

# The Animal Kingdom

## Reading and Discussion

There are many different types of animals. Some are similar to each other, but others are very different. Animals have been classified and divided into different kingdoms based on their similarities. There are five basic kingdoms of animals. These are:

- **Mammals**
- **Amphibians**
- **Reptiles**
- **Birds**
- **Fish**

Mammals have several common characteristics. Most mammals have hair or fur. They are warm-blooded. This means that they are capable of regulating their own body temperature, and their bodies stay at roughly the same temperature. Mammals breathe through their lungs. They are creatures that are born alive. Female mammals also produce milk to feed their young. Some common mammals are:

- **humans**
- **monkeys**
- **rodents**
- **whales.**

**Amphibians** spend part of their lives under water and part on land. Unlike mammals, they are cold-blooded creatures. This means that their bodies' temperature changes based on their environment. Amphibians lay their eggs in water. Baby amphibians live in water and breathe with gills. Frogs are a good example of amphibians. A tadpole, which is a newborn frog, lives in water and has a tail. This allows it to swim like a fish. It breathes through its gills. As a tadpole gets older, it loses its tail and gills. It develops legs for moving on land and starts to look like a typical frog.

One of the most noticeable characteristics of **reptiles** is that they have scales covering their bodies. They have either short legs, or no legs at all. Like amphibians, they are cold-blooded. Most young reptiles hatch from eggs. Reptiles breathe using their lungs. Typically, young reptiles look like their parents.

There are thousands of different kinds of **birds**. They vary in size. Some are quite small, like the hummingbird. Others are rather large, like the ostrich. Birds are animals with feathers. They have two legs and two wings. Birds also lay eggs, and their young hatch from these eggs. In addition, birds have either a beak or a bill. Like mammals, they are warm-blooded animals. In fact, mammals and birds are the only two types of animals that are warm-blooded. Birds breathe more rapidly than mammals, and they have higher body temperatures.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Fish** are cold-blooded animals. They breathe through their **gills** and live in water. Their gills perform the gas exchange between the water and their blood. This process allows them to breathe oxygen in water. Fish have fins instead of legs, and most fish are covered with scales. Fish also lay eggs.

Mammals, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and fish are all vertebrates. What does this mean? Vertebrates are animals that have a **backbone**.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Activities

**Activity A:** Match the FIVE animal kingdoms with the correct description.

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| _____ 1. Amphibians | a. typically have hair or fur and breathe through lungs.   |
| _____ 2. Mammals    | b. lay eggs and have beaks or bills.                       |
| _____ 3. Reptiles   | c. breathe through gills.                                  |
| _____ 4. Fish       | d. spend part of their lives under water and part on land. |
| _____ 5. Birds      | e. have scales and short legs or no legs.                  |

**Activity B:** For each of the following, write a **W** if the animals are warm-blooded or a **C** if they are cold-blooded:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Mammals
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Fish
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Reptiles
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Birds
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Amphibians

**Activity C:** Fill in the blanks:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ are animals that have a backbone or spinal column.
2. There are five basic \_\_\_\_\_ of animals.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Answer Key

### Activity A

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <u>d</u> 1. Amphibians | a. typically have hair or fur and breathe through lungs   |
| <u>a</u> 2. Mammals    | b. lay eggs and have beaks or bills                       |
| <u>e</u> 3. Reptiles   | c. breathe through gills                                  |
| <u>f</u> 4. Fish       | d. spend part of their lives under water and part on land |
| <u>b</u> 5. Birds      | e. have scales and short legs or no legs                  |

### Activity B

- W 1. Mammals
- C 2. Fish
- C 3. Reptiles
- W 4. Birds
- C 5. Amphibians

### Activity C

1. Vertebrates are animals that have a backbone or spinal column.
2. There are five basic kingdoms of animals.