

What is That Behavior?

Name _____

Background: Animals have developed different kinds of behavior that enable them to survive in the environment in which they live. Animal behaviors can be classified as instinctive or learned. An **instinctive behavior** is a behavior an animal is born with. A **learned behavior** is a behavior that develops with experience and practice.

Whether instinctive or learned, animals behave certain ways for specific reasons. These reasons can be divided into different categories of behavior. Some of the main categories are listed below:

Survival behavior - Behavior that helps an animal to survive, such as finding food or avoiding predators.

Communication/social behavior - Behavior that involves interacting with other animals.

Courtship behavior - Behavior that enables an animal to locate a mate and reproduce.

Seasonal behavior - Behavior that helps animals adjust to the changing seasons.

Part I: In this activity, you will categorize animal behaviors. Study the list of different types of behavior above. Next, read the descriptions of animal behaviors listed in the chart. Decide whether each behavior is instinctive or learned. Then decide what other category of behavior each description fits into.

Behavior	Instinctive/Learned	Other
<i>Example:</i> Canada geese fly south in the fall, where it is easier to find food.	<i>Instinctive</i>	<i>Seasonal</i>
1. A male peacock displays his beautiful tail to a female.		
2. A bottlenose dolphin breaches, or jumps, in the air. People clap and the trainer feeds the dolphin a fish.		
3. A hedgehog climbs into its den and hibernates through the winter.		
4. Two monkeys take turns grooming one another. One picks bugs from the other's fur and eats them.		
5. A sea anemone paralyzes prey with its tentacles.		
6. A human toddler practices saying "please" and "thank you."		
7. Squirrels gather as many nuts as possible and bury them to prepare for the winter.		
8. A male sea horse dances and changes colors to impress a female.		

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Part II:

1. Find an example of the living things listed below. Observe their behavior for 5 minutes.
2. Every minute, describe the behavior of the living things in the charts below.
3. At the end of 5 minutes, identify the type of behavior carried out by the living thing.

Mammal

Minute	Description of Behavior	Type of Behavior
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

Bird

Minute	Description of Behavior	Type of Behavior
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

Insect

Minute	Description of Behavior	Type of Behavior
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		