Animal Adaptations

Introduction

* Start by asking students to discuss the following question: What do people do to adapt to winter weather?
* Explain to students that **adapt** means to change something about your appearance, behavior, or surroundings to make it easier to live and survive.
* Ask students to volunteer how they adapt summer weather. (Dress lighter, drink cold water, swim…)
* Tell students that animals must also adapt to their **habitat**, (place where they live) to survive.

Instruction

* Tell students that there are two basic ways that animals adapt to their habitats.
* One way is by changing the way that they look. This is called a **physical adaptation**. For example, a deer can **camouflage**, or blend in, with its brown forest surroundings. A duck has webbed feet to help it swim in the water.
* Ask students to share some other physical adaptations that they know of.
* Another way an animal adapts to its habitat is by changing the way it acts. This is called a **behavioral adaptation.** For example, a bear hibernates in the winter. Geese fly south for the winter.
* Ask students to share some other behavioral adaptations that they know of.

Activity

* Explain that students will be creating a new animal! They can use supplies to draw a picture of their animal or create a three-dimensional replica.
* Students will choose the habitat in which their animal will live.
* The animal they create must demonstrate at least two physical adaptations.
* When students are finished creating their animals, they must write about the two physical adaptations as well as two behavioral adaptations that their animal has.

Assessment

* Use the students' written work to determine that they understand the difference between physical and behavioral adaptations, and that their adaptations match the landforms and climate of the habitat.

Closing

* Have students set their animals and written work on their tables or desks. The class can walk around the room and look at their classmates' creative work!