Animal Adaptations

Program Summary

Grades: 2 - 5

Duration: 45 minutes

Program Description:

When we talk about adaptations and animals being suited to their environments, what do we mean? This program takes a look at the science of zoology and puts students in the role of a field researcher. Through examining specimens from our collection, students will discuss collecting information from skulls, observe adaptations for an animal's survival, and ponder their own adaptations as humans.

This program will take place on Zoom. It is designed to be a collaborative lesson between the students and the museum facilitator. We ask that your students be split into small groups for some of the activities. A week prior to your field trip, you will receive a teacher packet with information, as well as worksheets to make copies of.

Activities:

- Students will observe a variety of animal skulls to determine what animals ate.
- Determine what type of adaptations an animal has and have a conversation about those adaptations.
- Participate in a game that has students develop an understanding of natural selection and how there are many factors that influence survival.
- Test out adaptation knowledge, by designing an animal of their own.

Program Goals:

- Students will learn about the professions in zoology and ecology.
- Students will work together collaboratively with each other as well as the instructor to solve problems and develop ideas.

Learning Targets

Students Will:

- Understand the terms "carnivore", "herbivore", and "omnivore" and be able to give examples of each.
- Understand how zoologists use the terms "natural selection" and "adaptation" and be able to identify basic adaptations in animals.
- Understand their own adaptations as humans.

Learning Standards

Wisconsin Science Standards:

- SCI.CC1.K-2 Students recognize that patterns in the natural and human designed world can be observed, used to describe phenomena, and used as evidence.
- SCI.CC1.3-5 Students identify similarities and differences in order to sort and classify natural objects and designed products. They identify patterns related to time, including simple rates of change and cycles, and use these patterns to make predictions.
- SCI.LS1.A.1 All organisms have external parts that they use to perform daily functions.
- SCI.LS1.A.4 Plants and animals have both internal and external macroscopic structures that allow for growth, survival, behavior, and reproduction.
- SCI.LS1.A.5 Food provides animals with the materials and energy they need for body repair, growth, warmth, and motion. Plants acquire material for growth chiefly from air, water, and process matter, and obtain energy from sunlight, which is used to maintain conditions necessary for survival.
- K-LS1-1. Use observations to describe patterns of what plants and animals (including humans) need to survive.
- 4-LS1-1. Construct an argument that plants and animals have internal and external structures that function to support survival, growth, behavior, and reproduction.

Next Generation Science Standards:

- 2-LS4-1 Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity. Make observations of plants and animals to compare the diversity of life in different habitats.
- 3-LS2-1 Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy, and Dynamics. Construct an argument that some animals form groups that help members survive.
- 3-LS3-2 Heredity: Inheritance and Variation of Traits. Use evidence to support the explanation that traits can be influenced by the environment.
- 3-LS4-3 Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity. Construct an argument with evidence that in a particular habitat some organisms can survive well, some survive less well, and some cannot survive at all.

Contact Information

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