

Name _____

Characteristics of Living Things WEB QUEST

Goal/Objectives:

All living things share certain characteristics. In this activity you will investigate how one particular animal displays these characteristics and how these characteristics help that animal to survive in its environment.

Introduction:

All living things share the following characteristics. Living things can:

1. Metabolize (including eating, digesting, and excreting)
2. Grow and develop
3. Respond to the environment
4. Reproduce
5. Adapt to the environment

Most organisms also show some kind of movement and have a possibility of extinction if their normal environment is significantly changed.

The special way that each organism exhibits these characteristics makes it suitable for a specific environment. Organisms can survive only in certain environments because of their particular characteristics.

Task:

Pick an organism that interests you. Using the Internet, any of the resources listed below, or any other resources you have, research how that animal shows the characteristics listed below and how these characteristics help this animal to survive in its environment. Using the table provided on the back, answer as many of the following questions as possible while doing your research, and then incorporate them into your table. Feel free to include other things under each topic that may not be mentioned.

1. **Metabolize** – What does this organism eat? How much does this organism need to eat? How often does this organism eat? How does this organism's digestion work? How does this organism excrete waste?
2. **Grow and develop** – How long does it take this organism to reach maturity? How long does this organism usually live? Who takes care of the offspring? How do the offspring learn? Does this organism undergo any metamorphosis?
3. **Respond to the environment** – What does this organism do when faced with danger? Does this organism have a territory? How is this territory marked and protected? How does this organism protect its young? How does this organism get along with others of its kind?
4. **Reproduce** – How long does it take this organism to reproduce? How many offspring are born at once? What kind of reproduction does this organism use?
5. **Adaptations** – How do the characteristics that this organism displays help it to adapt and survive in its environment? Does this organism have special features to help it survive?
6. **Move** – How fast does this organism move? Does it tend to move for short periods of time or long periods of time? When is this organism the most active? Does this organism migrate?
7. **Extinction** – What things could happen to this organism to cause its extinction? Does this organism have special needs that may not be met in the future? Could this organism be moved to another location to help it from becoming extinct? What things would need to be considered if this organism were moved to a zoo or other artificial environment? What precautions should humans take to ensure the survival of this organism?

Resources:

1. <http://www.wildlifeafrica.co.za/animalbehavior.html>
2. <http://fln-con.yazigi.com.br/magicarticles.htm>
3. <http://www.sandiegozoo.org/index.html>
4. <http://www.worldbookonline.com/>
5. <http://www.zoobooks.com/>
6. <http://encarta.msn.com/>
7. <http://www.britannica.com/>

Characteristic of Life	How my Organism Exhibits that Characteristic
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