

Animal Classification

Introduce the classification of animals to students by using Concept Science *Mammals Are Animals* or a similar simple book on animal classification.

1. Have students point to the mammals in the book and show what attributes mammals have. As you read each page, review the names of various mammals and their skin coverings.
2. Explain "backbone" by having students touch their own backbone and "breathing with lungs" by having students take deep breathes and feeling their chests move.
3. Explain concepts such as "warm-blooded/ cold-blooded "by showing students how a small rock gets warm if you put it under a lamp and cold if you put it in cold water." This concept is best taught in contrast.
4. Ask students if a baby puppy eats dog food or drinks milk from its mother. Explain "live birth" to very young children by contrasting it with "hatched from an egg." Ask students, "Do dogs lay eggs? Are puppies hatched from an egg? No, they are born alive."
5. Use the following worksheet to further emphasize an understanding of how animals are classified into different categories.

MAMMALS

- give birth to live young?
- have hair or fur
- mammal mothers nurse their young with milk.
- warm-blooded

REPTILES

- have scales, not fur.
- they have dry skin.
- usually lay eggs, sometimes live young
- cold-blooded.

AMPHIBIANS

- live on land & in water.
- cold-blooded.
- lay eggs.
- moist skin.
- webbed feet.

FISH

- breathe underwater using gills.
- have scales and fins.
- cold-blooded.
- lay eggs.

BIRDS

- have feathers & wings
- lay eggs
- warm-blooded