



AT THE ZOO I SAW...

Learning about animal body coverings



GRADE 1

KEY WORDS

- fur
- feathers
- scales

STANDARDS

- SCI.1.3.1

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn that animals have different body coverings depending on what class they belong to:
 - Mammals - fur or hair
 - Birds - feathers
 - Reptiles - dry scales
 - Amphibians - moist, smooth skin
 - Fish - wet, slimy scales

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Many cats, such as leopards, jaguars, ocelots, and cheetahs wait, camouflaged among the leaves, until their prey is within striking distance.
- Baby animals sometimes have spots to keep them hidden while they are otherwise defenseless. A deer fawn will lie perfectly still curled up on the forest floor, and remain undetected by predators that may pass.
- Ground-nesting birds, such as whippoorwills, woodcocks, plovers, and quail, have feathers with patterns that make them blend into the leaves or underbrush. Their eggs are brown in color to help with camouflage as well.
- Types of Body Coverings
 - So we can study them more easily, animals are grouped into classes according to their characteristics.
 - One of the main characteristics that is used to distinguish one class of animals from another is type of skin covering. Mammals have hair or fur, birds have feathers, reptiles have dry scales, amphibians have soft, moist skin, and fish have wet, slimy scales.
 - Although each skin covering is useful in many ways, the focus of this information is how various colors and patterns help an animal's chances for survival.
 - Animals often find it necessary to hide in order to escape enemies or to catch something to eat. Skin that helps an animal blend into its surroundings is an obvious advantage for both predators and prey.
- Body Coverings that Help Hide Animals
 - Birds and mammals that hide among the bushes often have spotted skin. Up close, their coats look like patches of sunlight in a forest.





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PROCEDURE

- Give each student a copy of the “At the Zoo I Saw...” worksheet.
- Ask them to predict how many animals they will find with each type of body covering; record their predictions for comparison after the trip.
- Instruct the students to make tally marks in the appropriate boxes as they walk around the zoo.
- When they return to the classroom, students can count their tally marks, and compare the actual numbers with the predictions they made before the trip.

RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT

- Check to be certain each student has found an animal for each category listed on the attached worksheet.

EXTENSIONS

- I Spy: While small groups of students are walking through Dr. Diversity’s Rain Forest Research Station, give them a few minutes to choose an animal that will be their “secret animal.” When everyone has chosen, let them take turns giving clues about their animals until someone guesses the identity of their “secret animal.”



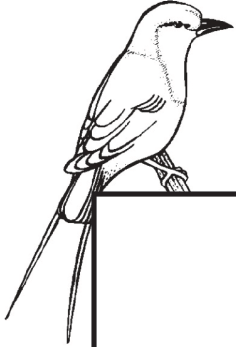


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Name _____



_____ Animals with fur

_____ Animals with dry scales

_____ Animals with wet scales



_____ Animals with feathers

_____ Animals with smooth, wet skin

