

Meet the Creature

Teacher's Guide



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MEET THE CREATURE

SUBJECT: **Science**

GRADES: **1, 2 & 3**

CURRICULUM **CONNECTIONS:**

Grade 1:
Needs and
Characteristics of
Living Things

Grade 2:
Animal Growth and
Changes

Grade 3:
Analyze the
interdependence
between soil and
living things

OVERVIEW:

The meet the creature program looks at the various types of vertebrate animals (mammals, birds, fish, reptiles and amphibians) and their different characteristics and skin coverings. The Zoo tour explores the various adaptations carnivores have for hunting and eating their prey. Using biological artefacts, we discuss how different fur can look on mammals.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will be introduced to some physical characteristics of vertebrate animals.
2. Students will be able to explain what a mammal is and understand that humans are mammals too.
3. Students will observe animal behaviours through live, interactive videos.
4. Through observation and teachings, students will learn that vertebrate animals are grouped according to their skin coverings.

KEY VOCABULARY:

Carnivore: an animal that eats primarily meat

Herbivore: an animal that eats primarily plants

Omnivore: an animal that eats both plants and meat

Reptile: a vertebrate animal characterized by having dry scaly skin

Amphibian: a vertebrate animal characterized by having smooth, moist skin and having an aquatic, gill-breathing larval stage that is followed (usually) by a terrestrial lung-breathing adult stage.

Mammal: a warm-blooded vertebrate animal classified by the presence of hair or fur, secretion of milk by the female for their young and typically live birth

Physical Characteristic: helps us explain an object. A physical characteristic is something we can explain using our senses (rather than describing what it does or how it behaves)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This program will focus on the 5 vertebrate groups: mammals, reptiles, birds, fish, and amphibians. The focus will be on what covers the animals' skin and some of the characteristics that differentiate the groups.

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Activity One

Go on a walk around the school or if at home, around the student's home. Have them make a list or take a picture of the living and non-living things they see. Set a limit of about 5-10 items of each. When you gather together either online or in-person; make a list with the headers non-living and living and have the students record their items that they found on their walk. Then ask the students to come up with what all living things do (things such as grow, move, take in energy, reproduce, make waste, breathe). Use these to review if they have put all their non-living and living items in the correct list.

Activity Two

Describe that a characteristic is something that helps us explain something that is living or non-living. Tell students that we can describe physical characteristics using our senses. Provide the students with some pictures of animals. Have them discuss how we know what animal is in the picture - what physical characteristics does a dog, a bird, a bee have that makes us know what they are. Then, have the students pick their own living plant or animal and identify some physical characteristics that describe that plant or animal.

POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Activity One

Now that the students have learned about some physical characteristics of the animals at the Zoo, have them see if they can differentiate between different animals. Provide them with two pictures and see if they can note some physical differences between them (a duck and an owl; a lion and a house cat; a deer and a sheep; a salamander and a lizard). You can include other living things (a coniferous tree with a deciduous tree for example).

Activity Two

Ask students what environment means to them. Can the environment around them affect the way living things exist? What does a healthy environment look like? What does an unhealthy environment look like to them? What are some things they can do to ensure a healthy environment? Have them draw a picture of a particular living thing (a flower for example) in both a healthy and unhealthy environment. What would that flower look like in both?

Activity Three

In the program, the Saskatoon Zoo Society talked about how the vertebrate animals needed something to protect their skin (fur, feather, scales, etc) and how humans are no different requiring clothes, hair and other things to protect our skin from the elements. Many different kinds of animals were used to make the clothing worn by First Nations people. Using historical pictures, figure out which furs were used, how they were used and why those furs might have been chosen.