

Goals for Animal Studies

In this unit, students explore the relationship between an animal and its habitat, as well as some of the ways animal behaviorists study animals. Through their experiences, students are introduced to the following concepts, skills, and attitudes.

Concepts

- All the living and nonliving elements that surround an animal—such as other animals, plants, climate, water, air, and location—affect the life of that animal.
- One way scientists learn about animals is through close observation over an extended period of time.
- When conducting animal behavior research, scientists follow guidelines to ensure the accuracy of results.
- A habitat is the place where an animal finds the resources—food, water, shelter, and space—necessary to survive and reproduce.
- Each type of animal has specific needs, such as type of food, amount of water, and range of temperature.
- Certain behaviors and body structures enable animals to survive in a particular habitat.
- Humans are one of the only animals that can significantly change their behaviors to live in a variety of habitats.

Skills

- Observing and describing structural characteristics and behaviors of the dwarf African frog, fiddler crab, and millipede.
- Recording observations in an animal log (Science Notebook).
- Developing questions and answering them through behavioral observation and research.
- Comparing and contrasting the dwarf African frog, fiddler crab, millipede, and human.
- Collecting, analyzing, and drawing conclusions from data.
- Supporting conclusions with reasons that are based on observation and experience.
- Predicting, observing, and recording the results of a simple experiment to test an animal's response to a sudden change in its habitat.
- Communicating ideas through writing and discussion.
- Reading to enhance understanding of the interaction between an animal and its habitat.
- Developing proper laboratory techniques that ensure the safety of living things.
- Maintaining animals outside their natural habitats.

Attitudes

- Developing an interest in exploring the characteristics and behaviors of animals.
- Gaining an appreciation for the variety of behaviors exhibited in the animal kingdom.
- Recognizing that humans can learn about themselves by learning about other animals.
- Developing an appreciation for the safe handling and observation of animals.
- Developing positive attitudes toward different forms of animal life.
- Appreciating the knowledge gained by observing animals over time.