



Super Animal Activity

Recommendations: For students Pre-K to Gr 3. Adult supervision is recommended. Can be done indoors or outside.

Purpose: allow students to gain an understanding of a variety of animal adaptations through discovery, creativity, and play.

Materials:

- Will be entirely up to the student!
- If gathering materials outside, review the importance of not killing living things. If they want to use part of a tree, flower, etc., they can draw it or make a replica from paper/cardboard.

How it Works:

Step 1: Ask the student about their favourite superhero and what abilities that superhero has. Then connect how most superheroes take on characteristics of different animals (fish breathe under water, cheetahs are super-fast, camouflage is like invisibility, etc.) This will lead into the making of a super animal!

Step 2: Referencing the animal fact cards below, ask students what stands out about one animal versus another...what about them is special (teeth, tail, feet, fur, etc.) These are called *adaptations* and allow the animal to survive.

Step 3: Allow the student to pick an animal and then venture outside (or around the house) to find items to represent that animal's unique adaptations. Can be structured like a scavenger hunt!

Step 4: After they have collected the items the student can build a model or dress up as their animal. Students should be encouraged to explain how each item represents a part of the animal and why that part is important for helping the animal survive.

Local Animals & Their Adaptations

Beaver

- Webbed feet
- Wide, flat tail
- Strong, sharp front teeth
- Thick, waterproof fur
- Translucent eyelids so they can see underwater

Turtle

- Very hard shell
- Can pull legs and head into their shell quickly
- Hard beak-like mouth
- Paddle like limbs for swimming
- Claws for moving on land

Bear

- Thick fur
- Big noses that can smell 4 feet underground
- Sticky tongue
- Can store a lot of fat for winter

Snake

- Shed their skin as they grow
- Long tongue
- Flexible body
- Strong jaw
- Backward facing teeth

Porcupine

- Quills to protect themselves
- Quills are anti-septic (they won't infect you or make you sick)
- Feet turned in (like pigeon-toed) to help them climb trees
- Insulate their dens (with scat!) to keep warm in winter

Frog

- Webbed feet
- Long back legs to propel them in the water
- Long fast tongue that can shoot out to catch flies
- Sticky fingers for good grip
- Hold their breath for a very long time
- Breathe air through their skin

Great Blue Heron

- Long thin legs
- Long neck
- Long, thin beak
- Big wide wings
- Binocular Vision –great depth perception!

Rabbit

- Fluffy feet
- Strong, sharp front teeth
- Very long ears for good hearing
- Fur changes colour with the season
- Get extra nutrients from their food (by eating their own scat!)

Deer

- Fur with three different colours (shades of brown/grey) on each hair
- Antlers
- Strong legs that allow them to run fast and jump far
- Thin legs that end in a pointed hoof
- Flashy tail

Woodpecker

- Strong chisel-like beak
- Thick, spongy skull to absorb impact
- Long tongues with barbs on the end to snatch bugs
- Membranes that protect their eyes from impact and woodchips
- Thick strong necks

Squirrel

- Sharp claws (for good grip on tree bark)
- Different species have different colours of fur (red, black, grey, blonde)
- Very good at burying stashes of food
- Flying Squirrels have an extra stretch of skin between their arms and legs to help them soar through the trees
- Hide in nests and burrows to get through winter

Other Animals!

- There are so many animals in Eastern Ontario! Brainstorm their characteristics, find materials that represent those adaptations, dress up, act them out and just keep having fun!