EARLY STAGE 1: HOW LIVING THINGS SURVIVE

Early Stage 1: Science
Outcome: STE-SC1-01

WHAT TO EXPECT IN OUR ZOO WORKSHOP

In this hands-on Early Stage 1 workshop, students will meet a range of native Australian animals and explore how living things find air, water and energy in their environments. By observing animal bodies and movements, learners uncover the remarkable adaptations that help each species survive in the wild. Designed to spark curiosity, students are encouraged to connect with the animals around them and understand the needs of living things that sustain life.



LINKS TO CURRICULUM

Science
STE-SC1-01 identifies and describes characteristics of living things, properties of materials, and movement

Living things have characteristics that help them survive in their environment

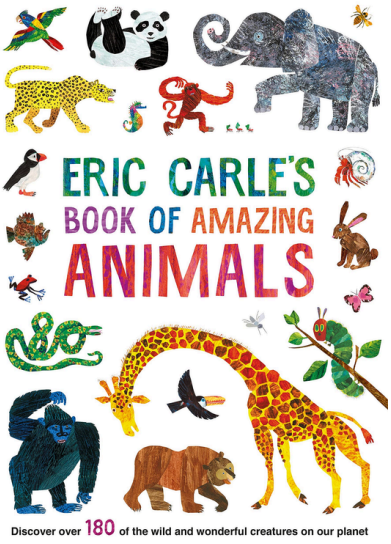
- Describe how living things get air, water and energy to survive in their environment
- Recognise that plants produce their own food, and animals need to find their food
- Examine animal bodies, their body coverings, and how and what they eat
- Observe and group animals based on their characteristics and justify the grouping
- Pose questions to compare the characteristics of living things and non-living things

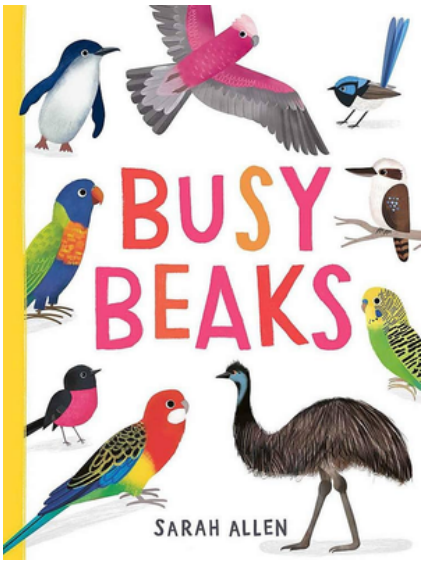
Living things and objects move in different ways

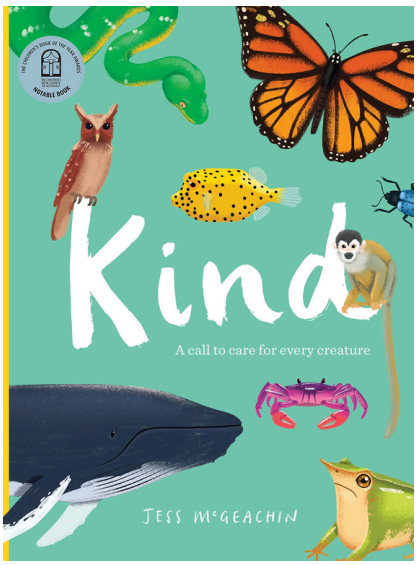
- Observe, describe and categorise the ways in which living things move

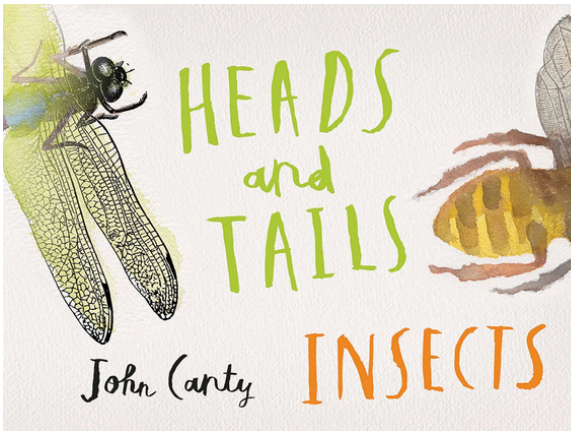
LITERACY SUGGESTIONS

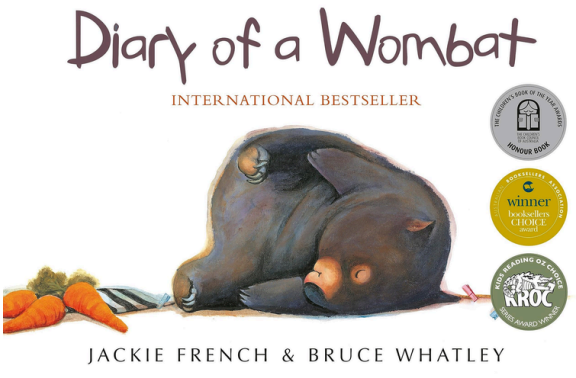
Use beautiful picture books to spark curiosity about living things, inviting students to explore the diversity of life and the beauty of the natural world across different habitats.

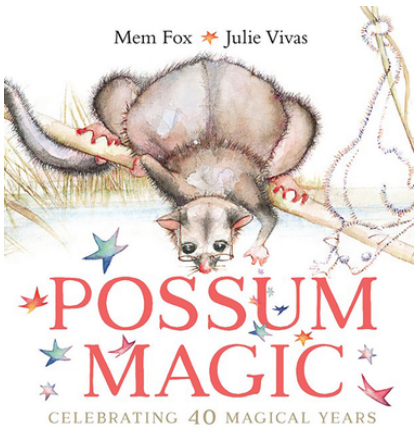


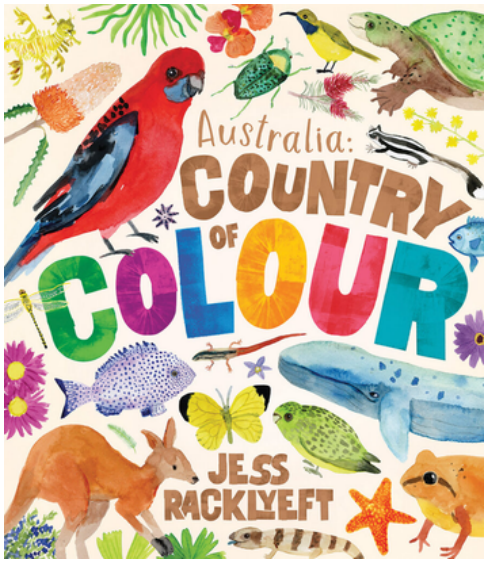










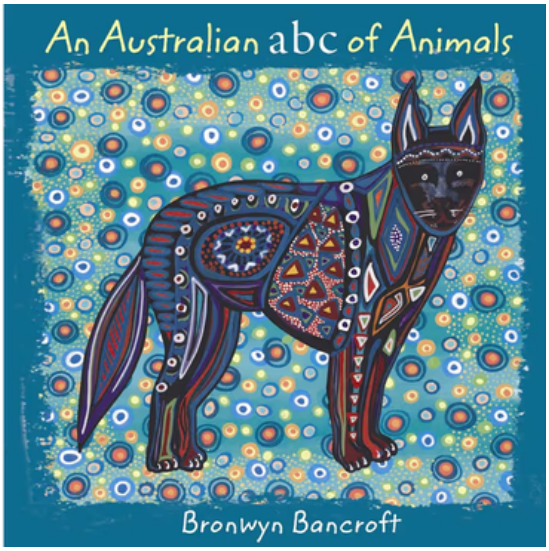


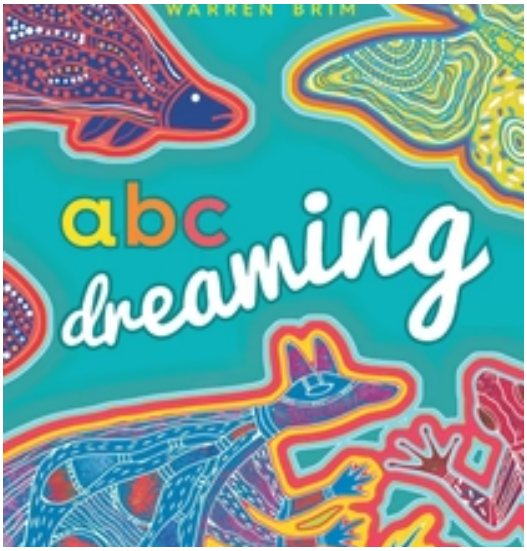


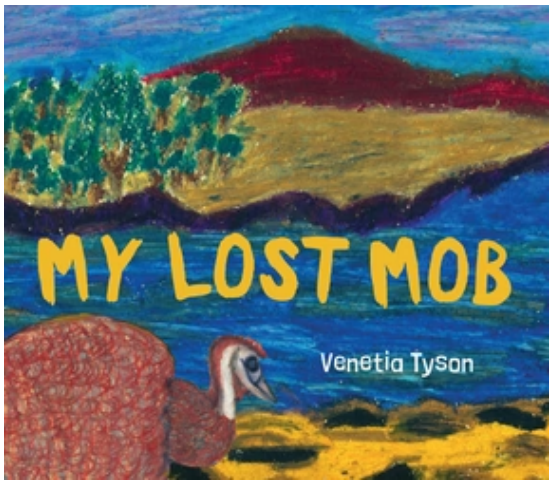
NSW GOVERNMENT | Education

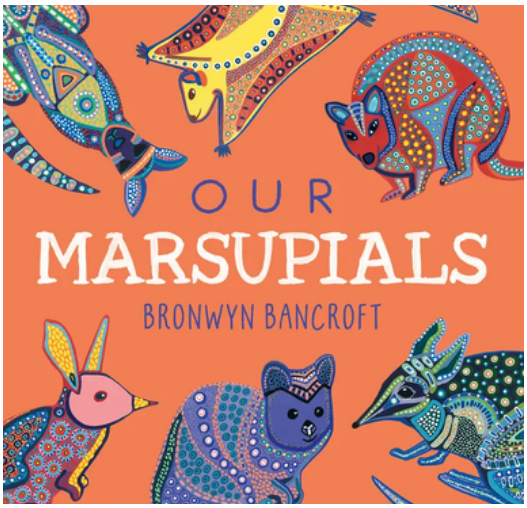
TARONGA ZOO SYDNEY
For the Wild

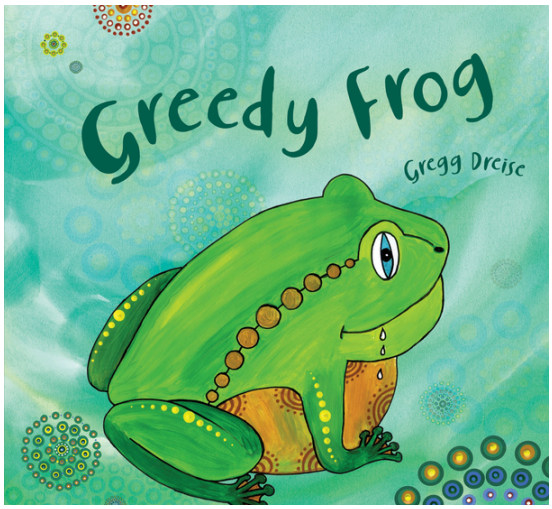
LITERACY SUGGESTIONS - INDIGENOUS AUTHORS

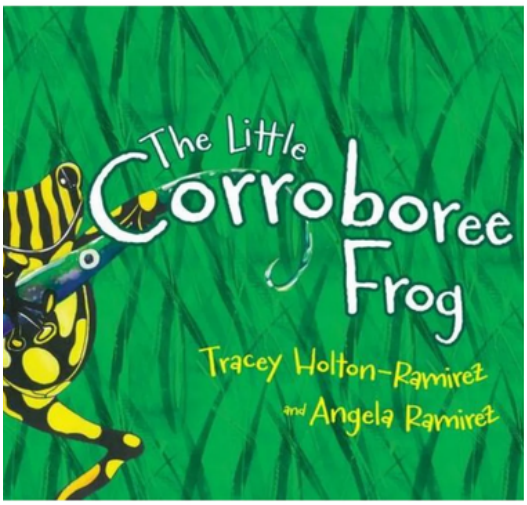












NSW GOVERNMENT | Education

TARONGA ZOO SYDNEY
For the Wild

INTRODUCING LIVING THINGS

Pre-Zoo Visit

NATURE WALK



Take some time to explore the living things around your school by taking students on a nature walk. Use the resource page 'Observing Living Things' for students to draw or write about what they see. When back in class, get students to compare what they saw and discuss how they know something is a 'living thing'.

SOUND MAP

Observations in nature don't just have to be visual, they can also be sounds that come from living and non-living things. In the circles on the 'Sound Map' get students to draw the sounds that they hear next to them, near to them or far away from them.

SAVENGER HUNT



Take your students outside for a nature scavenger hunt, using the prepared checklist (e.g., leaf, stick, flower, rock). Brief students about safety, reminding them not to disturb living creatures and to stay within boundaries. As they search for items, encourage them to use their senses and tick off each item they find. Afterwards, return to the classroom to share and discuss their favourite finds, supporting vocabulary development and an appreciation of nature.

USING LITERATURE

Choose engaging picture books (see our suggestions) that feature a variety of animals, plants, and living things. Pause during reading to ask questions about the characteristics, colours, and movements of the living things featured, encouraging students to observe and describe what they see. Use the rich illustrations to support discussions about living things and their habitats. After reading, invite students to share their favourite animals or plants from the book and extend learning with related hands-on activities, such as drawing or role-playing, to deepen their understanding of living things.

OBSERVING LIVING THINGS

Pre Zoo Visit

NATURE WALK

In your schoolyard or local area complete a nature walk. Go for an adventure to explore with your eyes and ears, see how many living things you can find!
Draw all the animals and other living things you discover in the space below.

OBSERVING LIVING THINGS

Pre or Post-Zoo Visit

SOUND MAP

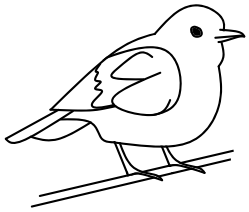
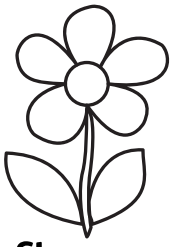
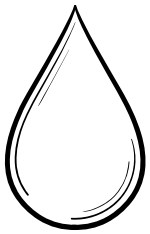
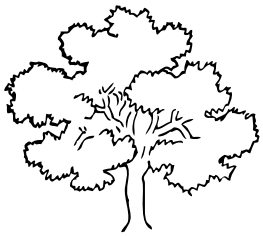
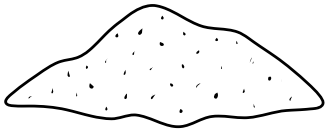
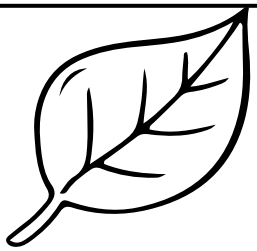
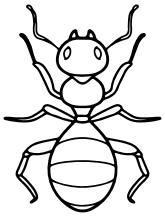
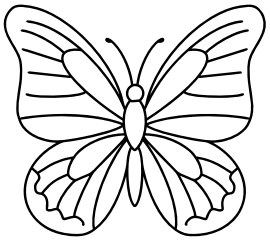
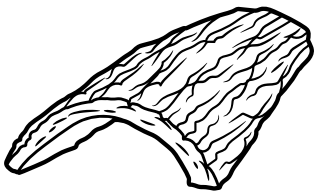
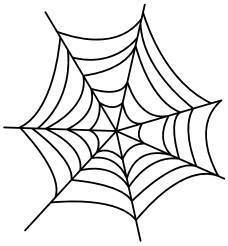
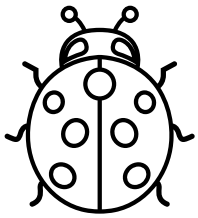
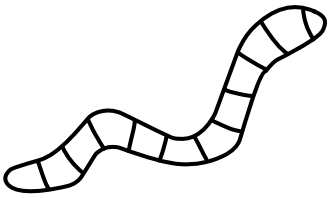
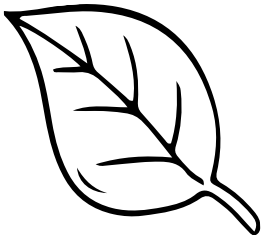
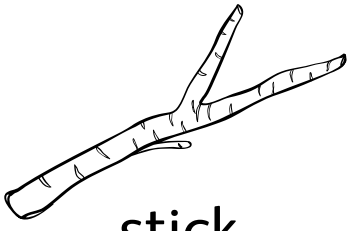
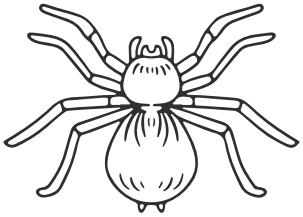
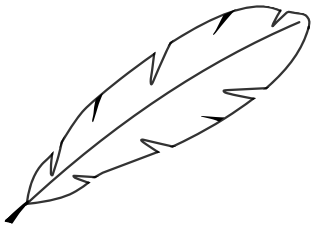
Often animals don't want to be seen, and it is easier to find them using a different sense! Close your eyes and use your ears to discover what sounds you can hear.

When you hear a sound, draw a symbol for that sound inside the circle. Make sure you use the near, mid and far parts of the sound map. Try to remember what your symbols mean so you talk about the sounds afterwards with your classmates.



NATURE SCAVENGER HUNT

Pre Zoo visit

 bird	 flower	 water	 grass
 tree	 soil	 green leaf	 ant
 cloud	 rocks	 butterfly	 bark
 spider web	 insect	 fern	 worm
 brown leaf	 stick	 spider	 feather

TARONGA ZOO SYDNEY
For the Wild

NSW GOVERNMENT Education

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES - ANIMAL CARDS

Pre/Post-Zoo Visit

GROUPING AND SORTING

Cut around each animal image and use for sorting activities. These images could also be enlarged to A3 and the activity completed as a class or within small groups. Encourage students to find as many different ways to sort them as possible and to explain their reasoning.

ANIMAL HEADS GAME

Use the animal cards to play a fun game of 'Celebrity Heads'. Give each student a card without letting them see it, and have them place it on their forehead or hold it facing outward so others can see the animal. Students take turns asking yes/no questions (e.g., "Do I live in water?", "Am I a mammal?") to guess which animal they are.

ANIMAL OF THE DAY/WEEK



Choose one of the animals and generate discussion using following questions:
Where does it live? How does it move? How would you describe its body covering? How does it breathe? What does it eat? Does it have any predators? What is a wonder question you have about this animal?

SAME BUT DIFFERENT

Show two of the animals cards at the same time and ask students to explain how the animals are the same and how they are different.
Eg. They both live in water but one is a reptile and the other is an amphibian.

WRITING STIMULUS

Give each student an animal picture card and ask them to write or draw about their animal, describing its features. The picture could also be place in the middle of a page and students brainstom all the words associated with that animal. Encourage students to use scientific words to describe the characteristics of their animal.

ANIMAL CARDS

Pre/Post-Zoo Visit













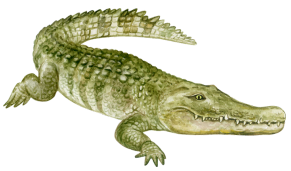
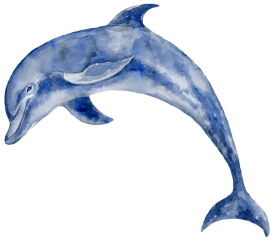










TARONGA ZOO SYDNEY
For the Wild
NSW GOVERNMENT
Education

BODY COVERINGS - SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Pre/Post -Zoo Visit

MAKING CONNECTIONS - OUR SKIN



Ask students to look at their skin. Have them talk about what their skin feels like and what it does for them (e.g. keeps their body safe, covers their bones and muscles, helps them feel things). Encourage students to draw or describe ways their skin helps protect them every day, getting them to think about the function of their own body covering before exploring animals. If possible, give students a magnifying glass and ask them to gently look closely at their skin on their arm or hand. Encourage them to describe what they see.

MYSTERY ANIMAL FEELY BAG



Prepare several small bags, each containing a sample or simulated item that represents an animal body covering (e.g. faux fur for mammals, feathers for birds, a smooth plastic piece for reptiles, squishy fabric for amphibians, and a shell for turtle or some invertebrates). Gather the students in a circle and invite them to reach into each bag (without looking) and feel the item inside. After each turn, ask students to guess which animal or type of covering it represents, then reveal the answers and show pictures of animals with those coverings.

SEE/THINK/WONDER

Use the resource to generate thinking and curiosity. The following prompts could be used:

- What do you see on the animal's body?
- How does this covering look (e.g. soft, hard, rough, smooth)?
- How do you think this body covering helps the animal (e.g. stay warm, protect itself, camoflauge)?
- Which animal do you think has this body covering?

NSW GOVERNMENT | Education

TARONGA ZOO SYDNEY

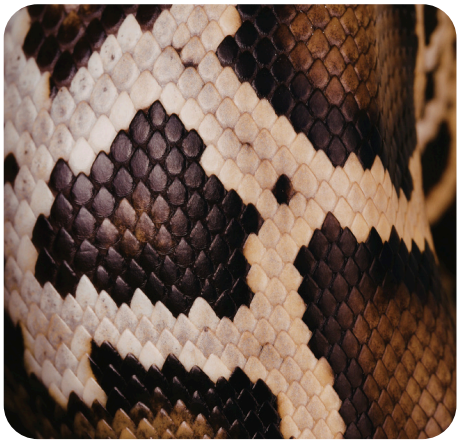
For the Wild

SEE THINK WONDER

Pre/Post-Zoo Visit









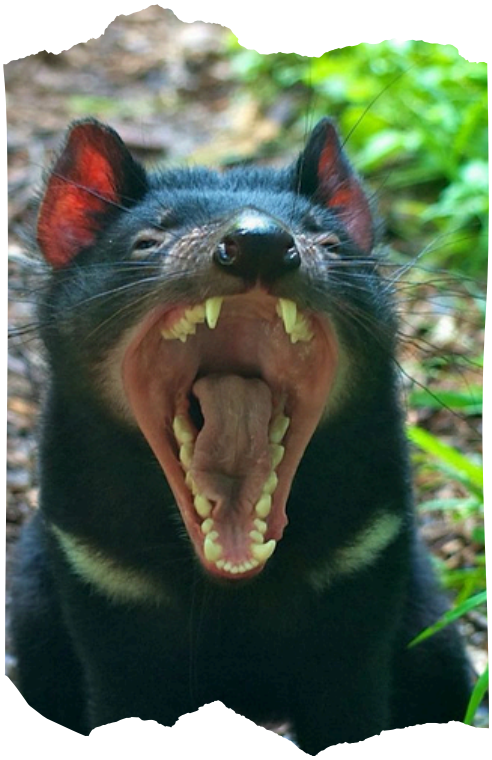





ANIMAL DIETS - SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

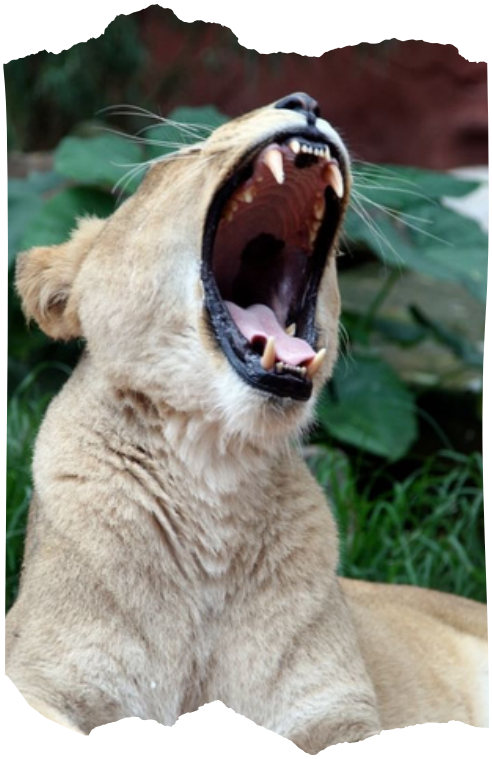
Pre/Post -Zoo Visit

ANIMAL CARDS



Use the previous 'animal card resource' to generate thinking about what an animal eats and how they eat it. Show one of the animals and ask students to list all the different things the animals eat. Ask them to think about how the animals find their food - do animals use the same senses as humans? This can lead onto interesting discussions about reptiles sensing with their tongue or insects sensing with antennae or sensory hairs. It's also a great way to start developing Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary (herbivore, carnivore, omnivore, predator, prey). You can show short video clips or images of animals eating (chameleons, pelicans, lions, snakes, frogs, etc.) and ask students to describe what body parts the animals use and how they eat their food.

SEE/THINK/WONDER



Use the resource to generate thinking and curiosity about the different ways animals eat their food. Discuss the different tools animals use (teeth, tongue, beaks, proboscis). Ask students to think of other animals that use teeth, beaks etc and are they all used in the same way?

ANIMAL EATING TOOLS INVESTIGATION

Give students different items that represent animal eating tools (e.g., tweezers for bird beaks, spoons for anteater tongues, straws for butterflies, tongs for crabs, chopsticks for stick insect 'mandibles'). Set up food items like rice, small beads, or liquid and let students try to pick them up with each tool, then discuss which animals might eat that way.

SEE THINK WONDER

Pre/Post-Zoo Visit













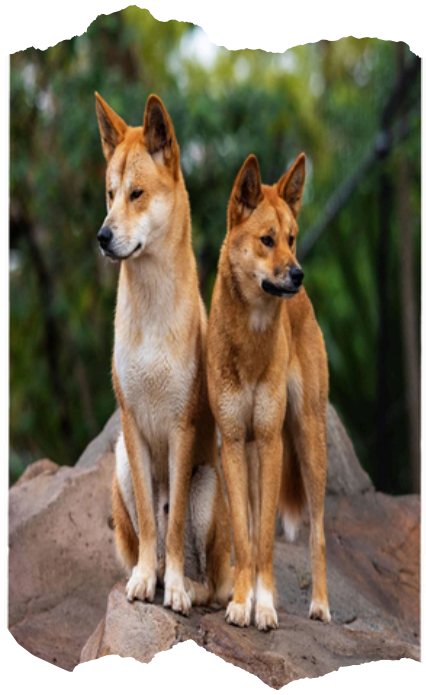

NSW GOVERNMENT Education

TARONGA ZOO SYDNEY For the Wild

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

During your Zoo visit

EXPLORING ENVIRONMENTS



Take the students on a guided walk around the Zoo to explore its diverse environments, including Nura Diya (Australia), Savannah (Africa), Wild Asia, and Great Southern Ocean. Encourage students to observe the living things in each environment carefully. Prompt students with the following questions:

- What does the animal eat? How does it find its food?
- What is the body covering? How does this help it survive?
- How does the animal move? Does it always move in the same way?
- How has the zoo environment been designed to support the needs of the animal?



You can also use the following resource to list all the living, non-living and once living things in a particular environment.

BODY COVERINGS

As you walk around the zoo, make a list of all the animals with different body coverings. You could do this as a teacher led activity or students could work in pairs to draw the animals that have those type of body coverings.

SEE/THINK/WONDER

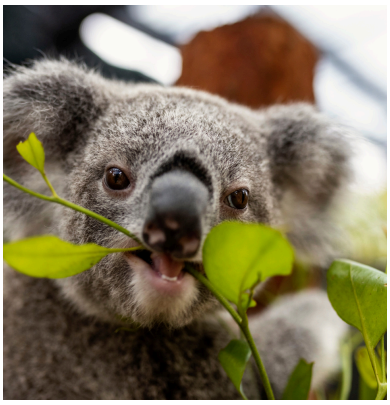
Stop at a particular animal habitat, give students a minute silent thinking time and then encourage them to share what they see, what it makes them think and what wonder questions they have about the animal. Make a note of the wonder questions and use these for research stimulus questions when back at school.

IT'S ALIVE? OR IS IT?

During your Zoo visit

Choose an area of the zoo. Stand with your class and ask students to observe all the living, or once living things they can see. Record the answers below.

Living	Non Living	Once Living



TARONGA ZOO SYDNEY For the Wild

NSW GOVERNMENT Education

ANIMAL BODY COVERINGS

During your Zoo Visit

Draw or write the names of animals that have these body coverings.

Fur

Shell

Scales

Feathers

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Post Zoo Visit



ANIMAL CONNECTIONS

Cut around the animals and then give a card to a pair of students and follow these suugested steps.

1) Students share everything they know about their animal.

2) Find another pair of students that has a connection with your animal - E.g find an animal that lives in the same habitat, eats the same food, moves the same way, has the same body covering.

3) Find another pair of students that has something different to your animal.

4) Convince the class why your animal is the best animal.

ANIMAL SPOTLIGHT

Students complete the resource sheet to show their understanding of the animal. This could also be done as a whole class activity where students contribute ideas and teacher scribes or as a small group activity.

ZOO REFLECTION

Ask students to choose an animal they saw on their zoo visit and complete the 'How Animals Survive' resource. Students can write or draw their ideas in the spaces, extra lines on the bottom allow them to write their favourite fun fact. A perfect assessment opportunity.

ANIMAL COLLAGE - ART

After your zoo visit, students can create a collage of their favourite animal using a variety of materials such as coloured paper, fabric, feathers, pipe cleaners, and googly eyes. Encourage them to think about and represent the unique features of their chosen animal, such as its colours, body parts, and textures. Students creations can be joined to create a class collage.

ANIMAL CONNECTIONS

Post-Zoo Visit






















NSW GOVERNMENT Education

TARONGA ZOO SYDNEY
For the Wild

Name: _____

ANIMAL SPOTLIGHT

During your Zoo visit



KOALA

Where am I found in the wild?
Describe my habitat.

What do I eat? How do I find my food and how do I eat it?

What is my body covering? How does it help me survive?

How do I move? Describe the body parts I use to help me.

Name: _____

ANIMAL SPOTLIGHT

During your Zoo visit



KANGAROO

Where am I found in the wild?
Describe my habitat.

What do I eat? How do I find my food and how do I eat it?

What is my body covering? How does it help me survive?

How do I move? Describe the body parts I use to help me.

Name: _____

ANIMAL SPOTLIGHT

During your Zoo visit



GIRAFFE

Where am I found in the wild?
Describe my habitat.

What do I eat? How do I find my food and how do I eat it?

What is my body covering? How does it help me survive?

How do I move? Describe the body parts I use to help me.

Name: _____

ANIMAL SPOTLIGHT

During your Zoo visit



LION

Where am I found in the wild?
Describe my habitat.

What do I eat? How do I find my food and how do I eat it?

What is my body covering? How does it help me survive?

How do I move? Describe the body parts I use to help me.

Name: _____

ANIMAL SPOTLIGHT

During your Zoo visit



SUMATRAN TIGER

Where am I found in the wild?
Describe my habitat.

What do I eat? How do I find my food and how do I eat it?

What is my body covering? How does it help me survive?

How do I move? Describe the body parts I use to help me.

HOW ANIMALS SURVIVE

Post-Zoo Visit

My Animal

It lives here

It eats

This is how it moves

It's body is covered in