

WHAT MAKES JET THE GERBIL* SPECIAL?

GRADE RANGE: K - 3

TIME: 30 - 45 MINUTES

MATERIALS:

- THE LEGEND OF JET THE GERBIL BY MICHAEL KELLER
- JET THE GERBIL COLORING PAGE - COPY FOR EACH STUDENT
- OPTIONAL:
 - SCISSORS
 - GLUE
 - ONE COPY OF ACTION LABELS FOR EACH STUDENT

STANDARDS:

NGSS - 1 - LS1.A: STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION

ALL ORGANISMS HAVE EXTERNAL PARTS. DIFFERENT ANIMALS USE THEIR BODY PARTS IN DIFFERENT WAYS TO SEE, HEAR, GRASP OBJECTS, PROTECT THEMSELVES, MOVE FROM PLACE TO PLACE, AND SEEK, FIND, AND TAKE IN FOOD, WATER AND AIR. PLANTS ALSO HAVE DIFFERENT PARTS (ROOTS, STEMS, LEAVES, FLOWERS, FRUITS) THAT HELP THEM SURVIVE AND GROW.

LS3.B: VARIATION OF TRAITS. INDIVIDUALS OF THE SAME KIND OF PLANT OR ANIMAL ARE RECOGNIZABLE AS SIMILAR BUT CAN ALSO VARY IN MANY WAYS.

NGSS - 3-LS4-2: INHERITANCE AND VARIATION OF TRAITS. USE EVIDENCE TO CONSTRUCT AN EXPLANATION FOR HOW THE VARIATIONS IN CHARACTERISTICS AMONG INDIVIDUALS OF THE SAME SPECIES MAY PROVIDE ADVANTAGES IN SURVIVING, FINDING MATES, AND REPRODUCING.

OVERVIEW:

IN THIS LESSON, STUDENTS WILL GATHER INFORMATION FROM READING THE LEGEND OF JET THE GERBIL AND COME UP WITH SUGGESTIONS OF HOW GERBILS IN THE WILD USED THEIR BODY PARTS TO SURVIVE IN THEIR NATURAL HABITAT.

VOCABULARY:

TRAITS: PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF A LIVING THING

INTRODUCTION

READ THE LEGEND OF JET THE GERBIL.

HAND OUT COPIES OF THE JET THE GERBIL COLORING PAGE. TELL STUDENTS TO COLOR IN THE PICTURE OF JET THE GERBIL, THEN HAVE THEM LOOK AT THEIR PICTURES.

WHAT KIND OF AN ANIMAL IS JET? WHAT DO YOU SEE THAT SHOWS JET ISN'T A PERSON/HUMAN?

ANIMALS USE THEIR SPECIAL BODY PARTS TO HELP THEM SURVIVE IN NATURE. SOMETIMES ANIMALS HAVE SIMILAR BODY PARTS, AND SOMETIMES THEY ARE DIFFERENT. WHAT DOES YOUR BODY HAVE IN COMMON WITH JET THE GERBIL?? HOW ARE YOU DIFFERENT FROM JET THE GERBIL?

APPLICATION

ANIMALS HAVE DIFFERENT BODY PARTS THAT HELP THEM SURVIVE IN DIFFERENT WAYS. HOW DO YOU THINK THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF A GERBIL HELP THEM TO SURVIVE IN NATURE? ALLOW SOME TIME FOR BRAINSTORMING 'HYPOTHESES' ABOUT GERBILS, THEN SUGGEST THAT THE CLASS SHOULD DO SOME RESEARCH TO FIND MORE INFORMATION.

YOUNGER STUDENTS: *SUMMARIZE THE GERBIL FACTS – IN NATURE, WILD GERBILS LIVE IN AREAS THAT ARE VERY DRY. IT IS SOMETIMES VERY HOT AND SOMETIMES VERY COLD. THERE ARE WILD CATS THAT WANT TO EAT THE GERBILS. GERBILS DIG TUNNELS INTO THE GROUND TO STAY SAFE AND KEEP FROM GETTING TOO HOT OR TOO COLD. BECAUSE THERE ISN'T A LOT OF WATER, THERE ISN'T A LOT OF FOOD, SO GERBILS EAT A LOT OF DIFFERENT FOODS: SEEDS, PLANTS, ROOTS AND EVEN BUGS! THEY LIVE IN GROUPS AND BEAT THEIR TAILS ON THE GROUND TO WARN OTHER GERBILS OF DANGER.*

HAVE STUDENTS CUT OUT THE LABELS AT THE END OF THIS HANDOUT AND GLUE THEM TO THEIR PICTURE OF JET THE GERBIL, TO LABEL THE WAYS THEY USE THEIR BODY PARTS TO SURVIVE.

OLDER STUDENTS: *READ THROUGH 'GERBIL FACTS' AT THE END OF THE BOOK AND/OR CHALLENGE STUDENTS TO TRY TO FIND MORE INFORMATION FROM BOOKS OR WEBSITES ON WILD GERBIL HABITATS. SEE 'RECOMMENDED READING' FOR SUGGESTED RESOURCES. HAVE STUDENTS WRITE LABELS ON THEIR PICTURE TO SHOW WHAT GERBILS CAN DO WITH THEIR DIFFERENT BODY PARTS (HEAR WILD CATS, DIG TUNNELS, SEE FOOD/WILD CATS, SMELL FOOD, KEEP WARM)*

CONCLUSION

EVEN THOUGH ALL GERBILS HAVE THE SAME BODY PARTS, NOT ALL GERBILS ARE THE SAME. SOMETIMES, GERBILS CAN HAVE TRAITS THAT MAKE THEM EXTRA-GOOD AT DOING SOME THINGS. HOW WAS JET THE GERBIL DIFFERENT FROM OTHER GERBILS?

REVIEW THE TEXT: *JET WAS VERY BIG, HE RAN FAST AND CHEWED QUICKLY. HE WAS VERY BRAVE, AND EVEN TRIED TO STAND UP TO A CAT!*

WHAT DO YOU THINK JET THE GERBIL WOULD BE EXTRA GOOD AT DOING IF HE LIVED IN NATURE?

DO YOU THINK JET'S CURIOSITY COULD ALSO GET HIM IN TROUBLE IF HE LIVED IN NATURE?

EVEN THOUGH OUR PETS SOMETIMES HAVE GREAT-GREAT GRANDPARENTS [ANCESTORS] THAT CAME FROM THE WILD, THEY ARE NOW PETS, AND WOULDN'T KNOW HOW TO SURVIVE IN NATURE. IT IS OUR JOB TO PROTECT THEM AND KEEP THEM SAFE, JUST LIKE MICHAEL AND HIS DAD DID FOR JET THE GERBIL!



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WARN OF DANGER	HEAR WARNINGS	SMELL FOOD	CHEW SEEDS



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