



Animal Needs

1st Grade

Students can identify when a plant and animal's needs are being met by its environment.

GSE Connections: S1L1: B

Overview: In order to survive, plants and animals have to meet their basic needs. Animals all need food, water, air and shelter. Plants need air, water, light and nutrients. Zoo Atlanta is home to a diversity of species, ranging from large African elephants to tiny diamondback terrapins. Within our just over 40 acres, we also have many native trees and plants, bamboo and more. The Animal Care and Horticulture Teams ensure that the basic needs of all the plants and animals are met. To do this, animal habitats are designed with the animal in mind. For example, what does it eat, how does it move, is it solitary or social, is it nocturnal or diurnal, how does it naturally obtain water? These are the types of questions that we ask, as no two animals are alike. When it comes to plants, it is also important to know their biology – do they like shade or sun, how often do they need water, what is their natural temperature range? By better understanding the basic needs of plants and animals, we can provide them with the best care possible.

Activity: Provide students with the Plant and Animal data sheet. Explain that as they walk around the Zoo, they should choose two animals and two plants to make observations about. Draw and label the plant(s) and animal(s) in the boxes provided. Ask the students to spend a few minutes making observations about the animals and to think about what their basic needs may be. Then record in the basic needs boxes by either drawing what they see or writing how their needs are being met. At the completion of your Zoo tour, discuss with your students what they saw, AND what they didn't see. Can your students spot all of the basic needs of the plants and animals being met? If they can't find a need, how do they think our animals get it?

Animal: Ringtailed lemur	
Food <i>Herbivore – plants, fruit, vegetables</i>	Water <i>Not visible, but drink water from dew or rainwater in treetops</i>
Shelter <i>Dense rainforests, trees</i>	Air <i>Breath air with lungs</i>



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Animal:		Animal:	
Food	Water	Food	Water
Shelter	Air	Shelter	Air
Plant:		Plant:	
Nutrients	Water	Nutrients	Water
Light	Air	Light	Air