

Adaptation Exploration at the Denver Zoo

Field Trip Guide

Your most important duty is to keep students with you at all times

An adaptation is any behavior or characteristic that helps an individual survive and reproduce.

Chaperone Objectives:

1. To keep students engaged and learning in a safe environment!!!
2. Discuss with students the different adaptations animals need to survive in their natural habitats by observing their behaviors and physical characteristics. You can also use the signage in front of exhibits to find out what they eat, the climate they live in, how they move, etc.

Structuring Your Zoo Experience:

- Investigate at each animal's exhibit...
 - *What does it eat? What are its teeth like?* Ask students if they believe each animal they visit is an herbivore (eats plants), carnivore (eats meat), or omnivore (eats plants and meat).
 - *Where are its eyes?* If they are on the side of its head, it is most likely a prey species. Eyes on the side of the head help the animal to see all around, and hopefully detect predators. If they are in the front of the head, the animal is most likely a predator. Eyes in the front give 3-D vision, which allows the animal to see how far away its prey is.
 - *What kind of climate does it live in? What kind of body covering does it have?* Ex. Thick, white fur – the Arctic, scales – the desert or water
 - *How does it move around?* Ex. Frogs have long, strong legs for hopping, birds have wings and feathers for flying, fish have fins for swimming
- Explore and find...
 - **An animal that lives in the water.**
What is covering its body? What special body parts does it have to move through the water?
 - **A bird with webbed feet.**
Does this bird live on the ground? in trees? in the water? Look for a bird that lives in a tree. How are its feet different?
 - **An animal with big ears.**
What do you think it uses its big ears for? (hearing, cooling down) Can you think of other senses animals need to survive?
 - **An animal with a tail.**
How does this animal use its tail? What other ways do animals use their tails?

Encourage students to learn by observing

Ask questions to keep students involved