



Dear Families,

In this unit, students begin their exploration of animals and animal adaptations by reading a collection of nonfiction texts. Throughout the unit, students investigate how animals use their body parts and senses to survive, how animal families help one another, and how individual animals of the same kind are both similar and different. This unit deepens students' understanding of the natural world and is part of a broader science sequence that spans Kindergarten through 3rd Grade.

Essential Questions

- How do animals use their body parts to survive?
- What behaviors do parents, siblings, and babies engage in to help each other survive?
- In what ways are individual animals of the same kind similar? In what ways can they differ?

Reading

In reading, students will read informational texts about animals and their adaptations, including books like *What Do You Do with a Tail Like This?*, *Living Color*, *What Color Is Camouflage?*, and *Sisters and Brothers: Sibling Relationships in the Animal World*. While reading these books, students learn that:

- Different animals use their body parts in different ways to see, hear, grasp objects, protect themselves, and move from place to place
- Details in an informational text are connected - readers think about how one event makes something else happen
- Illustrations help the reader learn more about a particular idea or topic

Writing

In writing, students apply their learnings about animals as they become authors themselves. Students write a narrative about an animal using its color to camouflage and survive. Then, they write two informational research reports about specific animals and endangered species. Students learn to:

Narrative Writing

- Stories have a beginning, middle, and end.
- Introduce the characters and the setting in the beginning of the story.
- Include details about what happened with each event.
- Engage readers by starting with a sound effect.
- Write an ending that provides a sense of closure.

Informational Writing

- Plan their writing by identifying 2–3 details and a main idea about a topic.
- Plan their writing by carefully selecting facts that tell the reader more about a problem and a related solution.
- Determine the main idea of a topic by thinking, "What do these facts tell about the topic?"
- Introduce the main idea in the first sentence.
- Pose a question within their introduction to capture the readers' interest.
- Add text features, including captions and headings, to provide the reader with more information.

Language & Grammar

In oral and written language, students will learn how to identify and use simple sentences with correct ending punctuation and to write questions using the words *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how*.

Ways to Support Your Student at Home

- Ask your student about how different animals use their body parts to survive. What did they learn about how animals see, hear, or protect themselves? How do the pictures in the books help them understand more about animals?
- Talk to your student about their animal narratives and research reports. What animal did they choose to write about? What interesting facts did they discover? How does their chosen animal use color or body parts to survive?
- Encourage your student to use unit vocabulary at home! Listen and prompt for: *cooperate*, *detect*, *disguise*, *excess*, *imitate*, *maneuver*, *poisonous*, *predator*, *prey*
- Read other books related to this unit with your student, or encourage your student to read on their own:

Non-Fiction Texts by the Same Author

- *Actual Size* by Steve Jenkins
- *Almost Gone: The World's Rarest Animals* by Steve Jenkins
- *Biggest, Strongest, Fastest* by Steve Jenkins
- *Creature Features: Twenty-Five Animals Explain Why They Look the Way They Do* by Steve Jenkins and Robin Page
- *Eye to Eye: How Animals See the World* by Steve Jenkins
- *I See a Kookaburra!: Discovering Animal Habitats around the World* by Steve Jenkins
- *Look Again: Secrets of Animal Camouflage* by Steve Jenkins and Robin Page
- *Move!* by Robin Page and Steve Jenkins
- *My First Day* by Steve Jenkins and Robin Page
- "Never Smile at a Monkey" by Steve Jenkins
- *Stinkiest!: 20 Smelly Animals* by Steve Jenkins
- *Who Am I?: An Animal Guessing Game* by Robin Page and Steve Jenkins

Non-Fiction Texts with Aligned Themes and Topics

- *A Place for Birds* by Melissa Stewart
- *Big Blue Whale* by Nicola Davies
- *National Geographic Readers: Penguins!* by Anne Schreiber
- *Seahorses* by Jennifer Keats Curtis
- *The Vast Wonder of the World: Biologist Ernest Everett Just* by Mélina Mangal
- *What If You Had Animal Ears?* by Sandra Markle