Pig Unit Study
Research and Lessons

Pig Characteristics
What is a pig? Pigs are mammals (they are warm blooded, have hair, and the mothers feed their own milk to the piglets). Pigs have four legs with feet called hooves. They have small eyes, small curly tails, and short flat snouts.

Coloring
Pigs have pink skin which makes them look pink in color when they are born. However, their hair can be a variety of colors and patterns. You'll find pigs with red, brown, black, white, and even spotted hair. Piglets are born with a soft covering of hair; as they grow, the hair becomes rough and bristly.

The Snout
Pigs use their snouts to make grunting and squealing sounds. It is also used to as a digging tool! A snout can help a pig find a meal in the dirt-- grubs, snails, and plant roots.

Speaking of the snout (and squealing!), here's what pigs sound like to different people:

English: oink oink

Croatian: rok-rok

French: groin groin

Japanese: buubuu

Polish: chrum chrum

Thai: ood ood

Vietnamese: ut-it

Vocabulary:
Boar - a male hog
Crops - plants grown by a farmer (such as corn and soybeans)
Hoof - a pig's foot
Litter - a family of newborn pigs
Piglet - a baby pig
Pork producer - a farmer who raises and cares for hogs
Sow - a mother pig
Omnivore- feeds on plants and animals
Sounder- a group of pigs
Snout- a long nose or muzzle that sticks out
Pork- the meat from a pig

In the Mud
You may think pigs wallow (or roll) in the mud for fun, but that's not the reason. What are the reasons?
1. To cool off! Pigs can't sweat but a nice romp in the mud will help them feel better on hot days.
2. To protect their skin from sunburn (suntan lotion!)
3. To protect their skin from insect bites.

Pork Products
When we think of pig products, the first things that come to mind are meat: ham, bacon, pork chops, and sausage. Pork is the most common meat eaten in the world today. A 250-pound market hog yields about 150 pounds of pork.

Other products and that come from swine include:
insulin for the regulation of diabetes
valves for human heart surgery
suede for shoes and clothing
leather for clothing and luggage
gelatin for many food and non-food uses
brushes
bone China

Items that are made from pig by-products:
water filters
insulation
rubber
antifreeze
certain plastics
floor waxes
crayons
chalk
glue
adhesives
fertilizer
cosmetics

Diet
Pigs in the wild eat differently than pigs on the farm (based on what is available to them), but the one thing they have in common is that they are omnivorous (feeding on plants and animals) and will eat almost anything!

Some items that pigs feed on include: worms, small animals (such as snakes), snails, roots, grubs, eggs, slop, corn, soybeans, oats, wheat, sorghum (usually the grains on the farm are harvested, dried up, and ground together making a concoction similar to granola)

What items from the list would be consumed by domestic (farm) pigs?
What items would be eaten by pigs in the wild?

Piglet Numbers
A mother piglet has 8-12 piglets in a litter.

A mother pig is pregnant for 3 months, 3 weeks, and 3 days.
When a piglet is born, it weighs between 2-5lbs. with an average of 3 lbs.
When a pig is 250 lbs., it is ready for market (this takes about 5 months).

Finding Pigs
Pigs can be found on every continent except Antarctica. Most pigs are woodland creatures, but some kinds can live in swamps, in grasslands, and even on beaches!
**Pig Farmer**
Farmers are the people who raise animals and crops on a farm. Different farmers raise different kinds of animals and crops. Some farmers raise only pigs (this type of farmer is called a pork producer). The main job of the farmer is to make sure the pigs are healthy and well fed. They feed the pigs, keep their environments clean, and check on the pigs often to make sure they are well/healthy. Farmers also keep themselves informed (learning new things) about how to care for pigs by reading books and even taking classes.

If you have a hog farm close by, take a field trip and let your student interview the farmer. Here are some ideas for questions to ask.
1. How big were your pigs when you got them?
2. How do you keep them from escaping?
3. What do you feed them?
4. How do you know how much to feed them?
5. How do they get water?
6. Why are they so dirty?
7. Where do they sleep?
8. How long will you keep them?
9. When do they go to market? How big will they be?

**The Pigpen**
Comparing a dirty room to a pigpen isn't a good comparison. Pigs like to keep clean. They divide their pen into three areas-- one area to feed in, a second area to sleep in, and a third area is designated (as far from their bed as possible) for waste.

**Three Little Pigs Story**
Spend some time with your student this week reading some different versions of *The Three Little Pigs*. When finished, let your student re-write the tale. He will need to choose a setting, characters, etc. He could even change the repeating phrases that the characters are so well known for ("Little pigs, little pigs, let me in...").

A younger student could simply narrate one of the stories you read to him.
**Pig Sayings**
There are tons of pigs sayings used in our culture. Here are a few (with meanings):
1. In hog heaven - complete happiness
2. Slippery as a greased pig - hard to hang on to
3. Go hog-wild! - get excited
4. Pig-headed - stubborn
5. Don't be piggy - don't be greedy
6. When pigs fly - that will never happen

**Library List**
*The Three Little Pigs* by Paul Galdone
*The Three Little Pigs* by David Weisner
*The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* by A. Wolf by Jon Scieszka
*Pigs* by Gail Gibbons
*All Pigs are Beautiful* by Dick King

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**More ideas for older students**
Research and make a map of pork producers around the world

Research and make a world pig map

Write your own pig riddles and include them in your lapbook

Compare and contrast wild and domestic pigs

Write a pig report (pocket provided in printables section)

Make a classification minit book for the type of pig that you wrote about in your report

**More ideas for younger students**
Try our [PIGS multi-book theme unit](#)
What Do Pigs Eat?
Cut out wheels. Discuss the different foods pigs eat.
Domestic: oats, corn, slop
Wild: worms, small snakes, eggs

Cut/paste the foods to the wheel below. Attach two wheels together with a brass fastener.

An older student could write in one word per space on the wheel and draw his own illustration, if desired.
Cut book out as one piece. Fold doors ("food" and "products") to the front of the book. Cut and paste title piece ("Products from Pigs") or to front, if desired. Let your student cut/paste the pictures under the correct door. Discuss the pictures using the information in the unit. Your student may want to write a brief explanation/word for each picture.
Cut book out as one piece (what you see is the inside of the book). Let your student color the grid (82 of the squares to represent how long a pig spends sleeping each day). She can also color the pig, if desired. Fold book in half.

Cut out the cover piece on the next page and glue to the front of the book.
a happy pig rests
How Does a Farmer Care for His Pigs?

Cut out cover page (below) as one piece. Fold in half.

Cut out book on next page as one piece. Fold in half. Cut on dotted lines to form three flaps. Let your student write (or cut/paste) answers to the riddles underneath the flaps. Glue flap book into cover book.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who are a pig’s favorite relatives?</td>
<td>It’s aunt and oinkle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What does a pig genie do?</td>
<td>A pigpen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do pigs write with?</td>
<td>Grunts three wishes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Where Are Pigs Found?

**Directions:** Cut out the cover piece on this page. Cut out book on next page, fold in half, and paste cover to the front of the book.
All Over the World!

Pigs are found on ever continent except for Antarctica.

Color the continents where pigs are found.
Directions: Cut out book as one piece. Fold in half. Cut out cover piece (next page) and paste to the front of the book.

Key

Flat Snout: RED
Hooves: BROWN
Short Tail: YELLOW
Ears: GREEN
Small Eyes: PURPLE
Pig Characteristics
Cut shape out as one piece. Let student write (or cut/paste) answers. Fold flaps in using the dotted lines as your guide. Tuck the last flap under so that book will stay closed.

Why Does a Pig Roll in the Mud?

to protect their skin from the sun

to protect their skin from insects

to cool off
Bet You Didn't Know

Pigs can run 11 miles per hour!

Pigs are smarter than most other animals.

Pigs don’t eat more than they need.
Cut out the piece with the pig. Cut out the call-outs. Stack together with cover “Bet you didn’t know” on top. Staple where indicated. Glue last call-out to the area indicated. The next page includes blank call-outs for your student to write in his own pig facts.
Cut book out as one piece. Fold in half.
Directions: Cut out the cover (on this page). Cut out each rectangle (solid black lines). Fold like a hotdog on center gray line. Cut dotted gray lines. Repeat steps with each rectangle.

Stack rectangles together (with the cover on top) and staple on the left side where indicated. You will be able to lift the flaps of each strip up. You should also be able to flip in your book from strip to strip.

Let your student write answers under flaps.
A mother pig has ____ piglets in a litter.

A mother pig is pregnant for ____ months, ____ weeks and ____ days.
When a piglet is born, it weighs ___ pounds.

When the pig weighs ___ pounds, it is ready for market.

Is a Pigpen Really Dirty?

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Cut out book cut one piece. Cut dotted lines. Fold outside flaps in (on grey lines). You will have six different sections to cut out book out as one piece. Cut dotted lines. Fold outside flaps in (on grey lines). You will have six different sections to write on. Let your student write the meaning for each saying behind the appropriate flap. Cut out cover piece and glue on.

| Piggy Pig | Fly Fly | When Pigs
|----------|--------|-----------
| don't be | when pigs | slippy
| pig in hog | go hog | headed
| heaven | in hog | headed
| hog | headed | pig
| greased as a |
| slippery |
Additional research required for this mini-book.

Cut out each shape. Younger students can write facts on appropriate pages of the book. Older students can cut/paste pictures on each page.

Stack together with cover ("All in the Family") on top and staple (or use a brass fastener) to hold the book together.

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Peccary

Wild boar

Red river hog
Giant hog

Red river hog

Warthog

Peccary

Wild boar

Babirusa
Cut pig shapes out on dotted lines. Let your student write the correct vocabulary word above each definition. Stack together with cover on front and use a staple to put the book together.

**VOCABULARY**

- a male hog
- plants grown by a farmer
a family of newborn pigs

a pig’s foot

a baby pig
a farmer who raises and cares for hogs

a mother pig

feeds on plants and animals
a group of pigs

a long nose or muzzle that sticks out

the meat from a pig
Cut pig shapes out on dotted lines. Let your student write vocabulary words and definitions on the pigs. Stack together with cover on front and use a staple to put the book together.
Cut shape out as one piece. Let your student write (cut/paste) the different uses for the word hog. Fold flaps in using the dotted lines as your guide. Tuck the last flap under so that book will stay closed.
If desired, ask your older student to write a report about pigs (or a certain breed of pig). Cut pocket out as one piece. Fold back up and fold flaps around the back and glue the flaps down (to the back).
Cut pocket out as one piece. Fold back up and fold flaps around the back and glue the flaps down (to the back).

Let your student create his own version of “The Three Little Pigs” story. Type it up and fold it (like a letter). Store in the pocket.
Cut cover book (COLORING) out on solid black lines and fold on dotted lines. Cut out the other skinny rectangle. Using an exacto knife, cut around each square (three sides; do NOT cut on the dotted lines at the top of each square). Glue (the sides) of the skinny rectangle into cover book. Let your student lift each flap and crayon the square according to the coloring of pigs (colors listed in the unit).