

Curious Creatures

Teacher Notes

Secondary (7-10)

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

The Curious Creatures activity highlights the diversity of living things and the features and adaptations that aid their survival. Each creature has evolved through natural selection to survive in their environment. Students are invited to reflect upon the diversity of species in our world, matching each animal with a clue about a unique feature of that animal.

INSTRUCTIONS

Please note - This activity requires a set of Curious Creature cards which can be purchased here: <https://sustainability.ceres.org.au/education-resources/ceres-education-cards/>

1. Facts and Animals

Hand out fact cards to each person in the group. Have everyone read theirs aloud and see if anyone can make a guess as to what animal the card is describing. Have a look at the animal cards. Which clue do you think matches with what animal? Refer to the back of the animal card for more information and to find out if you were correct.

2. Discussion

1. Describe how particular features and adaptations of these creatures aid their survival
2. Classify the different animals based on similarities and differences in particular features
3. Sharks date back to over 400 million years ago. How might these creatures have evolved and survived through natural selection?
4. How do human activities affect biodiversity and what are the consequences?

SUGGESTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

Formative

1. Participation in the Curious Creatures activity
2. Completion of the Discussion questions above

BACKGROUND NOTES

Our world is filled with amazingly quirky creatures with outlandish behaviours and it's hard not to be curious about what secrets have yet to be unravelled. Australia alone is home to between 600,000 and 700,00 species. Approximately 84% of Australian flora, 83% of Australian mammals and 45% of Australian birds are found nowhere else in the world.

The Curious Creatures cards have been designed by CERES Education and are divided into 2 sets of cards: Animal Cards (species from Australia and around the world), and Fact Cards. These cards can be used to match facts with the correct animals, and as conversation starters to encourage audiences to share their own amazing facts about the natural world. They can also be used as a tool to draw inspiration from nature and encourage celebration and protection of the environment.

ACCESS THIS ACTIVITY

Visit the **CERES School of Nature and Climate** website to download the activity - <https://sustainability.ceres.org.au/education-resources/curriculum-activities/>

Curriculum and RSS Links

KEY CONCEPTS

Biodiversity, Species, Adaptation, Evolution, Habitats, Environmental Change

KEY LEARNING INTENTIONS

1. Students will be able to describe the use of animal body parts for different purposes
2. Students will be able to explain how particular adaptations aid survival
3. Students will be able to explain how changes to an environment can impact upon living things

VICTORIAN CURRICULUM

Science

7 - 8 There are differences within and between groups of organisms: classification helps organise this diversity (VCSSU091)	9 - 10 The theory of evolution by natural selection explains the diversity of living things and is supported by a range of scientific evidence (VCSSU120)
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SUGGESTED RESOURCESMART SCHOOLS MODULE LINKS



Undertaking the activity as described above links to the *ResourceSmart Schools Biodiversity Module - actions B1.2, B1.3, B1.4*

Below is a list of extension activities that link to additional actions of the Biodiversity module:

1. Conduct an animal survey within the school grounds, a local park, reserve or at CERES Environment Park and record the findings (*ResourceSmart Schools Biodiversity Module - actions A1.3, B1.1, B1.3*)
2. Students take note of the different bird beak types that exist within their local area, and observe which beaks function for what purpose (*ResourceSmart Schools Biodiversity Module - action B1.3*)
3. Students liaise with a local Friends Group or wildlife organisation to plan and develop an indigenous garden that attracts native animals (*ResourceSmart Schools Biodiversity Module - actions A3.3, C3.1, C3.3*)
4. Students select and research one of the curious creatures and write a report classifying the species, evaluating and interpreting evidence of its evolution over time; including fossil records, chemical and anatomical similarities, and geographical distribution (*ResourceSmart Schools Biodiversity Module - actions B1.1, B1.3*)
5. Students develop a campaign, using various media (newsletters, websites, videos, etc.) to raise awareness for the protection of a local species of plant or animal in the community (*ResourceSmart Schools Biodiversity Module - actions C1.1, C1.3, C3.3*)

Speak to your CERES ResourceSmart Schools Facilitator about further links to the Biodiversity module.