

Surviving the Wild Pre Activity

Program at Nature Station: Backyard Safari: Secrets of Survival

Grade Level: 3rd - 6th

Group size: any

Setting: Classroom or outside

Vocabulary:

- adaptation: part of an animal that helps it to survive in its habitat
- climate: the average condition of the weather at a place over a period of years as exhibited by temperature, wind velocity, and precipitation
- talon: the claw of a bird of prey
- raptor: a bird that hunts its own food

Concepts: “Animals must acquire their basic needs in order to survive. These include: food, water, shelter, and air. They must also be adapted to the climate of their habitat.”

Materials:

- cards

Preparation: Copy cards onto heavy paper or cardstock and cut out.

Procedure: Hang up the four category cards on the wall or chalkboard. Explain to students that animals have different ways of acquiring their basic needs, and that they use their adaptations to do this. Read each card aloud and have students tell you what basic need each adaptation is helping the animal to acquire. This can be done as a group or as a competitive game. Below are animals in the correct category.

Great Horned Owl (talons)-food
All raptors-food
Rattlesnake-food
Cardinals-food
Frog-food
Red-tailed hawk-food
Red-eared sunfish-oxygen
Alligator snapping turtles-oxygen
Tiger salamander-climate
Groundhog (hibernate)-climate
Wild turkey-climate
Bald Eagle-climate
Turkey vultures-climate

Skunks-climate
Bobcat-shelter/protection
Coyotes-climate
Leopard frogs-water
Great horned owls (moisture)-water
Barred owls-shelter/protection
Viceroy butterfly-shelter/protection
Box turtle-shelter/protection
White-tailed deer-shelter/protection
Groundhog (feet)-shelter/protection

Great Horned Owls have strong, sharp talons that help them catch and hold on to smaller animals.

All raptors have sharp, hooked beaks.

Rattlesnakes have heat sensing pits on their face.

Cardinals have beaks designed to crack hard seeds.

Frogs use their large eyes to help them push things down their throats.

Red-tailed Hawks can see a tiny mouse from a mile away.

Red-eared Sunfish can rake
water over their gills.

Alligator Snapping Turtles
can absorb molecules from
the water through their skin.

Grounghogs hibernate during the cold winter months.

Wild turkeys have very little feeling in their feet.

Bald eagles have 7,000 feathers including tiny down feathers that lay close to their body.

Turkey vultures are black, which absorbs a lot of sunlight.

Tiger salamanders have to regulate their own body temperatures by moving from sun to shade and vice versa.

Skunks feed late in the day during the summer, when it is not too hot outside.

Bobcats have short tails.

Coyotes have long thick fur
in the winter and short fur in
the summer.

Leopard frogs can absorb water through their skin.

The Great Horned Owl gets a lot of the moisture it needs from the food it eats.

Barred Owls are the same color as most tree bark in the forest.

The Viceroy butterfly looks just like the Monarch butterfly, which is poisonous.

Eastern Box Turtles have a hard shell on their back.

White-tail deer have large ears that can turn like satellites.

Groundhogs have feet that
are built for digging.

SHELTER/ PROTECTION

FOOD

OXYGEN

CLIMATE

WATER