Lesson Overview:

Utilizing prior knowledge and experience, as well as observations of the artwork in the museum, students will compose their own real or imaginary animals out of geometric and organic shapes using stamping techniques. Students may also add elements of a habitat to the background of their composition.

Learning Objectives:

Essential Questions:

- What are the unique characteristics of animals?
- How do artists represent these characteristics in unique ways?
- What is stamping?
- What are the differences between organic and geometric shapes?

Students will be able to...

- Identify varying animal characteristics
- Create a work of art inspired by the unique attributes of animals
- Use stamping techniques to compose lines and shapes to form an animal

Performance Tasks:

- Discussion-based observation, art-making

Mini-glossary:

Vertebrate- having a backbone

Invertebrate- without a spinal column or backbone

Zoologist- a person who studies animals

Habitat- the natural environment of a plant or animal

Mammal- a type of vertebrate animal that feeds milk to its young and usually has hair or fur covering most of its skin

Reptile- vertebrate cold-blooded animals that breathe with lungs, are covered with scales or hard plates, and have short legs or none at all

Life Cycle- the continuous changes undergone by an organism in its lifetime

Characteristic- indicating the typical or distinguishing attributes and qualities of a person, group, action, or thing
Materials:

- White tagboard or cardstock
- Black watercolor for stamp pads
- Stamp pads
- Shaped Stamps (geometric and organic)
- Found objects (for stamping)
- Thick foam (for stamping)
- Gum stamps
- Art Sticks
- Plastic animals for students to reference
- Laminated images from the collection
- Texture plates
- Art stix

Instructions:

1. Visual Thinking and Discussion: The introduction will change based on the grade-level standards of your students. During this time, you’ll facilitate a two-part discussion: describing an animal from the permanent collection and brainstorming ideas about other animals.
   - Kindergarten-
     - Part 1: Students describe basic characteristics of an animal in the permanent collection (Big or small; feathers or fur; color).
     - Part 2: Ask students to name other animals based on specific characteristics: big, small, has a long neck, has scales, has talons, has paws, can swim, etc.
   - 1st-
     - Part 1: Students will describe an animal in a picture from the permanent collection. Ask them to identify what that animal needs to survive (food, shelter, water).
     - Part 2- Ask students to name other animals based on specific needs: lives in a nest, eats plants, lives underground, can breathe underwater, etc.
   - 2nd-
     - Part 1: Students will extend their description of an animal from the permanent collection by considering the animal’s life cycle. What did it look like when it was younger? How will it change?
     - Part 2: Ask students to name other animals based on life cycle: hatched from an egg, lived in a pouch, transformed in a cocoon, etc.
   - 3rd-
     - Part 1: Student will extend their description of an animal from the permanent collection by considering the animal's habitat.
     - Part 2: Ask students to name animals based on the habitat they live in: rainforest, mountains, coast, in the ocean, swamp, etc.
Part 1:
Student will extend their description of an animal from the permanent collection by identifying the characteristics that allow it to survive OR unique behaviors.

Part 2:
Ask students to name animals based on survival adaptations or behaviors: hibernation, camouflage, protects itself by its quick speed, etc.

Part 1:
Student will extend their description of an animal from the permanent collection by identifying if it is a vertebrate or invertebrate, a mammal, reptile, fish, or bird.

Part 2:
Ask students to name animals based on their classification: mammal, reptile, fish, bird.

2. Introduce the Project: Scientists and artists are similar in many ways. Both very closely observe nature and their surroundings, looking for details like lines, shapes, colors, and patterns.

3. Connecting to Prior Knowledge and Interests: Think of your favorite animal. Is it a pet? Something you’ve seen in real life? At the zoo? On T.V. or in a magazine or book? Is it real or imaginary?

4. Scaffolding: What shapes is that animal made of? Does the animal have patterns on its fur, feathers, or shell? What types of lines and shapes can you find in the pattern? How will you recreate those shapes and lines with the stamping materials? How will you arrange those shapes to look like your animal?

5. Overview of Materials: Provide an overview of the supplies available and how to use them. Encourage students to use their imaginations.

6. Closing: As students begin to finish the stamp animals, ask them to clean up their tables. Allow a few students to describe their animals as time allows.

Possible Modification:
- For younger students, use larger stamping devices.
- 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students should be prompted to include the animal’s habitat in the background of the composition.

Advance Prep:
- Prepare tables with supplies
- Make sure stamp pads are filled with black watercolor
- Place plastic animals on each table for student reference
- Hang examples from Permanent Collection on wall

Clean Up:
- Put supplies away
- Change paper on the tables as needed
- Stack chairs