



# Observing Animal Traits

## **Grade Level**

Grade 3

## **Objectives**

This activity is designed to help your at-home student recognize themselves as scientists and think critically about problem-solving. The goal is to teach concepts through discovery and to encourage using scientific thought processes. As with all lessons provided, please feel free to adapt them according to your students' abilities. Take these ideas, make them your own and your students will have a greater chance at success.

## **Materials**

Worksheet at the end of this lesson plan, computer with internet access *or* ability to view backyard animals (for example, at a bird feeder).

## **Procedures**

1. In this activity your student will be observing the physical characteristics of animals. If you live in a location with easy access to native, backyard animals, you can have your student observe local animals. For instance, if you have a backyard with a bird feeder, your students can observe birds. Or if you have a garden, your student can flip over some rocks and observe the bugs underneath. If you do this, you should be careful when you put the rocks back so you do not squish any of the bugs. When watching live animals, you should make sure your student knows that they should not attempt to touch any of the animals that they are observing. When watching animals such as birds or squirrels, they should remain as still and quiet as possible so that they do not scare the animals away.
2. If you do not have access to local animals, you can watch videos of animals online. Below are some pre-recorded videos from the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo's Online Resource Library. You can also look up live animal cams if you wish to watch live footage. There are many zoos, parks, and other organizations that post live footage of animals.
  - a. Bats: <https://resourcelibrary.clemetzoo.com/Video/3338>

- b. Capybara (plus anteaters and spoonbills):  
<https://resourcelibrary.clemetzoo.com/Video/25>
  - c. Fishing cat: <https://resourcelibrary.clemetzoo.com/Video/3341>
  - d. Flamingo: <https://resourcelibrary.clemetzoo.com/Video/3350>
  - e. Indian Crested Porcupine: <https://resourcelibrary.clemetzoo.com/Video/3334>
  - f. Other videos from Cleveland Metroparks Zoo can be found at  
<https://resourcelibrary.clemetzoo.com/>
3. Once you and your child have decided which animal your child wants to observe, help them get set up. Your child can follow the instructions in the attached worksheet to complete the activity.

***Standards***

Ohio Academic Content Standards
Grade 3 Life Science Topic: Behavior, Growth and Changes Offspring resemble their parents and each other.



# Observing Animal Traits Worksheet

Physical traits or characteristics refer to what an animal looks like. Size, fur color, beak shape, and number of toes are all examples of physical traits.

Today, you will be making observations of an animal. An **observation** is the word we use when we watch something very closely. In this case, you will be paying very close attention to what your animal looks like. We often write down our observations so that we can remember them later. Writing our observations also helps our brains to focus on what we are observing.

What kind of animal are you observing today? \_\_\_\_\_

In the spaces below, write down all your observations about the animal's physical traits:

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In the space below, draw a picture of the animal you observed. Make sure to include the traits you observed in your drawing.



Why do you think the animal you observed looks the way it does? Unscramble the words below to help complete the sentence that gives you the answer:

All animals get their traits from their 1. Some traits come from their 2, and some traits come from their 3.

1. SENPTAR \_\_\_\_\_

2. MEHROT \_\_\_\_\_

3. RTHAFE \_\_\_\_\_