

Living things and their habitats

Making a mythical animal

*Year 6
Age 10-11*



For parents

Thank you for supporting your child's learning in science.

Before the session:

- Please read slide 2 so you know what your child is learning and what you need to get ready.
- As an alternative to using paper, slide 5 may be printed for your child to record on.

During the session:

- Share the learning intentions on slide 2.
- Support your child with the main activities on slides 3, 4 & 5, as needed.
- Slide 6 is a glossary of key terms.

Reviewing with your child:

- Slide 7 gives an idea of what your child may produce.



Living things and their habitats

Making a mythical animal

Key Learning

- Living things can be grouped according to **characteristics**.
- Some animals can be hard to **classify** when they appear to have features from more than one group.

I can...

- Explain why classifying some animals, like a platypus, can be difficult.
- Make up a mythical (fictional) animal with features from two or more different vertebrate groups.

Activities (pages 2-5): 30 - 40 mins

- Use paper, a pencil and some coloured pencils/pens.
- You may wish to print page 5.





Explore, review, think, talk....

*Find out about an unusual animal – the platypus
(10-15 minutes)*

- Watch this clip about the platypus.

<https://www.tigtagworld.co.uk/film/why-do-we-classify-PRM00146/>



- Which two animals mentioned have features similar to a platypus?
- Which vertebrate group does a platypus belong to?

- This second clip, narrated by David Attenborough, gives more details about how a platypus breeds.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p004jl2c>

- Try jotting down some ideas as you watch.



- Talk or think about why scientists found it difficult to classify the platypus.



Features of mythical animals

Mythical animals often have features from more than one animal group
(page 4-5: 20-30 minutes)

- Talk or think about the features of a dragon.



- Which animals do you think have features or characteristics similar to a dragon?



- Dragons are sometimes drawn with scales like a reptile and wings like a bat.
- How do we know when an animal is mythical or fictional?
- Watch this clip about Carl Linnaeus.
<https://youtu.be/lmQVnEMWtFc>
- In the past, scientists were able to recognise fictional animals when they appeared to have features from different groups.

Create a mythical vertebrate creature and label its features:

- Has it got fur, hair, scales, feathers or a smooth moist skin?
- Has it got legs, wings, fins or a tail?
- Does it live on land or in water?
- Does it breathe air with lungs or use gills?
- Is it warm or cold blooded?
- Does it lay eggs or give birth to live young?

Describe which animals your creature might be related to.

I can make up a mythical animal with features from two or more different vertebrate groups.

Glossary of terms

Characteristic: **Characteristics** are features of living things which help scientists **classify** them.

Classification: **Classification** is the method scientists use to group living things.

Vertebrate: A **vertebrate** is an animal with a backbone.

Pupil comments:

"it has moist skin, webbed feet and lives on land and in the water."

"It has a beak and a feathered tail."

"it is warm blooded and gives bird to live young."

Possible learning outcome for reviewing your work.

I can make up a mythical animal with features from two or more different vertebrate groups.



This pupil has chosen features of a bird (warm blooded, feathers and a beak), an amphibian (moist skin and webbed feet) and a mammal (warm blooded and gives birth to live young)