OCEAN LIFE EDUCATION

Marine Animal Adaptations

Year 6 Science Activity

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Learning objective: Identify and compare structural and behavioural adaptations of Australian marine animals and explain how these adaptations support survival.

Activity 1: Match the Adaptation

Match each Queensland marine animal to its adaptation. Write the correct letter in the answer column.

Marine animal	Answer	Adaptation
1. Epaulette shark	_____	A. Powerful tail and insulating blubber
2. Green sea turtle	_____	B. Tube feet for gripping surfaces and moving
3. Octopus	_____	C. Claws and walking legs suited to muddy habitats
4. Sea star	_____	D. Flippers for swimming and specialised salt glands
5. Humpback whale	_____	E. Colour-changing skin and a flexible body
6. Mud crab	_____	F. Fins that help it move across shallow reef surfaces

Activity 2: Structural or Behavioural?

Remember:

- **Structural adaptation:** A physical feature of an animal's body.
- **Behavioural adaptation:** An action that helps an animal survive.

Write S (structural) or B (behavioural) beside each example.

1. A humpback whale migrates along Queensland's coastline. _____
2. A sea turtle has powerful front flippers. _____
3. An octopus hides in a reef crevice. _____
4. A shark has a streamlined body. _____
5. A mud crab shelters among mangrove roots. _____
6. A sea star has tube feet. _____

Activity 3: Think Like a Marine Scientist

Choose TWO animals from Activity 1.

Animal 1: _____

Animal 2: _____

Complete the comparison table.

Question	Animal 1	Animal 2
What is its habitat?	_____	_____
Name one structural adaptation.	_____	_____
Name one behavioural adaptation.	_____	_____
How do these adaptations support survival?	_____	_____

Challenge: Explain why an adaptation that is useful to one animal might not be useful to another.

Activity 4: What Happens When Habitats Change?

Queensland Case Study: Mangrove Forests

Mangrove forests provide important feeding and shelter habitats for mud crabs, juvenile fish and many other marine animals.

Imagine that a section of mangrove forest is cleared to make way for coastal development.

1. Identify two habitat conditions that could change.

2. Explain how these changes might affect the survival of mud crabs.

3. Mud crabs have claws, walking legs and shelter-seeking behaviours. Would these adaptations be enough to guarantee their survival if their habitat disappeared? Explain your reasoning.

Extension: Design an Ocean Survivor!

Imagine a new marine animal that lives in a Queensland coastal habitat.

Draw your animal and label:

- Two structural adaptations.
- One behavioural adaptation.
- Its habitat.
- How its adaptations help it survive.

My ocean survivor:

[Large blank drawing space]

Animal name: _____

Habitat: _____

Its most important adaptation is:

Australian Curriculum Connection

Year 6 Science – AC9S6U01

Investigate the physical conditions of a habitat and analyse how the growth and survival of living things is affected by changing physical conditions.