Name _____ Date _____

Spotting adaptations

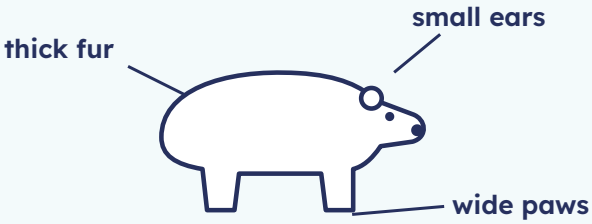
An adaptation is a feature or a behaviour that helps a living thing survive.

1 Learn

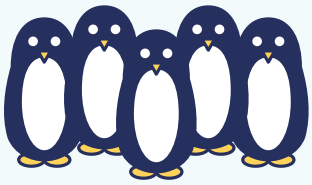


The features and behaviours that help a living thing survive where it lives are its **adaptations**. They are **inherited**: passed down from its parents.

Body feature: something it HAS



Behaviour: something it DOES



huddling to share warmth

Example: a hedgehog



1. **Has or does?** It **has** sharp spines. When scared, it **rolls into a ball**.
2. **Born with it?** Yes: young hedgehogs inherit both from their parents.
3. **How does it help?** A fox or badger gets a mouthful of spines, while the soft face and tummy stay tucked away.

So: spines = **body feature** rolling into a ball = **behaviour**

Flip's tip: ask: does it **have** it or **do** it? Then: how does it help it find food, stay safe, keep warm or cool, or raise young?

Warm up: write **F** for a body feature or **B** for a behaviour.

☐ webbed feet	☐ migrating for winter	☐ sharp claws
☐ hibernating in winter	☐ long eyelashes	☐ hunting at night

Grown-ups: schools may call body features "physical" or "structural" adaptations, and behaviours "behavioural" ones. The key idea: animals don't decide to grow an adaptation; they are born with it.

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2 Try it together a child and a grown-up, about 10 minutes



Adaptation hunt

You need: a window, garden or park to look out at (or a pet at home), this sheet and a pencil.

1. Spend about 5 minutes looking for living things: birds, squirrels, snails, insects, a pet. Plants count too! Watch quietly; don't touch wild animals.
2. Choose one. What **body features** can you see: legs, beak, ears, eyes, colour, fur or feathers?
3. Watch what it **does**: hop, hide, dig, fly off, freeze, look around? That's a behaviour.
4. Talk about how each one helps it survive. Fill in a row, then find another living thing.

Living thing	A body feature	A behaviour	How do they help it survive?

Grown-ups: a blackbird has a pointed beak (feature) for pulling up worms, and it flies off when you get close (behaviour) to stay safe. If it's raining, use a pet or an animal in a book.

3 Practise

A. Draw a line to match each adaptation to how it helps the animal survive.

a duck's webbed feet ●	● survive winter with little food
a giraffe's long neck ●	● fly almost silently to catch mice
swallows flying south in autumn ●	● push through water when swimming
an owl's soft-edged feathers ●	● find insects in a warmer place
a hedgehog hibernating ●	● reach leaves high up in trees

Spotting adaptations

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B. Sort these adaptations. Write each one in the right column.

thick fur | huddling together | a long, sticky tongue | digging a burrow | colours that match the background | playing dead

Body feature (it has it)	Behaviour (it does it)

C. Ring the **three** that are **not** adaptations, because they aren't inherited.

a dog that learnt to fetch | a cat's sharp claws | a fox's scar from a fight

a bat's big ears | a dog in a raincoat | a woodpecker's strong beak

D. Choose any animal. Name one body feature and one behaviour, and say how each one helps it.

Challenge

Mia says, "Ducks decided to grow webbed feet because they wanted to be good swimmers." Is Mia right? Explain your answer.

I can… Tick when you can.

- ☐ explain what an adaptation is, and that it is inherited
- ☐ tell a body feature from a behaviour
- ☐ say how an adaptation helps an animal to survive