

# DICKINSON COUNTY NATURE CENTER

## GRADE K — “THE ESSENTIALS OF LIFE”

### Core expectations

**K-LS1-1** Use observations to describe patterns of what plants and animals (including humans) need to survive.

**K-ESS3-1** Use the model to represent the relationship between the needs of different plants and animals (including humans) and the places they live.

### Activity Time

One 30- to 45-minute session

### **Contact:**

Environmental  
Education Team

[naturecenter@dickinsoncountyiowa.gov](mailto:naturecenter@dickinsoncountyiowa.gov)  
712-336-6352

### Program Alignment with Iowa Core Curriculum

#### Disciplinary Core Ideas

- **LS1.C Organization for Matter and Energy Flow in Organisms:** All animals need food in order to live and grow. They obtain their food from plants or from other animals. Plants need water and light to live and grow.
- **LS1 D: Information Processing:** Animals have body parts that capture and convey different kinds of information needed for growth and survival. Animals respond to these inputs with behaviors that help them survive. Plants also respond to some external inputs.
- **LS4D: Biodiversity and Humans:** There are many different kinds of living things in any area, and they exist in different places on land and in water.

#### Investigative questions

- What do you think animals need to live?
- Do all animals need the same things to live?
- What are some things you need to live?
- What is the difference between wildlife and domesticated animals?

#### Investigative phenomena

Through two interactive activities, students will learn the difference between wildlife and domesticated animals and how all living things need food, water, shelter and space to live and thrive.

#### Practices (SEPs)

- Students and the naturalist will develop and use a model to see which animals are wild and which are domesticated.
- Students will analyze and interpret data using observations made from photos and past experiences to categorize wild and domesticated animals.
- Students will investigate the needs of different animals to live and thrive.
- Students will be able to compare and contrast the needs of different animals.
- Students will be able to construct an explanation that all animals need food, water, shelter, and space, but their needs within those headings may be different.

#### Cross Cutting Concepts students will identify:

- Structure and function of different animal species.
- Structure and function of animals adapted to live in different environments.
- Patterns in which they see all animals need food, water, shelter, space.
- Systems and system models of animals in habitats.



### Supplies

*All supplies brought by the nature center unless otherwise arranged.*

- Cards of wildlife and domesticated animals (25 cards)
- Pictures to represent food, water, shelter and space.

### Animal Ambassadors

- Honey: Hedgehog
- Pinki: Chilean rose-haired tarantula
- Sy: Tiger salamander

### Program Overview

#### Background

Knowing the difference between wildlife and domesticated animals is an important concept for young children to grasp for their safety as well as for the safety of wildlife. **Wildlife** means an animal that lives in a natural state, providing its own food, water, and shelter. These animals are not tamed. **Domesticated** animals are those that humans have kept in captivity and bred for special reasons.

This concept can be difficult for young students to understand, but we hope to encourage them to think of the usual circumstances for the animal. The main concept students should understand is that wild animals can take care of themselves if they are in a suitable habitat, while domesticated animals depend on humans to feed and take care of them.

Although there is a difference between wildlife and domesticated animals, these animals have many similarities. All animals — including humans — need food, water, shelter and space. However, these needs must be in a particular quantity and quality for specific animals. Through exploring the differences between domesticated and wild animals, students will be able to see a pattern that all things need food, water, shelter and space, but their needs will vary depending on species.

#### Procedure

1. The naturalist will introduce the concept of domesticated and wild animals.
2. The naturalist will hand every student a picture of an animal.
3. We will then go around the room and talk about whether the animal is wild or domestic. Students will be able to show the class their animal and put the animal on the board under the correct column.
4. After we have discussed the difference between domestic and wild animals we will talk about what all animals need to live.
5. Students will be asked to help brainstorm a list of things that people, wildlife and pets need to live. The naturalist will write down all the observations on the board.
6. After we have completed this, we will take the time to group our thoughts into larger themes. For instance a roof, heat and blankets would represent shelter.
7. After we have completed our lists, we will discuss how all animals need food, water, shelter, and space, but their needs are different.
8. At the end of our lesson, we will meet three different animals and talk about:
  - Where they get their food, water, and shelter.
  - If they are a wild or domesticated or both.