

# The Animal Kingdom

By Cindy Grigg

<sup>1</sup> There are many different kinds of animals. Whales, cows, and people are all animals. They are all mammals, too. But they don't look very much alike or live in places that are very much alike, either. But they do have some things in common. Whales, cows, and people all give birth to live babies and feed them with milk from the mother's body. This is what makes them mammals. So what makes an animal an animal? What do all animals have in common?



<sup>2</sup> On a very basic level, all animals are made up of many cells. We call them multicellular organisms. Animals are all consumers, depending on other living organisms for their food. Some animals eat only plants. Some eat only other animals. Some animals eat almost anything. But all animals must eat other organisms for food.

<sup>3</sup> Animals live in a wide variety of environments. Penguins survive in Antarctica when temperatures are below -100 degrees Fahrenheit. Desert bighorn sheep live in some of the hottest places on Earth. Animals live in the kind of environment that they are best suited for. The environment gives them everything they need to survive. All animals must get food, water, and oxygen from their surroundings. Food gives animals the energy to keep their bodies breathing, digesting, moving, and living. Chemical reactions in the cells need water and oxygen to be carried out. Oxygen is needed in every cell of an animal's body to get the energy from food. Some animals get oxygen from the water they live in. Some animals breathe air to get oxygen. Some animals even get oxygen by absorbing it through their skin!

<sup>4</sup> All animals make more organisms like themselves by reproducing. Most animals reproduce sexually. A cell from a male and a female come together, resulting in offspring that look like the parents. Some animals reproduce asexually. In this process, an animal like the hydra can produce a new organism like itself. The adult hydra forms "buds" that eventually break off and become new hydras.

<sup>5</sup> Since all animals must find food, most animals can move from one place to another. Some animals need to escape from predators that want them to be food. Some animals don't move from place to place. Adult oysters, sponges, and corals all attached to underwater rocks or the sea floor. But most animals move at some point in their lives. For example, an oyster is a tiny swimmer during the first few weeks of its life. Then it attaches to a rock and changes into an adult oyster within a shell.

<sup>6</sup> When you hear the word "animal," what do you think of? Maybe you think of an animal that is soft and furry. You probably don't think of a sea sponge. Because sponges are so different from other animals, for many years people thought that sponges were plants. But sponges can't make their own food; they must get food from other organisms. Now sponges are classified as animals. They are multicellular; they need food, water, and oxygen to survive, and they must get food from other organisms. I'll bet you didn't know you had so much in common with a sponge!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Science Pd: \_\_\_\_\_

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1. What makes an animal an animal? <input type="radio"/> A It has fur or hair and breathes oxygen. <input type="radio"/> B It moves and thinks. <input type="radio"/> C It is made of many cells and must get food from other organisms.	2. What three things do animals need to survive?  _____  _____
3. All animals are made up of many cells. <input type="radio"/> A False <input type="radio"/> B True	4. All animals move. <input type="radio"/> A False <input type="radio"/> B True
5. Humans belong to the animal kingdom. <input type="radio"/> A False <input type="radio"/> B True	6. Coral and sponges belong to the animal kingdom. <input type="radio"/> A False <input type="radio"/> B True