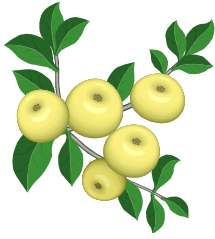


# IS IT A PLANT OR AN ANIMAL?



## **BENCHMARKS and TASKS**

**SC.A.1.1.1** The student knows that objects can be described, classified, and compared by their composition (e.g., wood or metal) and their physical properties (e.g., color, size, and shape).

**SC.F.1.1.5** The student compares and describes the structural characteristics of

plants and animals.

- The student classifies real living objects as plants and animals.
- The student recognizes the characteristics of plants and animals.



## **KEY QUESTION**

How are animals and plants similar and different?

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Most living things are classified as either plant or animal. Plants and animals share many common characteristics:

- Both plants and animals change as they grow and develop.
- Plants and animals have certain needs in order for them to live and grow. Animals need air, food, water, shelter, and adequate space, while plants need food, air, water, light, and certain nutrients, which they usually obtain from the soil in which they grow.
- Both plants and animals reproduce their own kind.
- Plants and animals have certain characteristics and structure by which they can be described.

Plants and animals each have certain distinguishing characteristics:

- Plants usually remain in one place, while animals move around.
- Animals obtain their food by eating plants and other animals, while plants make their own food through a process called photosynthesis.
- Both animals and plants have cells, but plant cells are rigid, with supporting cells containing cellulose.
- Plants, unlike animals, do not have sensory organs or a nervous system.

Humans and all other life forms depend upon plants for survival. There are over 350,000 species of plants, and they can be found almost everywhere in the world – in polar regions, deserts, oceans, and on mountains. The plant life in an area determines what animal life will be present.

## **MATERIALS**

### **Teacher**

opaque bag containing a small plant  
Venn diagram or Double Bubble Map  
chart paper

### **Per group**

pill bugs (from previous lesson)  
1 small plant  
clipboards (or other writing surface to take outside)  
paper and pencil  
magnifiers

## TEACHING TIPS

1. Have chart paper or bulletin board labeled **Plants/Animals** prepared in advance.
2. The teacher needs to modify the game “Twenty Questions” in order for the children to play it.

## ENGAGE

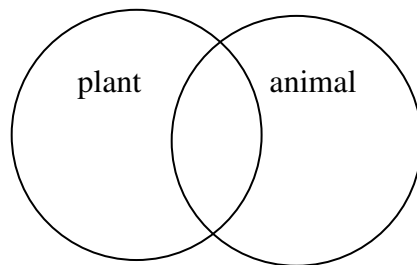
1. Show the bag (with plant hidden inside) to the students. Play a version of “Twenty Questions” with the teacher providing clues or helping with questions. Students ask questions that can be answered either *yes* or *no* until they discover what is in the bag.
2. After students have guessed what is in the bag, have them think about the most important clues – the ones that helped them determine that the object in the bag was a plant. Write those clues on the board.

## EXPLORE

1. Remind students that pill bugs are living things and must be treated humanely.
2. Give each group a pill bug and a small plant to observe.
3. Encourage students to think about how the animal and the plant are alike and how they are different.
4. Use magnifiers to observe the plant and animal.

## EXPLAIN

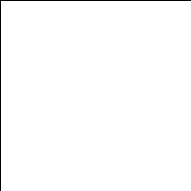
1. Record student/group observations on a Venn diagram or Double Bubble Map.



2. Through questioning, develop the concept that animals and plants have similarities and differences.  
Ask:  
*What living things did you observe?*  
*How was the pill bug like the plant?*  
*How was the pill bug different from the plant?*  
*Was there anything you learned or observed about the plant or pill bug that surprised you?*

## EXTEND/APPLY

1. Take students on a nature walk and ask them to look for plants and animals. Stop at various points along the way and give them time to make sketches.
2. Students should place their sketches in the appropriate column on a class bulletin board or chart paper labeled **Plants/Animals**. Encourage students to discuss their pictures with the class, explaining how they knew which living things were plants and which were animals.

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3. Bring closure to the lesson by discussing the following questions:  
*How are plants and animals alike?*  
*How are plants and animals different?*

### **ASSESSMENT**

1. Make two class books. The first: How Are We Alike? The second: How Are We Different? Each child draws two pictures. One shows how plants and animals are alike. Students dictate likenesses. The second picture shows how plants and animals are different. Students dictate differences. Put the student pictures with dictations into the correct class books.
2. While taking the students' dictations, observe whether or not they are able to tell some characteristics that plants and animals share and do not share.