



Animal Features & Adaptations

Outdoor Classroom Field Journal Activity Lesson Plans & Resources

Online Lesson Plans & Resources: <https://www.alabamawildlife.org/oc-activity-animal-adaptations/>

Students will explore the outdoor classroom as they look for an animal to observe, and then they will use their observations to determine which of the animal's features or adaptations of its external body parts help it survive, grow, and reproduce.

Example Discussion Questions & Answers (online as a PowerPoint or PDF)

Q: How does a tiny ant stay alive when everything is so much bigger?

A: *It can hide & live in its anthill, but it has to come out to search for food.*

Q: How does the size of the ant help it survive?

A: *It can hide easily from predators (other animals that might want to eat it), and duck into small places.*

Q: How is an ant's body different than ours?

A: *We are humans. Our bodies have hair and soft skin, while they have a hard exoskeleton that provides support and protection.*

A: *An ant has 2 antennae on its head that reach out to touch, taste, and smell everything. Humans' bodies have 2 arms & 2 hands to reach out to touch, a mouth to taste & a nose to smell.*

A: *An ant's body has mandibles for holding and carrying things, biting, and digging. Humans' bodies have 2 arms and hands to hold and carry things, and we have teeth for biting.*

A: *An ant has 2 compound eyes that contain hundreds of camera-like lenses that help detect movement on both sides of the ant without it having to turn its head. Humans have 2 eyes that have 1 camera-like lens that allows us to see in great detail, but we cannot see things next to us without moving our heads left or right.*

Q: What is special about an ant's body that helps it survive?

A: *The neck joint of a common American field ant can withstand pressures up to 5,000 times greater than its own body weight, so it can carry food back to its colony in the anthill.*

Q: What other types of animals could we find in the outdoor classroom? How do their external parts (bodies, feet, skin/covering, eyes, ears, mouths, etc) help them survive and grow?

A: *Answers will vary such as birds' feathers help them fly away from predators, turtles' shells protect them from predators, and a bee's tongue (called proboscis) is long and shaped like a tube so that it can suck nectar from flowers.*

