

Biology 101

Overview: Students compare and contrast two or three specimens to learn about observation.

Ages: 5 – 9

Time: 30 – 40 minutes

Materials Required: paper, pencil, crayons, magnifying glass (optional)

Objective: Students observe two or three of the same specimen and take notes on what is the same and what is different in order to draw conclusions.

Instructions:

- Read the following:
Did you ever wonder why one blade of grass was greener than another from the same yard? Did you ever look at two goldfish in the same tank at the same pet store and wonder why one was bigger and brighter than the other? Did you ever see twin sisters who didn't have the same hair color and try to figure out why? Biologists look for answers to questions such as these because biology is the study of all living things.
Biologists can specialize in the study of thousands of different things, but one thing they have in common is good observation skills. One of the most important skills for becoming a biologist is learning to observe. Looking closely at plants, animals or any living thing begins to broaden your knowledge and helps you make connections between discoveries.
- Find two or three samples of the same living thing. Watch closely and take notes on what you observe about what is the same and what is different about each. Draw a picture or write about each. Include size, color, shape, movement, etc. Then record the difference between each. For example, if you have two worms, is one longer? fatter? Does one move faster? If you have two leaves, write down the size, color, shape, and texture of each. How are they the same? How are they different?
- When the students return to the classroom, ask each student to read the descriptions of the specimens they found without telling what it is. Then ask the class to guess the type of specimen.

Follow-up Questions:

What did you observe about each one?

How are the things you found the same? How are they different?

Where could you go for more information about this?