



Furs & Skulls

NGSS Standards: K-LS1-1, K-ESS3-1, K-ESS3-3/ 1-LS1-1, 1-LS1-2/ 2-LS4-1/ 3-LS2-1, 3-LS3-1, 3-LS4-2, 4-LS1-1, 4-LS1-2

Level: Kindergarten-4 grade

Time: 45 minutes

Objectives:

1. Students will discover how animals adapt to their habitat. (thermoregulation, protection, reproduction, movement, camouflage)
2. Students will use observation skills to learn how to identify native furbearers.
3. Students will understand the term invasive animal species and native animal species.
4. Students will learn the terms: herbivore, omnivore, carnivore.

Materials:

- Pelts: raccoon, nutria, skunk, ermine, coyote, gray fox, beaver, opossum, river otter, marmot
- Skulls: beaver, cougar, deer, fox, opossum, raccoon, skunk, muskrat, nutria

Pre-Activities:

Visit [Oregon Forest Resources Institute](#) and [Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife](#) to view Oregon's diverse wildlife species.

Read *What Do You Do with a Tail Like This?* By Steve Jenkins and Robin Page

Procedure:

1. Adaptations are things plants and animals have or do to help them survive. Ask the students what the fur does for the animal? Keeps them warm, protects them, helps them blend into their environment, shiny healthy fur is a sign of health)
2. Animals can survive through one of three ways: move or migration (flap your arms and have the students do the same) adapt ([ASL for adapt](#)), or die ([ASL for die](#)) Discuss animals that migrate; like monarchs, animals that adapt to their environment; like ermine, animals that die; like certain wasp species.
3. Investigate 3 skulls by observing the teeth to determine if the animal is an herbivore (deer), omnivore (raccoon), or carnivore (cougar).
4. Investigate the furs one by one to observe the adaptations of the animal and allow the students to touch the fur.

Post-Activities & Resources:

1. Have students write/draw their favorite animal. Have them describe their favorite adaptation/specialty. (long tail for balance, claws for capturing prey, insulating fur)

<http://www.turtleridgewildlifecenter.org/WP/>