

Lesson at a Glance

Students will be able to recognize that humans and bears are both mammals and that they share common characteristics but they are adapted to live in different habitats.

Grade

1-5

Time

40 minutes

Core Connections

- 1st Grade Science 4.2.2 *Analyze the individual similarities and differences within and across larger groups*
- 2nd Grade Science 4.2 *Identify the basic needs of living things and their abilities to meet their needs*
- 3rd Grade Science 2 *Students will understand that organisms depend on living and nonliving things within their environment*
- 4th Grade Science 5.2.b *Cite examples of physical features that allow particular plants and animals to live in specific environments*
- 4th Grade Science 5.3.a *Explain how scientists use classification schemes*
- 5th Grade Science 5.2 *Describe how some characteristics could give a species a survival advantage in a particular environment*

Materials

- ❑ A **Where Do Bears Fit In?** worksheet for each group of 4-5 students
- ❑ A pen or pencil for each group of 4-5 students
- ❑ A transparency of the **Where Do Bears Fit In?** worksheet (Venn Diagram)
- ❑ A wet or dry erase marker

Background Information

Plants and animals are arranged into groups based on their characteristics. There are many ways plants and animals can be classified. For example, they might be grouped as land or aquatic plants or animals, active by day or by night, useful or nuisance, etc.

However, taxonomy, the study of scientific classification, attempts to classify animals based on their actual relationships and shared characteristics. Scientists do this by studying plant and animal anatomy and physiology. For example, research has shown that sea turtles belong with snakes and lizards, while porpoises and whales belong in the mammal group and neither are fish. Classification can change from time to time as new evidence emerges and as scientists change their minds about where to draw lines between groups.

Activity

1. Divide the class into cooperative-learning groups of 4-5 students.
2. Give each group a worksheet and a pen or pencil.
3. Have each group designate a recorder.
4. Have each group brainstorm as many characteristics of humans as they can and list them in the circle labeled humans.
5. Have each group brainstorm as many characteristics of bears as they can think of and list them in the circle labeled bears.
6. Have the group list the characteristics that both groups share in the center of their work sheet.

Climate Change Connections

Would some characteristics of bears help them if the climate changed? What about human characteristics?

Summary

Review what the students placed in their diagram by using a document camera or an overhead projector and a transparency of the **Where Do Bears Fit In?** Venn diagram worksheet.

Climate change connections: can bears and humans both be impacted by climate change? Describe some common ways in which they may be affected.

Extension

As the unit progresses, refer back to the diagram. Would the students change or add anything to the diagram? Why or why not?

Where Do Bears Fit In?
Worksheet

