

Mammal Facts and Myths



Content Area(s):

- life sciences
- technology

Objectives:

In this section students:

- draw and label diagrams.
- utilize the resources in the school library.
- distinguish between factual and mythical information.
- record resources used.

Materials Required:

- computer with Internet access (will be helpful for extension)
- General Activity Pages
- pencil or pen

Time:

- approximately 40 minutes per lesson

Teaching Suggestions:

Whale Species (Page 41)

- Make an overhead projector sheet of a student's diagram to use in a class discussion.

The Beaver (Page 42)

- Use the facts to write a report.
- Make a model of a beaver's lodge.

Bat Myths (Page 43)

- Brainstorm a list of myths about other animals. Discuss why the myths were created.
- Locate a bat colony in your neighborhood to observe.
- Create a bat cave in the classroom.

Echidna Quiz (Page 44)

- Use diagrams and images to make a model of an echidna. Use modeling clay for the base and copper wire (or another suitable material) for the quills. Stick the quills in the base before the clay sets. Spray-paint the entire echidna.

Name: _____

Whale Species

There are many different species of whales that live in oceans all over the world. Use the resources in the library to complete the following research activities on some of these different species.

☉ Habitat

1. In what ocean conditions do sperm whales live? _____

☉ Description

2. Draw an illustration of a blue whale, labeling all the body parts. Give some information about the different body parts that are specially adapted to the whale's aquatic environment.



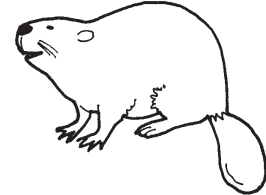
3. Draw diagrams to show the differences between the insides of the head of a toothed whale (such as a sperm whale) and a baleen whale.



Name: _____

The Beaver

The beaver is a rodent that lives in rivers, streams, and the fresh-water lakes of North America. They are unusual because, unlike most animals, they continue to grow throughout their entire lives. Use the resources in the library to complete some research on beavers.



☉ Appearance

1. Describe the features below.

head: _____

feet: _____

teeth: _____

fur: _____

tail: _____

☉ Diet

2. What do beavers eat?

☉ Beaver Behavior

3. Describe how a beaver builds its lodge.

4. Draw a diagram of a beaver lodge.

Name: _____

Bat Myths

Myths about bats create fear, dislike, and lead to the destruction and possible extinction of the animals.

☉ Use the resources in your library to find out if the following statements about bats are facts or myths.

1. It is said that a bat is blind, hence the saying "blind as a bat." _____
2. Is it true that bats get caught up in people's hair? _____
3. Bats are helpful to humans. _____
4. All bats suck blood from other animals. _____
5. Bats clean their fur the same way that cats do. _____
6. Bats are really flying mice! _____
7. All bats are dirty, and they carry rabies. _____
8. Without the bat some species of tropical plants would become extinct. _____
9. Some bats eat fish. _____
10. In Asia bats are considered to be bad luck. _____
11. A bat's skin is smooth. _____
12. Bats hibernate in winter. _____
13. Bats are solitary animals. _____
14. Vampire bats often bite humans. _____
15. Bats do not drink water. _____
16. Bats live on every continent. _____
17. Bats are harmless to humans. _____
18. A flying fox is not a bat. _____
19. Bats can be as small as bumble bees. _____
20. Some bat species do not walk at all. _____

Extra:

Find out about the bats that live in or near your area. Research information about their food, where they roost, and any other interesting facts that you can find.

Name: _____

Echidna Quiz

The echidna is a fascinating Australian animal whose only natural enemy is humans.

- ☛ Use the resources in the library to answer the following quiz questions about the echidna. Write the names and authors of the resources you use at the bottom of the quiz.

True or False

1. The echidna lives only in Australia. _____
2. Echidnas have no nostrils. _____
3. An echidna uses its teeth to crush ants and termites. _____
4. The echidna is not a marsupial. _____
5. The spines of an echidna are hollow. _____
6. The life span of an echidna is about 15 years. _____
7. Echidnas like cold weather. _____
8. In the wild, echidnas have a varied diet. _____
9. The echidna only lays one egg at a time. _____
10. Echidnas have fewer spines if they live in cold weather. _____
11. Echidnas are social animals. _____
12. Echidnas are strong for their size. _____

- ☛ Fill in the words to make the statements correct.

1. The male echidnas have a _____ claw which releases a weak poison.
2. The echidna's tongue can be up to _____ long and is very _____.
3. The two genera of echidna are the _____ and the _____.
4. The outside of an echidna's egg is _____.
5. The word *monotreme* means _____.
(Hint: The answer is not egg-laying mammal.)

Resources used: _____

Answer Key (cont.)

Mammal Characteristics—Page 33

	kangaroo	sloth	dolphin
carnivorous	no	no	no
omnivorous	no	yes	no
herbivorous	no	yes	no
marine	no	no	yes
semi-aquatic	no	no	no
terrestrial	yes	no	no
monotreme	no	no	no
marsupial	yes	no	no

2. caribou—N. America; raccoon—N. America; wolverine—Europe; pekapeka (bats)—New Zealand; chamois—Europe; ratel—Asia; marhkor—Asia; orangutan—Asia; ring-tailed lemur—Africa; impala—Africa; wildebeest—Africa; cuscus—Australia; chuditch—Australia; tapir—S. America; llama—S. America.

Big Cats at the Zoo—Page 35

Answers will vary.

Saving the Elephant—Page 36

Answers will vary.

Polar Bear Quiz—Page 37

True or false

1. true; 2. false; 3. true; 4. false; 5. false; 6. true; 7. false; 8. true; 9. true; 10. true
1. black; 2. two; 3. 1,400 lbs (650 kg), 550 lbs (250 kg); 4. 16–24 oz (450–680 g.); 5. two.

The Bear Facts—Page 38

1. Sloth; 2. Spectacled; 3. Polar; 4. Asiatic black bears; 5. Spectacled; 6. Malayan sun bear; 7. panda; 8. brown bears; 9. polar bears; 10. Sloth; 11. Malayan sun bear; 12. spectacled bear; 13. American black bear; 14. Brown bear; 15. Sloth.

Megafauna: the Mammoth—Page 39

1. Mammathus imperator
2. Largest species of mammoth found; reached a height of about 14 ft (4.3m). Had long, curved tusks; shaggy covering of long thick hair; prominent hump on back
3. Herbivorous—grazed on grass, plants and leaves
4. Mainly lived in cold climates, moved north as the Ice Age receded
5. Long, thick hair; hump on back; long curved tusks (length of about 10.5 ft/3m)
6. It is believed that human hunting had a big impact on numbers although climate changes brought about by receding Ice Age might have also caused extinction.
7. Answers will vary.

Whale Species—Page 41

Answers will vary.

The Beaver—Page 42

Answers will vary.

Bat Myths—Page 43

1. False; 2. False; 3. True; 4. False; 5. True; 6. False; 7. False; 8. True; 9. True; 10. False; 11. False; 12. True; 13. False; 14. False; 15. True; 16. False; 17. True; 18. False; 19. True; 20. True

Echidna Quiz—Page 44

1. False; 2. False; 3. False; 4. False; 5. True; 6. False; 7. False; 8. False; 9. True; 10. False; 11. False; 12. True.
1. retractable; 2. 12 in. (30 cm); long, sticky; 3. Tachyglossus aculeatus; Zaglossus bruijni; 4. leathery; 5. One opening.