Animal Trading Cards

Purpose
To learn about diversity in the animal kingdom by making and playing with animal trading cards.

Process Skills
Classify, Collect data, Communicate

Background
All animals share similar needs—food, body covering, movement, habitat, and more. But the way in which animals meet these needs varies quite a bit. As students learn about different animal species, they will discover similarities and differences in the traits of those species.

Time – Approximately 1–1½ hours

Grouping – Individuals, small groups, and whole class

Materials
- ❑ pre-formatted animal cards (provided)
- ❑ cardstock
- ❑ glue stick
- ❑ scissors
- ❑ pencil

Optional Materials
- ❑ blank animal cards (provided)
- ❑ reference materials (e.g., animal books, encyclopedias, the Internet)
- ❑ coloring tools
- ❑ nature and other magazines that can be clipped

Procedure

Project 1: Making Animal Cards

In this activity, you may choose to use the pre-formatted animal cards provided. Cut the cards apart and mount them on cardstock, so each card has a picture of an animal on one side and spaces to record information about that animal on the other side. Or you can follow the steps below to have students research animals and create their own cards. Project 3 works best with the pre-formatted cards.

1. Give each student one page with four blank animal cards. Also give each student a piece of cardstock and a glue stick. Have them mount the page onto the cardstock. **TIP:** Have extra copies available in case students need to start over.
2. Have students cut along the lines so they each have four cards mounted on cardstock.
3. Ask students to choose four animals they would like to research. (You might want to provide a list of animals for which you have reference sources.) Explain how to find the information on the data side of the cards.
4. On the blank side of each card, have students draw and color a picture of one of their animals, or have students cut out a picture from a magazine to glueonto it.
5. On the printed side of each card, have students use their research to circle the trait in each category that best describes their animal. If an animal's trait is not listed, help students write it in an appropriate spot on the card.

Project 2: Group Trading

1. Put students into groups and have students bring their animal cards. Try to group students so that a wide variety of animal cards is found in each group.
2. Tell each group to combine their cards to form a "hand" of cards.

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3. On the board, write all of the traits from the categories on the cards (lives in water, eats plants, swims, etc.). Challenge the groups to trade cards with other groups until they have an animal card for as many of the different traits as possible.
4. For an element of competition, you can declare that the group with the most traits represented in its hand will win. To measure this, you might use a tally on the board for each group as you call out each of the traits.

Project 3: Animal Card Game

This game works best with the pre-formatted cards, because they represent a balance among the traits. If this is the first time using the pre-formatted cards, prepare them as described in Project 1, so that each card has data on one side and a picture on the other. Have students fill out the data side of the cards, researching the traits if necessary.

1. Have each group combine its animal cards into one stack, shuffle them, and then deal four cards to each group member. Have students hold their animal cards so they can read the data side. (If there are extra cards, have students place them data side down in one draw stack.)
2. Announce a trait to be played first. The first student who can find a card in his/her hand with that trait may play it first, by starting a discard pile with the data side facing up.
3. With play moving in a circle to that player's left, each student may place one animal card on the discard pile that shares any trait with the previously played animal.
4. If a student doesn't have an animal that shares a trait with the card on the top of the pile, the student's turn is skipped. If no one in the group has a card that shares a trait with the top card in the discard pile, the current player may play any card in his/her hand. (If there are extra cards, you can make students draw cards from the draw stack until they find one to play. If this stack becomes empty, flip all the played cards except the top one, reshuffle them, and set up the draw stack again.)
5. Play continues until one player has discarded all of his/her cards. Encourage groups to restart the game once someone wins.

Discussion Questions

Use these questions to guide a discussion about the project.

1. What were some animals that moved the same way?

   Answers will vary. Examples include lizard and snake or bear and elephant.

2. What were some animals that had a similar body covering?

   Answers will vary. Examples include fox and lion or snail and tortoise.

3. What were some animals that live in different places?

   Answers will vary. Examples include otter and bat or prairie dog and polar bear.

4. What were some animals that eat different types of food?

   Answers will vary. Examples include pig and duck or frog and eagle.

5. Were you surprised that certain animals were the same in some ways? Which ones?

   Students may not have realized that certain animals have so much in common, despite their difference in appearance. For example, an elephant and a koala bear both live above ground, both walk, and both eat plants. Students can probably find many other examples.

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6. If you were making a card about yourself, what would you circle?

Students would likely indicate that they live above ground, eat plants and animals, walk, and are covered in skin.

7. Which animals on your cards live in this area?

Answers will vary. Discuss with students that certain animals are native to the area in which they live while non-native animals may be found in zoos, on farms, or in a family home.

Extensions and Variations

- *Variation:* Conduct classification activities in which students sort their animal cards using new traits (e.g., big to small, pet/not a pet, place of origin). Students may propose more sorting criteria. Alternatively, assign specific types of animals or a specific region to groups of students.
- *Art:* Cover the cards with clear contact paper, packaging tape, or laminate, to give them a protective coating. Display the students' finished cards on mobiles so the class can see both the pictures and the data as the cards twirl in the air.
- *Math:* Compile a class data table for the number of animals with each trait. Use this data to create a graph to visually display the frequency of each trait. You can also create a data table and graph for animals native to your region and compare the results.
- *Research:* Let students add additional details from their research to their cards.
- *Research:* Have students trade cards with a friend. Challenge students to research the traits of the animal pictured without looking at the data on the back of the card. Then allow them to compare their findings with what the maker of the card circled.
- *Fine Arts:* Have students pantomime the behavior of one of their animals, and challenge the class to guess the animal.

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Cut or Fold

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:
under ground in water
above ground

Food:
plants animals plants & animals

Movement:
fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:
fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:
under ground in water
above ground

Food:
plants animals plants & animals

Movement:
fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:
fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:
under ground in water
above ground

Food:
plants animals plants & animals

Movement:
fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:
fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:
under ground in water
above ground

Food:
plants animals plants & animals

Movement:
fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:
fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

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Cut or Fold

Science a-z

© Jupiterimages Corporation

BEAR

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

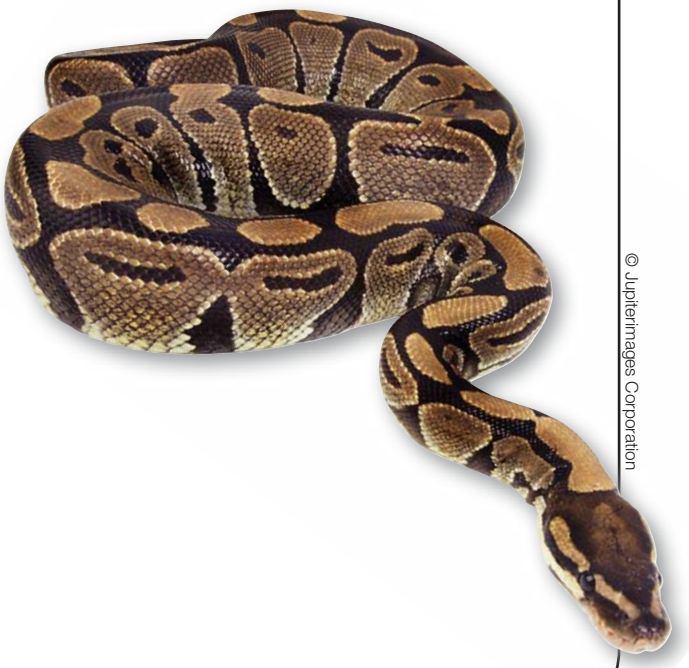
fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

Science a-z



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SNAKE

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

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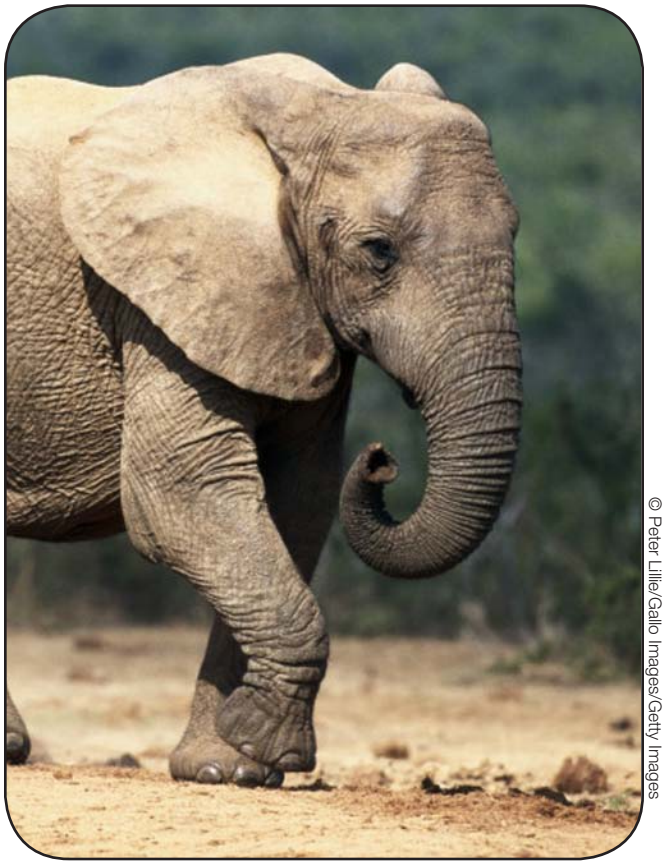
Cut or Fold

Science a-z



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ELEPHANT

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

Science a-z

© Stephen Frink/Getty Images

FISH

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

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Cut or Fold

Science a-z

© Jupiterimages Corporation

FOX

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

Science a-z

© Jupiterimages Corporation

FROG

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

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GAZELLE

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

Science a-z

© Jupiterimages Corporation

EAGLE

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

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Cut or Fold

Science a-z

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HIPPOPOTAMUS

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

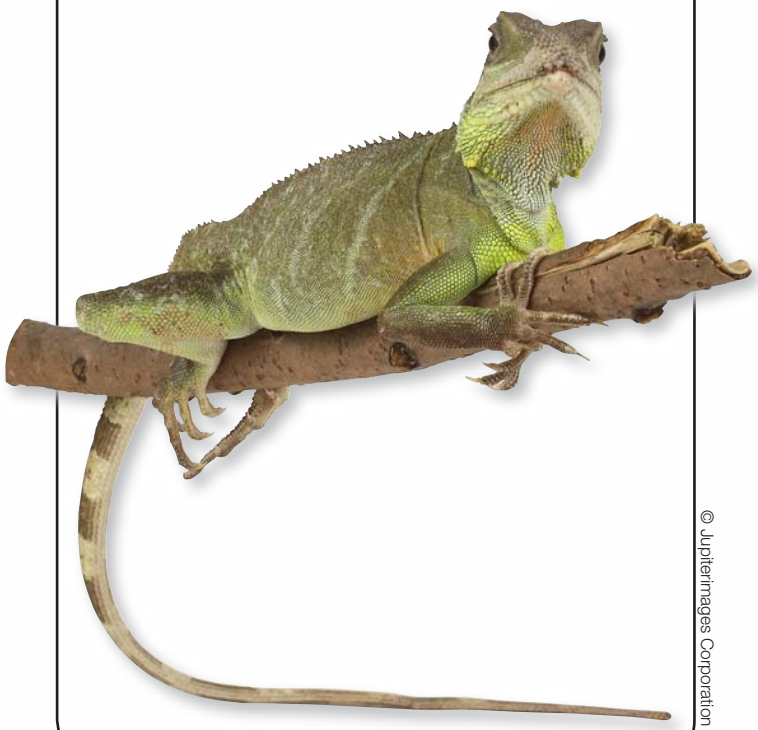
fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

Science a-z



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LIZARD

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

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Cut or Fold

Science a-z

© Jupiterimages Corporation

CAT

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

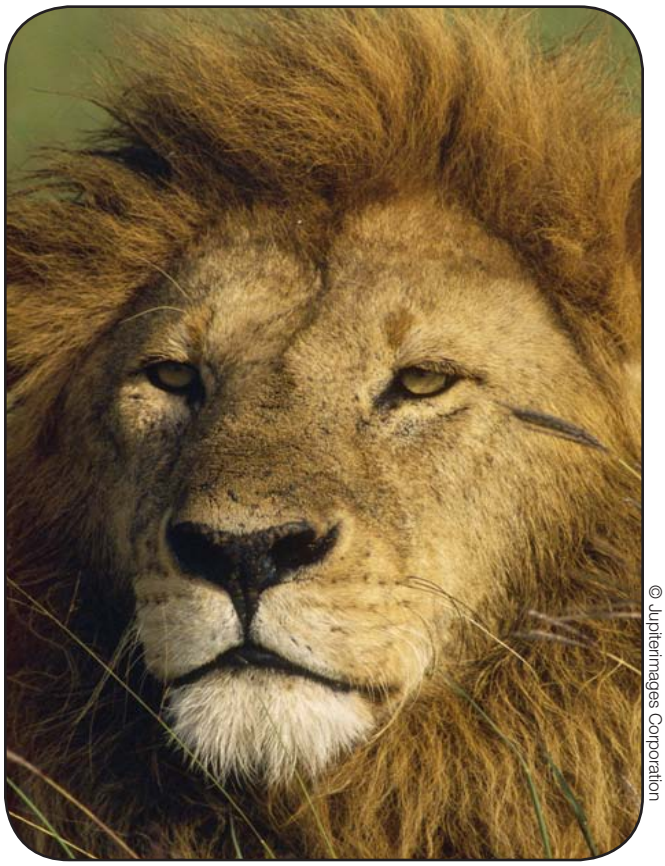
fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

Science a-z



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LION

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

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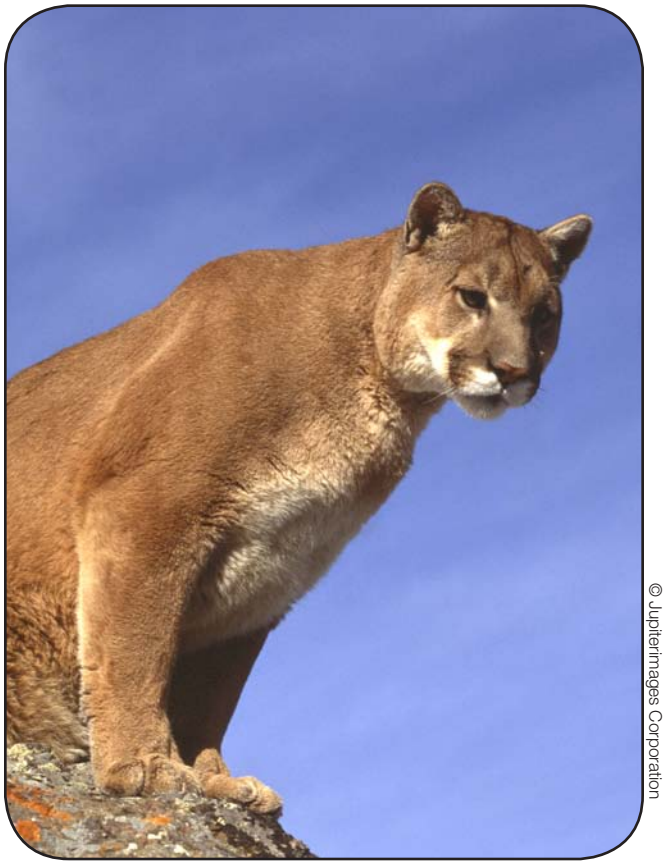
Science a-z



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MOUNTAIN LION

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

Science a-z

© iStockphoto.com/Jan Gottwald

OTTER

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

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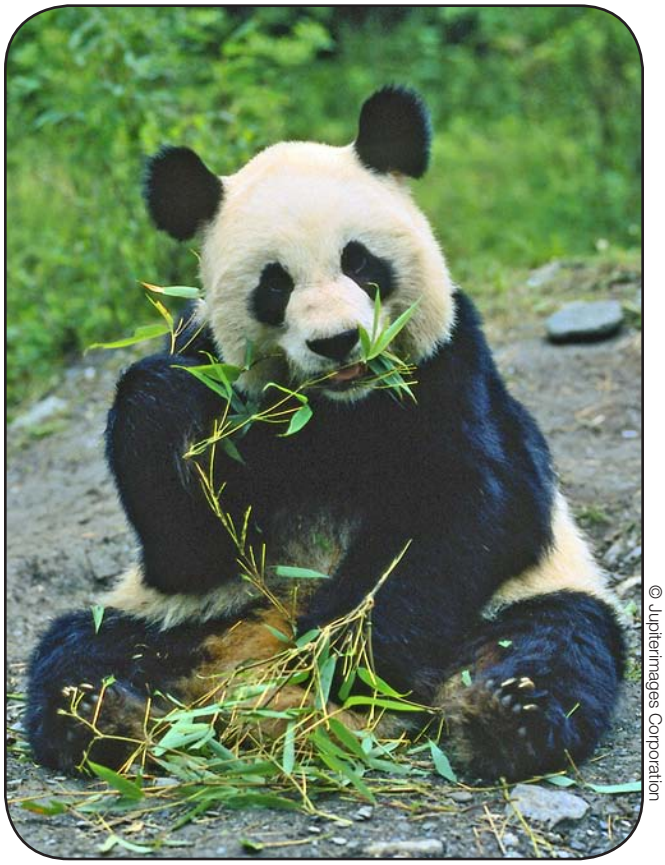
Cut or Fold

Science a-z



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PANDA BEAR

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

Science a-z

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PIG

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

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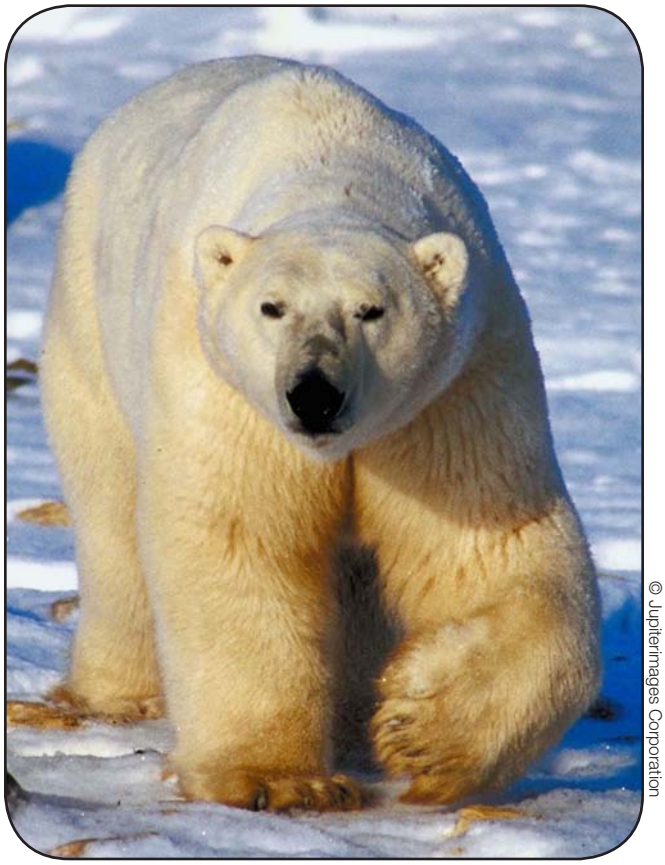
Cut or Fold

Science a-z



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POLAR BEAR

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

Science a-z

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PORCUPINE

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

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Cut or Fold

Science a-z

© Jupiterimages Corporation

PRAIRIE DOG

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

Science a-z

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RACCOON

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

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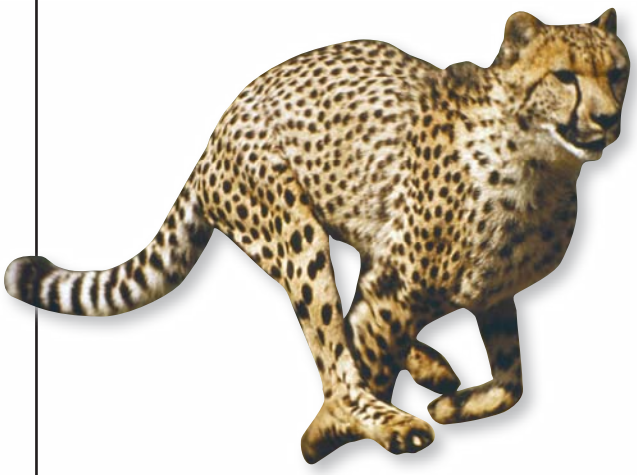
Cut or Fold

Science a-z



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CHEETAH

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

Science a-z

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SNAIL

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

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Cut or Fold

Science a-z

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TORTOISE

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

Science a-z

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MONKEY

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

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BATS

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

Science a-z

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BEAVER

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

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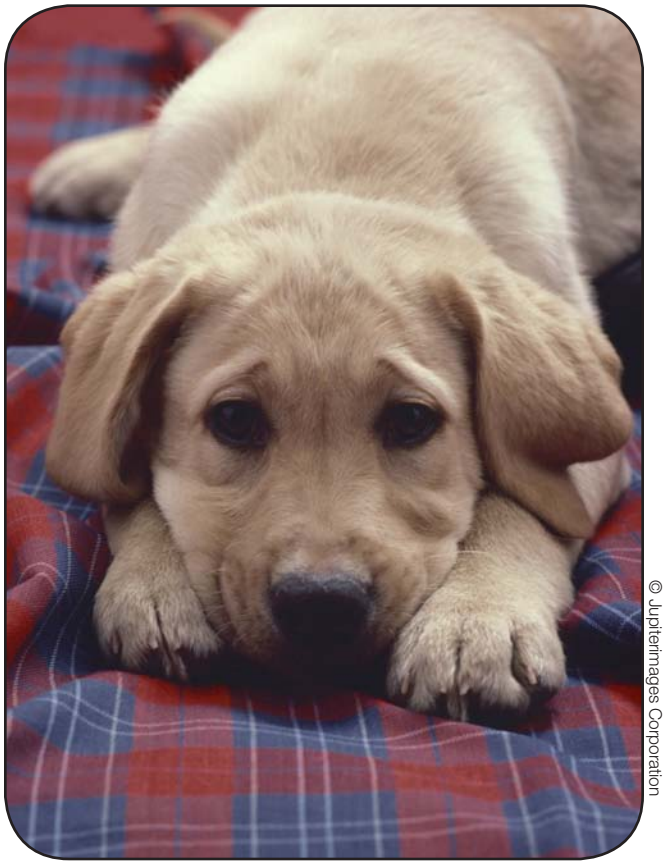
Cut or Fold

Science a-z



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DOG

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

Science a-z

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CHICKENS

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

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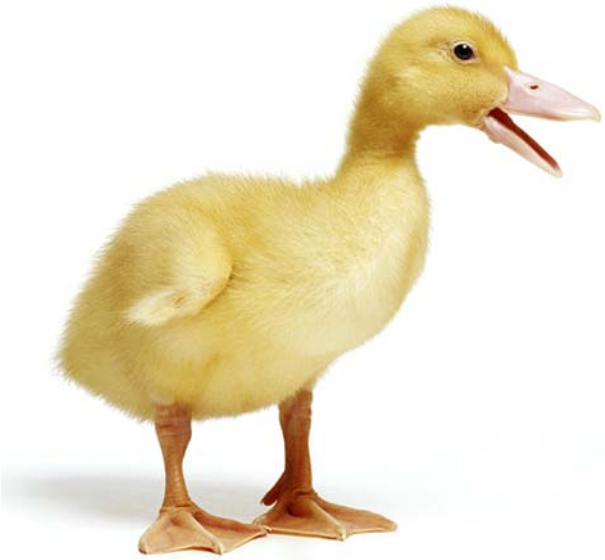
Science a-z



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DUCK

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

Science a-z

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RAT

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

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Cut or Fold

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RABBIT

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

Science a-z

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SHEEP

Science a-z

Animal:

_____

Habitat:

under ground in water
above ground

Food:

plants animals plants & animals

Movement:

fly swim walk slither hop

Body covering:

fur feathers scales skin shell

Card made by:

_____

DATA CARD

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