a country. Explain that people remember George Washington and Abraham Lincoln on Presidents' Day.

### Background Information

#### George Washington

- George Washington was born on Feb. 22, 1732, in Virginia.
- He spent most of his childhood on his family's farm.
- He became the first president of the United States in 1789.

#### Abraham Lincoln

- Abraham Lincoln was born on Feb. 12, 1809, in Kentucky.
- He had little formal education as a child, but he taught himself to read and to write.
- He was first elected president in 1860.

#### Barack Obama

- Barack Obama is the 44th president of the United States. He was elected president in 2008.
- He was born on Aug. 4, 1961, in Hawaii.
- He and his wife, Michelle Obama, have two daughters, Sasha and Malia Obama.
- People will vote for a U.S. president later this year.

### During Reading

**Make Connections:** Ask: Who is our president? What kinds of jobs does the president have?

### After Reading

**Think Critically:** Ask: Would you like to be president? Why or why not?

**Mathematics Extension:** Point out that Abraham Lincoln's picture is on the heads side of the penny. Then invite each child to come to the front of the group, one at a time. Let each child drop a penny to the floor. On an easel pad, tally how many times the penny lands heads up. Then ask questions such as: How many more times did the penny land heads up than tails up?






**Social Studies Extension:** Explain that Presidents' Day celebrates the birthdays of two important U.S. presidents: George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Plan a presidential birthday party complete with a cake and party hats. (**Note:** Be aware of allergies.) Invite each child to make or draw a picture of a present he or she would give one of the presidents. Encourage each child to explain why he or she chose to give that present. Sing "Happy Birthday" or a patriotic song in honor of those presidents.

**Adaptation:** Help children develop fine motor skills. Cut out silhouettes of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Invite children to trace the shapes onto red, white, or blue paper. Then have children cut out the pictures they traced. Use the cutouts as a border or another decoration on a bulletin board.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Count the Pennies

A penny is worth 1 cent. Count the pennies in each row. Circle the number to show how much money there is in each row.

	<b>2¢</b>	<b>3¢</b>	<b>4¢</b>
	<b>1¢</b>	<b>2¢</b>	<b>3¢</b>
	<b>5¢</b>	<b>6¢</b>	<b>7¢</b>
	<b>1¢</b>	<b>2¢</b>	<b>4¢</b>
	<b>2¢</b>	<b>3¢</b>	<b>4¢</b>

**TRY THIS**

How many pennies do you need to make 10 cents? Circle the number.

1

5

10



## Wind Is Air That Moves

### SCIENCE

**Discuss what wind is and how it affects the world.**

#### National Standard

Science (NSES)  
Changes in Earth and sky

#### Goal

Students will learn what wind can do and how it can be helpful and harmful.

#### Objective

Students will be able to identify the two objects in each row that are the same.

#### [www.weeklyreader.com/prek](http://www.weeklyreader.com/prek)

Find activity and craft ideas to teach about wind.

#### Literature Connection

- *Feel the Wind*, by Arthur Dorros
- *Hugs on the Wind*, by Marsha Diane Arnold and Vernise Elaine Pelzel
- *I Face the Wind*, by Vicki Cobb
- *Like a Windy Day*, by Frank Asch and Devin Asch
- *The Wind Blew*, by Pat Hutchins

#### A Poem to Share

##### All Kinds of Wind

The wind starts out quite gently  
And whispers through the trees.  
It blows so soft and quietly.  
We call that wind a breeze.  
But when the wind blows harder  
And it begins to rain  
And leaves fall off the swaying trees,  
That is a hurricane.  
When winds begin to twirl and spin  
And lift things from the ground,  
We call that a tornado;  
It swirls around and round.

—Deborah Garmon

#### Before Reading

**Get Moving:** Take children outside on a windy day. Invite them to observe things that move in the wind, such as leaves, paper, tree branches, and flags.

#### Background Information

- Wind is air that moves.
- Solar energy creates wind. The sun does not heat Earth evenly, which causes the air to move. Warmer air is lighter than cooler air, so warm air rises. When that happens, cooler air moves in to take the place of the warmer air.
- Wind can be helpful as a source of energy. It can generate power with the use of turbines. The movement of the wind pushes the blades around a rotor that spins a generator. The generator creates electricity.
- Wind helps plants and trees grow by blowing their seeds to new places.
- Wind can be harmful. Strong winds can knock down trees and telephone poles, causing damage to homes and cars.
- Some storms that have strong winds include tornadoes, hurricanes, and monsoons.

#### During Reading

**Think Critically:** After reading the page about the pinwheel, invite children to think of other games or toys they can play with on a windy day. Make a list.

#### After Reading

**Mini Activity:** Take the class outside to blow bubbles. Invite children to talk about how the wind moves the bubbles. Ask: Which way does the wind move the bubbles? How fast or slow does the wind move the bubbles?

**Science Extension:** Explain that the month of March is approaching. Tell students about the saying “March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb.” Ask: What kind of weather might be like a lion? like a lamb? Encourage children to watch the weather for the month of March. Each day, place a lion or a lamb drawing on the calendar day to show the type of weather. At the end of the month, ask children to decide whether they think the saying is accurate.

**Mathematics Extension:** Display a large calendar page on a bulletin board. Invite a different child to illustrate the weather each day on that day’s calendar space. At the end of the month, cut the boxes apart. Guide children in creating a picture graph, organizing the pictures into rows based on the type of weather they illustrate. Ask questions such as: What kind of weather did we have the most of?

**Art Extension:** Use a large sheet of white paper, paints, straws, and several table tennis balls to make a wind painting. Spread the paper over a table. Dip the balls in paints of different colors. Then invite children to blow through the straws to move the balls as the balls come near them. Explain that the air they blow through the straws moves the balls the way the wind moves things such as leaves and flags outside.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Fun With Poetry

Ask children to listen carefully as you read the poem. When you have finished, invite children to complete the activity below.

### Here Comes the Wind!

The wind is blowing all around,  
Reaching high and low.  
The wind is blowing very hard.  
Everybody blow!  
The wind is blowing in the trees.  
Everybody sway!  
The wind is blowing on the ground,  
So let's all roll away!



—Sharon Siegelman

Patrick Girouard

1. Circle the title of the poem.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Underline two words in the poem that rhyme with **snow**.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Draw boxes around the two words in the poem that rhyme with **day**.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Draw an arrow pointing to the author's name.

**▶ TRY  
THIS**

Write the letter to complete the word.

\_\_\_ind is air that moves.