



Animal Adaptations Post Visit Guide: 2nd to 9th Grade

These resources will expand upon your zoo visit and provide additional opportunities for your students to learn and explore in the classroom and beyond!

In-Classroom Activities

Build an Ecosystem Bulletin Board

Decorate a bulletin board or part of the wall with a specific habitat. Assign each student an animal and have them research and draw their animal, and write a brief description of the structural and behavioral adaptations. Then they can add it to the habitat mural!

Mimicry Experiment

Start with two different cups for each students; cup A will contain Sprite (or a similar clear, sweet soda) and cup B will contain plain Seltzer water. Have them make visual observations for both cups and compare them, then discuss these observations as a class. Explain that each cup represents a type of butterfly and they will become the predators—allow them to ‘eat’ cup A, and ask how it tastes. Then have them predict the taste of the second butterfly/cup B based on its similarities to cup A. Have them taste cup B, discuss their reactions, and draw the connections to nature and mimics like the Viceroy butterfly.

Extension: Fill a cup C with seltzer water, and a cup D with a darker sweet soda. Explain to students that it is now the next day, and as predators they see two butterflies go by—one that looks just like the two from before (cup C), and one that looks different (cup D). Ask them, which would you choose to eat? Discuss their answers.

Watch & Learn

LIVING THINGS CHANGE

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xDSFIRunlrU>

TYPES OF ADAPTATIONS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnmPdHmRv9o>

Get Involved!

Encourage your students to become citizen scientists and help collect data for real environmental research!

Cedar Creek: Eye on the Wild

Assist in identifying the North American wildlife caught on trail cameras at this biological field station to help scientists better understand the role of predators in ecological health and the structure of biological communities.

<https://www.zooniverse.org/projects/meredithspalmer/cedar-creek-eyes-on-the-wild>

Student Take-Home Worksheet

Do pets have adaptations?

Even though they may not have to survive in the wild, domesticated animals also have special traits that help them explore and thrive! Take some time to observe a pet at home, and record what you find: does the animal move in a special way? Which senses might it use the most?

How do the teeth or beak relate to their diet?

If you do not have any pets at home, choose any kind of domesticated animal that you are familiar with instead!

Animal's Name: _____

Type of Animal: _____

Behavioral Adaptations:

(Examples: vocalizations, diurnal vs nocturnal, social structure)



Physical Adaptations: