

### Fur, Fins, and Feathers: Animal Classification

In this unit, students will be introduced to the science of animal classification.

#### What's the story?

Students will **develop scientific skills** while they observe and practice **identifying important characteristics** of organisms and objects.

#### What will my student learn?

Students will have the opportunity to **engage in discussions** with their teacher and classmates, in which they will be asked to **respond based on observations** and **thinking** that occurred throughout their reading.

Students will focus on an **opinion writing piece** that will extend their understanding of vertebrates. They will also have many opportunities to **work with their peers**, **share ideas**, and **provide feedback** on their writing.

#### Conversation starters

Ask your student questions about the unit to promote discussion and continued learning:

1. How do scientists classify animals?  
**Follow up:** Why do they classify animals?
2. What is a vertebrate? What is an invertebrate?  
**Follow up:** What are some animals that are vertebrates? What are some animals that are invertebrates? How would your life be different if you did not have a backbone?
3. What are some characteristics of mammals?
4. Tell me about the changes that a frog goes through in its lifetime.
5. What were some of the discoveries that Jane Goodall made about chimps during her years in Africa?
6. If you could be any animal that you read about, what would it be?  
**Follow up:** Why would you choose to be that animal?