Adaptation: The Perfect Fit
A Digital Education Module

Carnegie Mellon University
Leonard Gelfand Center

ANIMAL ANALYSIS ACTIVITY

In this activity, you will research an animal and learn how it **adapted** to survive in its environment. Follow the instructions below to get started.

1. Choose a wild animal that you want to study for this activity. Write the name of the animal in the space below.
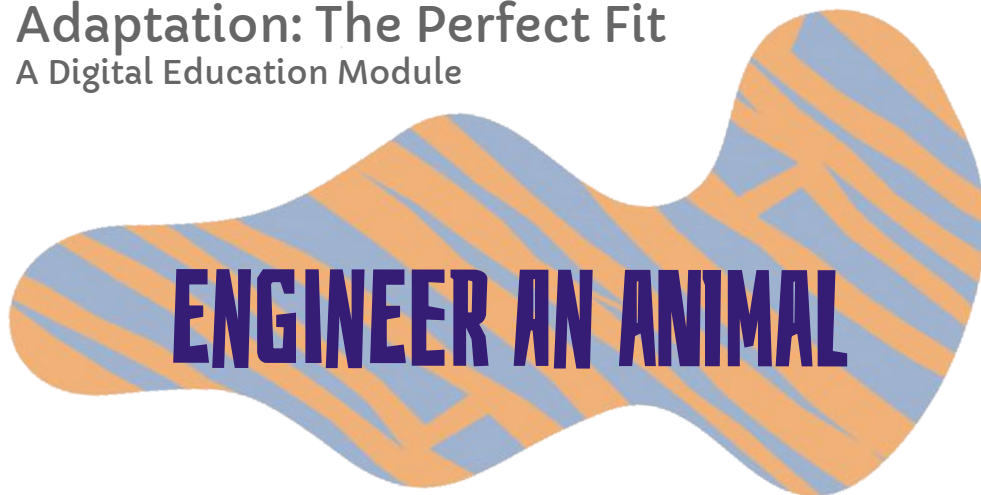
    _____

2. Make a picture of your animal and the environment where it lives. You can hand-draw the picture or you can use images from the internet. Make sure to include these things in your drawing:
    a. What your animal eats
    b. Where your animal sleeps and/or hides
    c. Any predators your animal must hide from
    d. If your animal lives alone or with others

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ANIMAL ANALYSIS ACTIVITY

3. Fill in the table below by researching the **traits** of your animal and describing why they have those traits. Think about how the trait helps the animal to survive in its environment.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAIT	WHY DOES MY ANIMAL HAVE THIS TRAIT?
Example: Webbed feet on a duck.	A duck uses its webbed feet like paddles. This helps ducks to swim. Ducks need to swim to be able to catch food that lives underwater.

2

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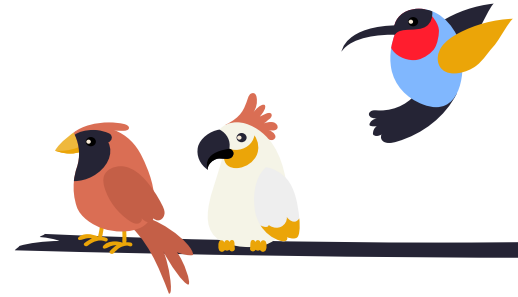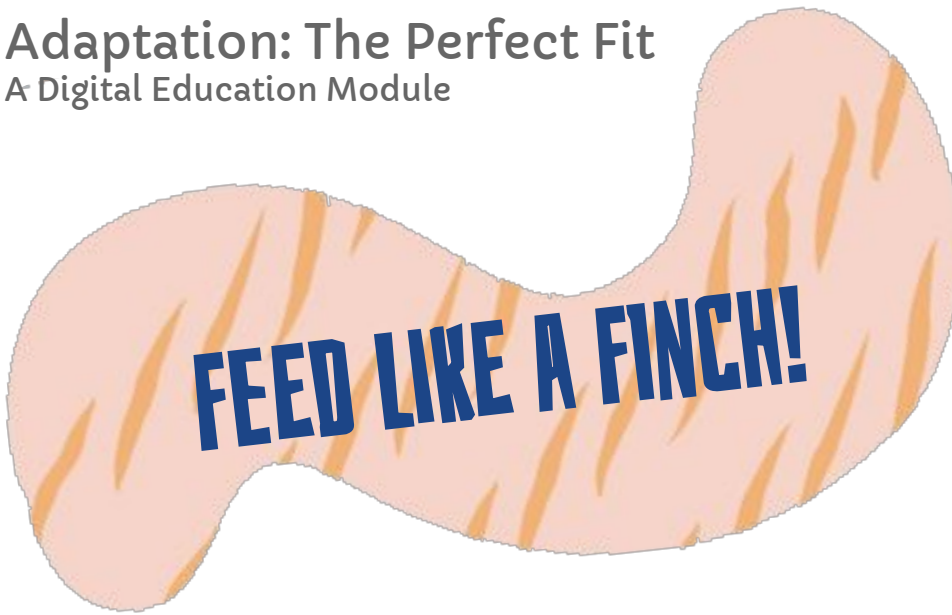Leonard Gelfand Center

ENGINEER AN ANIMAL

In this activity, you will use the same animal as in the Animal Analysis worksheet. Your challenge is to **adapt** your animal so that it is able to live in an environment that is the *complete opposite* of where it normally lives. (For example, imagine putting a polar bear in the desert!)

How would you change the **traits** of your animal so that it could live in this new environment? How will you make sure the animal survives?

Draw your animal and the changes you made to it below. Don't forget to name it!

Name of animal: _____

Describe the new traits of your animal and how they help your animal survive in the space below.

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FEED LIKE A FINCH!

Follow the instructions in the video to set up and perform your Feed Like A Finch experiment. After each round, fill in the table below with the amount of food you caught with each beak.

Write your types of beaks here! → / Write your types of food here! ↓				
	pieces of food collected	pieces of food collected	pieces of food collected	pieces of food collected
	pieces of food collected	pieces of food collected	pieces of food collected	pieces of food collected
	pieces of food collected	pieces of food collected	pieces of food collected	pieces of food collected
	pieces of food collected	pieces of food collected	pieces of food collected	pieces of food collected

FEED LIKE A FINCH!

After you have filled in your table, write down your observations from the activity.

You can ask yourself:
Were there certain types of beaks that were really good or bad at catching one type of food?
Were there any beaks that were pretty good at catching all types of food?
Which type of food was caught the most? Which type was caught the least?

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2