

I Know An Animal: Snail

I Know An Animal: Snail (Südwestrundfunk, Baden-Baden, Germany) is a new, 11-minute series for children ages 3 to 7. Children present this program about animals by singing, explaining, exploring, demonstrating, and joking. Information presented in each scene extends what children already know about animals. The opening theme recurs several times during the program, in short animations of a snail accompanied by harmonica music (cf. illustration 1). This episode begins with a guessing game: what animal is never in a hurry, creeps slowly, carries its house with it, has an antenna? Small groups of children respond to animated depictions of each answer (cf. illustration 2). The next scene is different species of real snails in the wild, followed by animation of snails. Children's voiceovers describe snail characteristics such as sticking to surfaces and moving slowly. Outdoors, children interact with snails (cf. illustration 3) and wonder how snails climb without legs. Then they go into their school to figure it out. Working together, they build a structure to support a glass bridge. They place the snail on the glass and get underneath to observe (cf. illustration 4). They see waves as the snail moves. Contracting and stretching their muscles like the snail, children move across the floor together without using arms and legs (cf. illustration 5). Then they use magnifiers to see the snail and its slippery trail more closely. Additional footage of live snails illustrates movement across different surfaces (cf. illustration 6). Children are shown painting snails on a wall (cf. illustration 7). The final element of the program is an animated story about two snails on a stormy night who share their sleeping quarters (cf. illustration 8).

I Know An Animal: Snail won the PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL 2014 award in the up to 6 nonfiction category.

INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS' OPINION

International experts shared their opinions about *I Know An Animal: Snail* during the discussion sessions at the PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL 2014. Experts spoke with great enthusiasm, both about individual elements and the overall program. Many seemed to think that individual scenes could work as standalone videos. There were minor criticisms in terms of how the program was not placed firmly in a particular time and how the final scene with two snails in one shell was not entirely factual. There were questions about how animation during the guessing games sequence was constructed for children's interaction, but there was universal agreement about the quality of the animation in this program. Everyone agreed that this was designed for the right age group.

"I liked that there are no adults in this program." (female expert, Sweden)

"What I loved is the children were so authentic. Here they were really acting like themselves. And I think that's very, very good." (female expert, Netherlands)

"It was a very well done project. You use all different senses." (female expert, Taiwan)



III. 1: The animated theme of *I Know An Animal: Snail*



III. 2: Children play guessing games with graphic elements on screen



III. 3: Experiencing real snails in their outdoor habitat

Screenshots from *I Know An Animal: Snail* © Südwestrundfunk



III. 4: Learning how snails move by observing them under glass



III. 5: Children move about the room without using hands or feet



III. 6: Slime allows snails to move easily over sharp objects



III. 7: Painting snails on the wall



III. 8: Two snails share a cozy room on a stormy night

"They really used the senses; they really used touch and smell and sight. It's nice for preschoolers to experience feelings and emotions when using the senses." (female expert, Argentina)

"I think the variety of different concepts and approaches were good; it worked." (male expert, Ireland)

"Wow, how many ideas from a snail?" (female expert, Brazil)

"I thought it was really, really nice to focus on one topic. Pick one topic and cover it from lots of different angles. When you're that young, you need help to put something in a box." (male expert, United Kingdom)

"I think the length was okay. I liked the progression of the guessing game, real footage, and animation of the two snails with great emotion and dialog and expressions and sound." (female expert, United States)

"I really liked getting in the mindset of the snail and I really liked the guessing game." (male expert, Denmark)

"It was interactive with guessing games. You show them trying, their curiosity—these elements are very well integrated." (female expert, Chile)

"Kids on the screen were playing and the kids in the houses are playing the same games." (female expert, Colombia)

"I really like that they kind of constructed. Let's take this—you could do this at home. Also, I really, really liked the animation in the end. It was so well done. The best this morning!" (male expert, Sweden)

"Personally, I love the animation. It was brilliant." (male expert, Italy)

"I really like the music." (female expert, Germany)

"Everyone will know the word 'snail' after this show." (female expert, Netherlands)

Elizabeth Spezia, PhD student, Southern Illinois University, USA

Screenshots from I Know An Animal: Snail © Südwestrundfunk

Target Audience 8.35

Idea 8.09

Script 7.93

Realization 8.13

Average Score per Category by experts' voters at PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL 2014