

FIELD TRIP ACTIVITIES FOR GRADE 3 CHAPERONES

THEME: Koala Adaptations

Dear Chaperone: Use these activities to add fun and focus as you guide your student group around the Zoo.

EXPLORE AND FIND

- **A koala perched in a tree.**
What adaptations (body parts or behaviors) does a koala have for surviving in its habitat?
What is the koala doing?
Why do you think koalas sleep so much? How might this be a good adaptation?
- **A koala eating.**
What type of food(s) do koalas eat?
What adaptation do koalas have to find and eat eucalyptus leaves?
Can you think of other animals that have adaptations to eat leaves?
- **A koala drinking water.**
How can a koala get a drink high in the trees?
If you don't see a koala drinking how else might it get moisture?
Are plants "juicy" foods? What juicy plants do you like to eat?
- **A koala on exhibit by itself.**
How would solitary life help the koala survive in the forest?
What adaptations do male koalas have for letting other koalas know they are in the area?
How do you think a koala marks its tree?
What messages does a scent gland convey?
What sounds does a koala make?
Do koalas "talk" to each other? If so, what are they saying?
- **A koala with a baby (called a joey).**
If you can't find a joey, where might it be resting?
What do you call animals that carry their babies in a pouch? How do pouches protect the joeys?
- **Another animal from Australia.**
What adaptations (body parts or behaviors) does it have for surviving in its habitat?
How is this animal like a koala? How is it different?



I wonder...

Some of the animals you've seen during your field trip are endangered. What are some of the reasons animals become endangered (e.g., over hunting, habitat destruction, pollution, lack of food, etc.)? Are koalas threatened or endangered? Why? What can you do to help endangered species (e.g., recycle, conserve water and fuel, etc.)?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: GRADE 3

THEME: Koala Adaptations

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will use their observation skills.
2. Students will describe the physical attributes of a koala.
3. Students will investigate these concepts from the National Science Content Standards:
 - Science as Inquiry
 - The Characteristics of Organisms
 - Organisms and Their Environments

PREVISIT ACTIVITIES

- **Inquiry Lesson:** Ask the students what they know about koalas. Write down their answers. Ask the students what they would like to know about koalas. Write down their answers. Write this question on the board: *What adaptations do koalas have to survive in the wild?* Ask the students to “guess” some answers. Ask the students how they might find the answers to this question (e.g. books, visit to a zoo, watch a movie or a television show, ask an expert, etc.).
- Define adaptation (a characteristic of a living thing that helps it survive in its environment). Have students list some physical and behavioral adaptations that people have. Ask students to choose one adaptation from the list and describe how their life might be different without it. Have students list some physical and behavioral adaptations of koalas. Ask students to choose one adaptation and describe how koala life might be different without it. Compare and contrast the physical and behavioral adaptations of people and koalas.
- Zoos try to mirror wild habitats. Ask students to adapt a koala habitat utilizing a shoebox diorama and their own recycled materials. Pose the following questions: Where will the koala spend most of its time? What types of terrain will the animal cover everyday? What other animals might live nearby? What should they include so that their koala has everything it needs to survive?

POSTVISIT ACTIVITIES

- Ask students what they have learned about koalas. Review the list of what they wanted to know about koalas to see if their questions were answered. Review the question: *What adaptations do koalas have to survive in the wild?*
- Read Deborah Dennard’s book, [Koala Country: A Story of an Australian Eucalyptus Forest](#) to your students. Discuss the animals mentioned in the book. Create a list of each animal’s physical and behavioral adaptations; discuss how these adaptations might help them survive in the wild. Have students write and illustrate a story about one of the animals and how their adaptations help them survive in the eucalyptus forest.
- Koalas are adapted to living in a unique environment. Ask students to describe the koala habitat. Discuss how habitats, like animals, can become endangered. What happens to animals that live in endangered habitats? Brainstorm ways students can help protect their local habitats. Choose an idea from the list and take action!