

Animal Needs & Groups

Safari Basecamp with Wildling

Learning target

Classify animals using evidence and describe their needs.



Before you begin

Use the reference page and discussion prompts on their own, or open the optional browser adventure. No earlier lesson or physical kit is required.

For online play: use an internet-connected current browser with local storage enabled. Read the three-part Gemling briefing, answer the quick check, and apply the evidence at three checkpoints. Retry feedback supports review; results are not a secure test or gradebook.

Use for teacher-led review, science centers or partner practice. Independent readers may need support with the vocabulary below. The design target is grades 3-5; choose support based on the learner.

Vocabulary and concepts to discuss

Food; water; air; shelter; major animal groups; shared traits

Open Safari Basecamp - direct lesson link

Scan the QR code or use the clickable link. This guide is usable offline; the adventure runs on an external educational website.



Animal Needs & Groups - key ideas

1. The first clues

Animals need food, water, oxygen and suitable living conditions. The ways they obtain these needs differ.

2. How the clues connect

Groups can be described by shared traits. Feathers are a bird trait; mammals have hair at some stage and mothers produce milk. Size alone is not a reliable grouping rule.

3. Our evidence record

Our cards show a small feathered bird and a large feathered bird. Their shared feathers support grouping them together despite their different sizes.

Keep the science accurate

Use a few animal groups and evidence. Avoid requiring a full taxonomy or implying every animal has identical senses or parental care.

Apply the evidence

Use a specific observation from this lesson to explain one choice. Point to a clue, then connect that clue to a scientific idea.

Curriculum reference: <https://www.nextgenscience.org/dci-arrangement/4-Is1-molecules-organisms-structures-and-processes>

Talk through the evidence

1. Which shared feature supports the bird group?

Expected answer: Feathers

Reasoning: Groups can be described by shared traits. Feathers are a bird trait; mammals have hair at some stage and mothers produce milk. Size alone is not a reliable grouping rule.

2. Do all animals meet needs in the same way?

Expected answer: No

Reasoning: Animals need food, water, oxygen and suitable living conditions. The ways they obtain these needs differ.

3. Which trait is associated with mammals?

Expected answer: Producing milk for young

Reasoning: Groups can be described by shared traits. Feathers are a bird trait; mammals have hair at some stage and mothers produce milk. Size alone is not a reliable grouping rule.

4. How should we group our two bird cards?

Expected answer: By shared traits

Reasoning: Groups can be described by shared traits. Feathers are a bird trait; mammals have hair at some stage and mothers produce milk. Size alone is not a reliable grouping rule.

Guide the discussion

Ask learners to name the evidence that supports their answer. If an answer differs, revisit the matching key idea on page 2 and invite a revised explanation.

Online rewards: this lesson grants one fixed digital Expedition Discovery. Five saved digital Gemling friends become available only after all six distinct subject lessons are complete, in any order. Digital rewards do not establish physical ownership.