



Teacher Background: Structures and Functions

In third grade standards, the word *adaptation* is not introduced but students are asked to know about the different internal and external structures that animals have and the functions they serve in growth, survival, behavior, and reproduction.

Organisms best-suited for their environment are more likely to successfully reproduce. This phenomenon is known as natural selection. It causes species to make changes to their structures, functions, and behaviors that increase their chances of survival.

Structural = how the body is put together. For example, a cheetah's legs are built for maximum speed to catch its prey. It also involves internal body structures and chemistry, such as poison dart frogs developing poison glands for protection.