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Animal Adaptations



What are adaptations?

Adaptations are changes in an **organism** that help them survive better in their environment. Much of the time, adaptations are the result of evolution. **Evolution** is the change in a species over a very long period of time.

What are the different types of adaptations?

Ecobottle Sample

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Interesting Fact!

An interesting adaptation of the leopard gecko is that it can snap off its tail if it is attacked by a predator.

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What are structural adaptations?

Structural adaptations are changes in the organism's physical appearance. Two examples are camouflage and mimicry. **Camouflage** is when an animal blends into their environment. Can you spot the frog in the picture to the right?



Adaptation – A change in an organism to help it survive better in its environment.

Organism – A living thing.

Evolution – The change in a species over a very long period of time.

Camouflage – When an animal blends into their environment.

Mimicry is when one organism imitates another organism. There are two different types of mimicry. Protective mimicry is when a harmless organism mimics a dangerous organism.



Aggressive mimicry is when a predator pretends to be food preferred by its **prey**. Circle the snake that you think is not dangerous.

What are physiological adaptations?

Ecobottle Sample



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What are behavioral adaptations?

Behavioral adaptations are changes in how an organism acts. An example of a behavioral adaptation is seen in birds. Birds migrate to the south when winter arrives.

What is not an adaptation?

An example of something that is not an adaptation is a **vestigial structure**. This is a structure that developed in an organism's ancestor but it is no longer useful for the organism. An example of a vestigial structure is the tailbone and appendix in humans.

Examples of Adaptations:

- Echo-Acoustic Flower: This flower has leaves shaped like little satellite dishes so that when a bat sends out a signal it sends a strong signal back. This brings the bat to the flower so that it can eat its fruits.

Mimicry – When an organism mimics another organism.

Vestigial structure – A structure that is no longer useful for the organism.

Reading Comprehension Questions

1. What is an adaptation?
2. What is
3. What are
4. What
5. What is a vestigial structure?

Extension Questions:

6. Why do you think that adaptations are important?
7. List three

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