Animal Adaptations: Creature Creation

Design an Animal Activity

- 1. Choose at least 5 animal adaptations that would like to include for your animal. Explain how each adaptation will help it survive in its preferred environment.
- 2. Draw and label your animal.
- 3. Chose a creative name for your animal (make sure to add 3 or more Latin or Greek prefixes, suffixes or root words).

4. Answer the following questions about your creature. You can use the listed options or chose your own.

A) WHERE DOES IT LIVE?

- 1 mountains
- 2 flatlands
- 3 rocky, harsh
- 4 small island
- 5 near a volcano
- 6 in a cave

B) HOW MUCH WATER IS THERE?

- 1 almost none; dry and barren
- 2 water part of the year, drought the rest
- 3 lots of precipitation all year
- 4 near a coastline
- 5 in a swamp
- 6 in the ocean

C) WHAT IS THE CLIMATE/WEATHER LIKE?

- 1 hot and humid
- 2 hot and dry
- 3 moderate
- 4 cold, rainy, and windy
- 5 seasons change from hot to cold
- 6 sub-zero temperatures

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D) WHAT DOES IT EAT?

- 1 leaves from tall plants
- 2 fungus growing under rocks
- 3 berries, plants, and small animals
- 4 water animals
- 5 swift running deer-like animals
- 6 flying insects
- E) WHAT EATS IT?
 - 1 stompsuckers squash it flat
 - 2 vampire butterflies land on it and suck it dry
 - 3 buzzbugs lay eggs that burrow into its skin
 - 4 web devils set gooey traps to catch it
 - 5 ratrax packs are wolf-like and chase it
 - 6 megaworms leap out of the sand and swallow it
- 5. Create a story about your animal. Imagine a day in the life of your unique creature. What does it eat for lunch? Is it an animal that prefers to be alone or does it live in a group with others of its kind? How much does it sleep in a day? How does it use its unique features throughout the day? After a few minutes of brainstorming, compose a short story about a day in the life of their creatures. Try to incorporate as many rich details as possible!
- 6. Be ready to present your animal to the class!

Extensions:

- 1. **Animal Lab**: On the whiteboard, review the classification of animals by labeling six columns on the board (mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, insects, and birds) and invite students to take turns adding the name of an animal to its appropriate column. In which category would their new creature fit?
- 2. Fictional Food Chain: If the fictional animals created by the students lived in a real ecosystem, where would they fit into the food chain? Review the concept of a food chain where one species is linked to other species as either that animal's predator or prey and then map out the established food chain of the habitat previously selected by the class (or teacher). Next, have students add their animal to this food chain after considering what it eats and what larger animals might want to eat it.

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- 3. **Shoebox Habitat**: Invite students to create shoebox habitats for their creatures that include a place for the creature to sleep and food for it to eat. Alternatively, create a giant habitat area where all of the class's creatures can live together.
- 4. **A Change in Habitat**: Analyze what might happen if an animal was moved from its habitat to a different one. Would it be able to survive? Might it eventually develop new adaptations? In terms of the changes in climate due to global warming, what might this mean for the future of animals and humans?