

LESSON | ANIMALS AND TEAMWORK

Humans aren't the only animals who work together! Students will uncover ways that animals cooperate to survive and thrive.

OBJECTIVE

Students will examine how animals rely on group behavior, the food web, and their ecosystems for survival.

STANDARDS NGSS

LS2.D Social Interactions and Group Behavior

3-LS2-1 Animals form groups for survival.

5-LS2-1 Movement of matter among plants, animals, decomposers, and the environment.

SEL

(20 Questions Game)
Work as a team.
Listen and ask questions.
Follow directions.
Take turns.

TIME

60 minutes

MATERIALS

Play Wild Cards!
activity sheet

Prep Write the following Dolittle animal characters on slips of paper: Yoshi (polar bear); Tutu (fox); Dab-Dab (duck); Barry (tiger); Betsy (giraffe); Jip (dog); Plimpton (ostrich); Chee-Chee (gorilla); Mini (sugar glider); Polynesia (parrot).

1 Break students into groups. Hand out character slips to one student from each group. That student should announce the character's name only. Then group members will work together to ask up to 20 yes or no questions to discover what animal matches their character's name. Encourage questions related to animal features, diet, and habitat (e.g., Do you have feathers? Can you breathe underwater? Are you an herbivore? Do you live in a jungle?).

2 Lead a discussion. Ask: *What strategies did your group use to guess their animals? Which parts of working as a team made the task easier, and which parts were more difficult?*

3 Explain that animals often work in groups to get a job done. Ask: *What are some of the reasons animals might work together?* Prompt for ideas central to survival, like protecting their young and finding food, water, and shelter.

For older students: Prompt discussions about how the food webs in habitats provide animals with energy from the sun via teamwork among plants, herbivores, carnivores, and decomposers.

4 Distribute the Play Wild Cards! activity sheet. Have students work in pairs to cut out the cards, then rearrange them

to match each animal to its cooperative behavior or relationship to its ecosystem.

5 Have students write a journal entry describing an animal's behavior as though they are observing it in the wild.

For younger students: Encourage them to focus on group behavior.

For older students: Encourage them to focus on the food web.

Activity Sheet Answer Key: sugar gliders/spot food at night; gorillas/"babysit"; polar bears/swim in icy water; ducks/dive underwater; ostriches/take turns incubating.



BRAIN BREAK

Sit in a circle. Shout out the name of an animal and toss a ball to a student. Students should say a physical attribute of that animal, name a new animal, and toss the ball to a classmate. Repeat.

Play Wild Cards!

Doctor Dolittle keeps a journal to record his research about animals. First, learn about his animal friends by cutting out and matching each animal with its fun fact. Then imagine you are a behaviorist and write what you observe about an animal in the wild.



Sugar Glider



Mothers and fathers take turns rotating and incubating the eggs in their sandy nest.

Gorilla



These swimmers can take long dips in icy Arctic waters thanks to an insulating layer of blubber and a thick, furry coat.

Polar Bear



These animals press the air out of their feathers so they can dive underwater to find food in their wetland habitat.

Duck



Thanks to their large eyes, these nocturnal creatures can spy something yummy to eat, even in the darkest night.

Ostrich



These creatures help raise and care for babies in their troop even if they're not the parent—it's kind of like "babysitting," but in the jungle!