

Teacher Backgrounder

Topic: Adaptations: Creature Features

Grades: 9–12

Context:

When it comes to adaptations, there are many amazing and evolved traits that both plants and animals have to not only survive, but thrive. This lesson takes a deeper look at behavioral, structural, and physiological adaptations. Dive deeper with background about the theory of natural selection by evolution.

Then students can analyze videos from the New Bedford Whaling Museum and generate questions of their own about the evolution of marine animals and hypothesize about their future, especially given current challenges with climate change.

As a culminating activity, students will storyboard their own 2-minute Creature Feature video on an animal of their choice (see full library at [PLAYLIST](#)). Consider how this storyboarding activity could lead to a full-blown video production project in your class.

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to ...

1. Describe the various types of animal adaptations.
2. Analyze The New Bedford Whaling Museum's *Creature Feature* videos.
3. Report on an animal's unique adaptations via a creative storyboard.

Materials & Preparation

INVESTIGATE

The slides are designed for you to use with your whole class or to share directly with individual students. Review the slides and prepare to present or share the link with individual students.

INQUIRE

Make copies of the corresponding handouts (one per student) or share the PDFs digitally.

IMAGINE

Review the Activity Guide. Each student or pair will need writing utensils. Consider how/if you want to extend this activity to include scripting and actual video production.

Cross-curricular Connections:

- ☐ Social Studies
- ☒ Language Arts
- ☒ Science
- ☐ Math
- ☒ Arts

Tech It Up:

- Share lesson materials via GOOGLE CLASSROOM or LMS
- Play the suggested videos
- Share the handouts digitally
- Devote time to exploring the recommended resources online
- Explore student-friendly video production tools.

ANALYZING SCRIPTS

Directions: Choose from one of two *Creature Feature* videos to watch and analyze. What do you note about the flow of the scripts and the four main parts? How did the script come to life in the actual video? What might you change?

- *Creature Feature: Horseshoe Crab:* [THE SCRIPT](#) + [THE FINAL VIDEO](#)
- *Creature Feature: Seal:* [THE SCRIPT](#) + [THE FINAL VIDEO](#)

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

CONSERVATION

CLOSING

THOUGHTS ON FINAL VIDEO



Activity Guide: Creature Feature

Your Challenge

It's your turn to create an original *Creature Feature* video. Choose a marine animal or plant life that has a unique adaptation that you would like to highlight. Start with an outline for a script. Then storyboard your idea to map out what your future viewers will see in your video. Storyboards are a valuable part of the production process. If time permits, try to film your original script with a host or two.

Materials

- Production process template
- Printed storyboard template
- writing/sketching utensils
- OPT: video production tools like set design and camera equipment

Time to Create

STEP 1:

1. Revisit the production process.
2. Plan out how you might be able to create a video that is two or three minutes. If you start by planning on two and a half minutes, you could break the 150 seconds into ten 15-second frames.
3. One way to help with your production process is to storyboard your video. In each of the ten frames, you can think of the visual components (what is happening on the screen -- talking heads or animation) and what is being heard (scripted content and music).
4. Try to address these four components visually or with scripting:
 - a. INTRODUCTION to the topic and the hosts with an engaging hook about the topic
 - b. BACKGROUND of the topic, which can include historical overview, scientific facts, and cross-curricular connections
 - c. CONSERVATION should bring up present-day problems and possible solutions that your community can take part in
 - d. CLOSING to end your video and either tee up another or point to additional interesting resources
5. If time permits, make a plan to film your video. And remember ... You are the creative mind! So feel free to modify or tweak the above instructions to create your own *Creature Feature*.

Storyboarding:

Consider how you want to map out the scenes of your upcoming *Creature Feature* release. Feel free to number each scene and use a combination of images and annotations to plan out your film.

NOTES:

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