

## Grade Level: 3-5

### Its Great to be Different

### Post Lesson

#### Time Allotment

50 minutes

#### Materials

Per student:

- Handouts
- Crayons, colored pencils or markers
- Glue
- Scissors
- Pencil

#### Advance Preparation

Make copies of all the handouts.

#### Lesson Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Define the four vocabulary terms below.
- Describe adaptations and how they are used by the animal to aid in its survival within a specific environment.

#### Sunshine State Standards for Late Elementary

Category:

Name of Standard: XX.X.0.0.0

#### Vocabulary

Adaptation    Habitat

Native Range    Natural Behavior

#### Background Information

**Adaptations** are features that allow living organisms to survive within their environment, or **habitat**. These adaptations allow the organisms to perform basic life functions. Some organisms have adaptations that limit them to a specific habitat, while others are capable of surviving in many different habitats.

Not all habitats are equal. Some organisms can survive in extreme habitats that have no oxygen or sunlight, or that have very high or low temperatures. The four elements all habitats must have are food, water, shelter and space appropriate for the organism living there.

It can be difficult or even impossible to maintain some organisms outside of their normal habitat. Aquariums, zoos and even pet owners must recreate essential elements of an animal's habitat to keep it alive and healthy.

Sometimes an animal's general habitat requirements can be deduced by observing the animal's adaptations. Some adaptations, however, are internal and are not always obvious. For example, it is easy to tell that a fish lives in water by observing that it has fins and gills. However it may be a little more difficult to determine if the fish comes from an ocean or a lake.

When recreating a habitat for an animal in captivity, biologists typically study the **native range** (where the animal is naturally found in the wild) and **natural behavior** (how the animal functions within its environment) of that animal. By studying these, a biologist can determine what the animal eats, how it acquires water, where it goes for shelter and the amount of space the animal requires to be comfortable.

In this activity, students will create a habitat for a known animal with known adaptations. The pop-up habitat diorama was inspired by Dinah Zike's book *Teaching Science with Foldables* (McGraw Hill). The students can either research their animal on their own to find out its habitat requirements (elements

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which must be included in the diorama) or you may discuss each animal together as a class.

#### Initial Discussion

1. Ask the students to identify the four elements that all habitats must contain (food, water, shelter and space).
2. On the board, write the names of 3-5 very different habitats. Have the students discuss ways that an animal might obtain food or water, or build a shelter in each habitat. Remind students that to do these things the animals must have special adaptations.

#### Hands-On Activity

3. Distribute the Habitat Diorama and Animal Adaptations worksheets to each student.
4. Read directions aloud, making sure the students understand that they are to choose one animal and create a habitat for it using the diorama.
5. If needed, demonstrate how to cut and fold the diorama.
6. Students should choose one animal from the examples provided, or research their own animal, making sure to write down four adaptations.
7. Students can color and cut out an animal, draw an animal to color and cut out, or find a small picture of an animal online or in magazine to use for their diorama.

8. Students can draw the elements of the animal's habitat on the ground and walls of their diorama, or they can use photographs taken from magazines to recreate a habitat.
9. Students should write the animal's adaptations on their diorama, or on a note card which can be attached to the front or back of the diorama.

#### Relate Activity to Concept

10. Ask the students to present their completed diorama to the class. Have each student describe the elements they included in their habitat.

#### Assessment

Collect the dioramas and grade based on how appropriate the habitat the student created is for their animal. Display by setting on a table or pinning to a bulletin board.

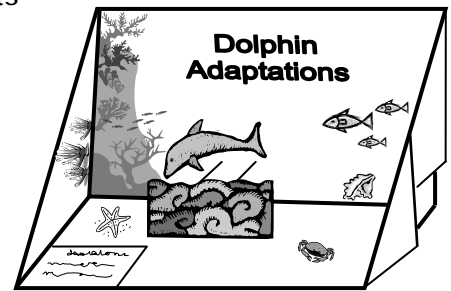
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Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:**

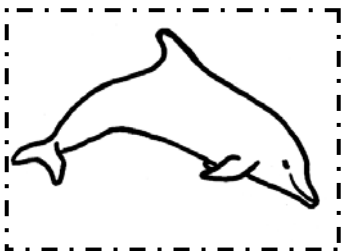
Choose one animal from the list below and read about its adaptations. Use the next page to create a habitat for your animal. Start by writing your animal's name on the line above the word "Adaptations" and write your animal's adaptations in the space labeled "My animal's adaptations".

Draw your habitat on the parts labeled "side" and "ground". **Do not draw** on the parts labeled "fold back". Make sure to include places for your animal to find water and food, and a place for it to find shelter.



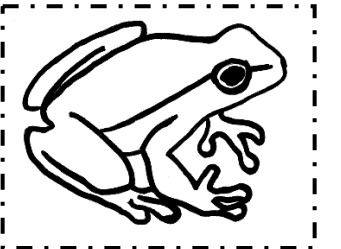
A finished diorama

When you have created your habitat, **cut the paper along the dotted lines only** and fold the paper on the solid lines. Fold the rectangle in the middle forward to create a 3D tab. Glue your animal to the tab where it is labeled. Glue down the tabs on the side.



Animals:  
Dolphin

Adaptations:  
Teeth to catch fish  
Strong tail for fast swimming  
Water comes from their food  
Travel in pods for protection



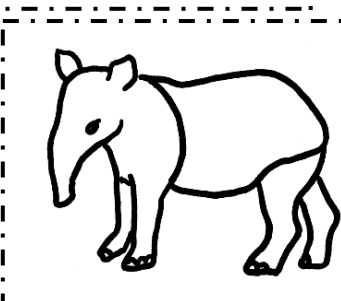
Tree Frog

Sticky toes for climbing  
Long, sticky tongue for catching insects  
Water is absorbed through the skin  
Uses camouflage to hide in plants



Snow  
Leopard

Sharp claws and teeth for catching prey  
Thick fur for surviving in cold weather  
Wide feet for walking on snow  
Long tail for balance while climbing



Tapir

Long nose to help reach leaves  
Thick, waterproof skin  
Camouflaged to hide in forest shadows  
Chisel-shape teeth for grinding tough plants

Fold  
Back

Fold  
Back

# Adaptations

Side

Side

Side

Glue  
animal  
here

Ground

My Animal's Adaptations:

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Fold  
Back

Fold  
Back