

Colorado National Monument

Environmental Education

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Animal Adaptations: Pre-Field Trip Activity
(4th grade, *An Alcove for an Abode, Desert Dwellers*)

Name _____

List three reasons why it would be hard for you to live in the desert:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

The animals below have **adaptations** that help them survive in the desert.

**Animals
Depend on their
Activities and
Parts
To
Survive**

Adaptation: an activity or physical feature of an animal or plant that helps it survive in its environment.

Who Am I?

Draw a line to match the description with the animal.

I can swoop down at speeds over 250 mph to capture my prey, smaller birds.



Ringtail

I am an excellent jumper and get all the water I need from the plants I eat.



Desert Cottontail Rabbit

I pant like a dog to keep cool in the heat of the summer.



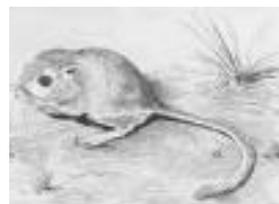
Desert Bighorn Sheep

My big ears release heat to help me stay cool.



Peregrine Falcon

My large tail helps me balance as I climb through the trees in search of food at night.



Kangaroo Rat

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Animal Adaptations: Pre-Field Trip Activity
(4th grade, *An Alcove for an Abode, Desert Dwellers*)

Answer Key

List three reasons why it would be hard for you to live in the desert:

- 1) _____ **It is hot.** _____
- 2) _____ **There is not much to eat.** _____
- 3) _____ **There is not enough water. There is not much shade.** _____ **Etc., etc.** _____

The animals below have **adaptations** that help them survive in the desert.

Animals Depend on their Activities and Parts To Survive

Adaptation: an activity or physical feature of an animal or plant that helps it survive in its environment.

Who Am I?

Draw a line to match the description with the animal.

I can swoop down at speeds over 250 mph to capture my prey, smaller birds.

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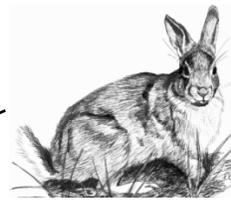
My large tail helps me balance as I climb through the trees at night in search of food.



Ringtail



Desert Bighorn Sheep



Desert Cottontail Rabbit



Peregrine Falcon



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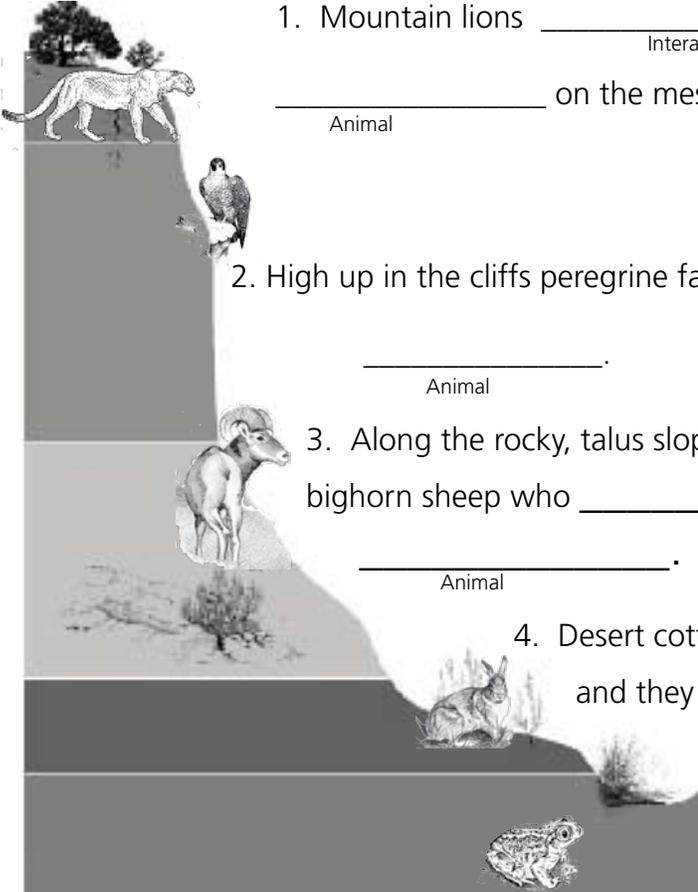
National Park Service
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Animal Adaptations: Post-Field Trip Activity
(4th grade, An Alcove for an Abode, Desert Dwellers)

Name _____

Complete the five sentences below by writing an interaction and an animal that lives in each life zone.
There is more than one correct answer for each sentence.



1. Mountain lions _____
Interaction
_____ on the mesa tops.
Animal

2. High up in the cliffs peregrine falcons _____
Interaction
_____.
Animal

3. Along the rocky, talus slopes you can find desert bighorn sheep who _____
Interaction
_____.
Animal

4. Desert cottontail rabbits are often in the sagebrush meadows and they _____
Interaction _____
Animal

5. If you walk along the dry stream beds in the bottom of the canyons, you may see spadefoot toads who _____
Interaction _____
Animal

Animals that live here:

- midget faded rattlesnakes
- golden eagles
- mule deer
- coyote
- collared lizards
- ringtails
- quails
- swallows
- turkey vultures

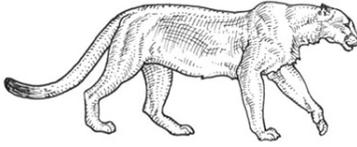
Interactions:

- prey on
- are hunted by
- share the habitat with
- compete for food with



Desert Bighorn Sheep

- Sticky hooves
- Large horns
- Light brown color
- Pants like a dog
- Eyes on the side of the head
- Teeth for grinding



Mountain Lion

- Good jumper
- Good climber
- Stalks prey quietly
- Tan color
- Eyes on the front of the head
- Teeth for tearing

Select either the Desert Bighorn Sheep or the Mountain Lion and choose two adaptations from the list.

Explain how those adaptations help the animal survive.

Example: Teeth for grinding help the desert bighorn sheep survive because it is an herbivore and needs teeth that can grind plants. (Sorry, you may not use this example in your answers.)

1) _____

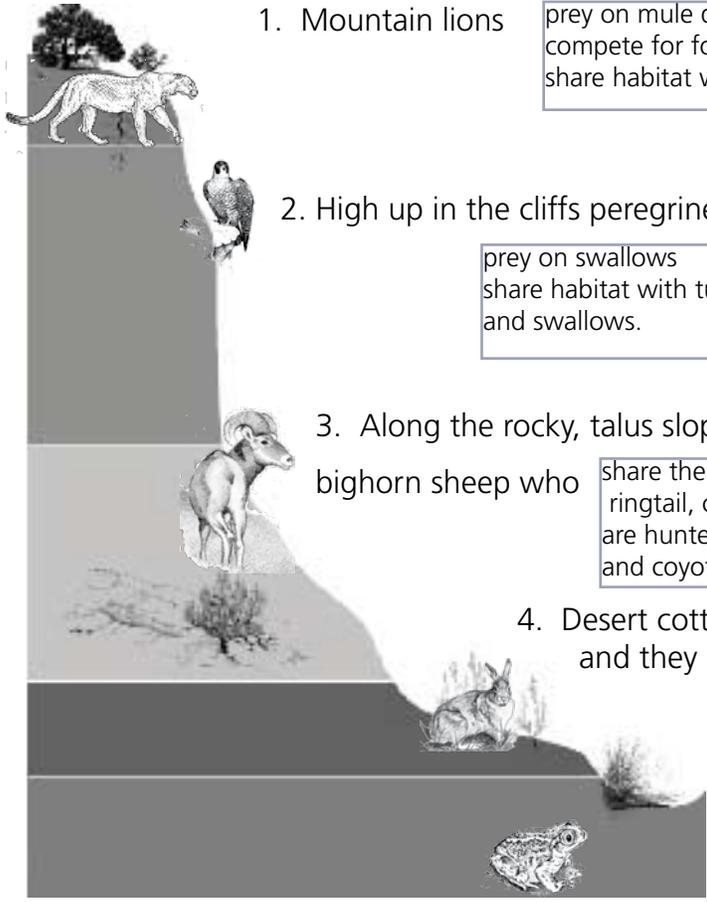
2) _____



Animal Adaptations: Post-Field Trip Activity
(4th grade, An Alcove for an Abode, Desert Dwellers)

Name _____ **Answer Key**

Complete the five sentences below by writing an interaction and an animal that lives in each life zone. There is more than one correct answer for each sentence.



1. Mountain lions prey on mule deer and cottontail rabbits.
compete for food with coyote
share habitat with deer, coyote, rattlesnakes
on the mesa tops.

2. High up in the cliffs peregrine falcons prey on swallows
share habitat with turkey vultures, golden eagles
and swallows.

3. Along the rocky, talus slopes you can find desert bighorn sheep who share the habitat with rattlesnakes,
ringtail, collared lizards, mt. lions
are hunted by mt. lion. golden eagles
and coyote will hunt young sheep.

4. Desert cottontail rabbits are often in the sagebrush meadows and they are hunted by coyote, rattlesnake, golden eagles, mt. lion.
share the habitat with deer, coyote, lizards, quails, mt. lion and
rattlesnakes

5. If you walk along the dry stream beds in the bottom of the canyons, you may see spadefoot toads who are hunted by coyote, ringtails, rattlesnakes
share the habitat with deer, coyote, lizards,
quails, mt. lion compete for food with lizards

Animals that live here:
midget faded rattlesnakes
golden eagles
mule deer
coyote
collared lizards
ringtails
quails
swallows
turkey vultures

Interactions:
prey on
are hunted by
share the habitat with
compete for food with

Sticky hooves
Large horns
Light brown color
Pants like a dog
Eyes on the side of the head
Teeth for grinding

Desert Bighorn Sheep

Good jumper
Good climber
Stalks prey quietly
Tan color
Eyes on the front of the head
Teeth for tearing

Mountain Lion

Select either the Desert Bighorn Sheep or the Mountain Lion and choose two adaptations from the list. **Explain** how those adaptations help the animal survive.

Example: Teeth for grinding help the desert bighorn sheep survive because it is an herbivore and needs teeth that can grind plants. (Sorry, you may not use this example in your answers.)

Desert Bighorn Sheep
Sticky hooves: helps to climb, avoid predators
Large horns: can fight other males to earn females
Light brown color: helps camouflaged from predators
Pants like a dog: Gets rid of heat to survive desert
Eyes on the side: Can see predators all around
Teeth for grinding: Herbivore - see example.

Mountain Lion
Good jumper: surprises prey to eat
Good climber: Helps hide from prey
Can stalk (sneak up) quietly: Helps surprise prey
Tan color: Camouflaged from prey
Eyes on the front: Judges distance to attack prey
Teeth for tearing:
Carnivore -sharp teeth for ripping meat.