

Predators and prey

By the end of the lesson the learners will be able to:

- Give the definition of a predator, prey, a herbivore, a carnivore and an omnivore.
- Share their views on the way animals feed.

Materials and preparation

- *Predators and prey definitions and image cards A3.*
- Sticky tape to fix the definitions and image cards on the wall.
- *Predators and prey food chain game* – set of cards, cut up.
- Use the *Information for the Teacher* sheet to come up with examples of animals for the main activity, found at the end of this lesson plan.
- Questions for starter activity written on board before lesson starts.

Key words

predator

An animal that hunts other animals for food.

A female lion is an awesome predator.

prey

An animal being hunted, caught, and eaten by another animal.

Gazelles are prey for lions.

herbivore

An animal who only eats plants (grass, fruit, vegetable, tree leaves). Many insects are herbivores but some large animals are herbivores too, such as cows and zebra.

carnivore

An animal who only eats meat (other animals). Birds of prey like the eagle are carnivores along with animals such as snakes and cats.

omnivore

An animal or a person who eats meat and plants. Pigs, opossums and lizards are omnivores.

energy

The power or ability to make something work, move or grow.
Plants use the energy of the sun to grow.

plankton

Tiny organisms that live in large bodies of water and are food for many fish.

Starter

Discussion +
explanation
10 mins

Pair discussion: on the board, have the following questions written down before the lesson starts and ask learners to discuss their answers in pairs :

1. What is your favourite food?
2. What food do lions eat?
3. What food do most monkeys eat?
4. What food do most insects eat?
5. Why do we need food?

Listen to some of the learners' answers and provide the explanation below:

All living things need food. Food provides energy so that we can stay alive and grow. When a living thing eats something, they get energy from it so the energy is passed on from one living thing to the next. For example, a caterpillar gets energy from the plant it eats, and a bird gets energy from the caterpillar it eats. Different animals eat different things according to the category they belong to. Let's see what those categories are.

Main activity

Definitions
10 mins

With the group, read the definitions on *Predators and prey definitions and image cards A3 resource* of **predator**, **prey**, **carnivore**, **herbivore** and **omnivore** and match each definition to the correct term. Make sure the definitions are fixed to the wall so that learners might refer to them throughout the lesson.

Ask why the frog appears in **both** the prey and predator category. The answer is that the frogs eat insects, therefore they are a predator, but they also get eaten by birds so they are prey as well.

Stand up, sit
down or crouch
10 mins

Use your teacher's information sheet to call out the names of animals. Learners need to decide what category each animal belongs to and act accordingly. They must:

- **sit down** if the animal called out is only **prey**

- **stand up** if it is **both** prey and a predator
- **crouch** if it is only a **predator**

Alternatively, you could give the name of an animal to a child or a group of children and ask them to place themselves by the right definition on the wall: are they a predator, prey or both?

Food chain game
15 mins

Give out the animal cards from the *food chain game*. Each learner gets one card and has to find where they fit in a food chain: they have to find who they eat and who eats them by moving around the classroom and speaking to their classmates.

When they have found their predator and their prey, they should stand in a line in order of who eats whom.

When everyone is matched up correctly (go round and correct groups), you can explain to the class that what they have made is a very basic *food chain*.

Definition of food chain: food chains show us how plants and animals in a habitat rely on each other for food. Food chains usually start with a green plant which is eaten by an animal which is then eaten by another animal.

You can let the class know that this will be the topic of the next lesson.

Plenary

Quiz
15 mins

Ask the class the following questions:

1. How do you think a predator feels when they're very hungry and they can't catch prey?
2. How do you think prey feel when they're trying to escape from a predator?
3. Do you think prey and predator can choose what they eat? Why? Why not?
4. Would you rather be: prey, predator or both? Why?
5. How do you feel about the way nature is organised according to predators and prey?

Extension
(optional)

Write down as many animals that are prey, predators and both as you can in your books in their correct categories.

Information for the teacher

animals

Predators

lion, eagle (and many birds), tiger, bear, shark, crocodile, wolf, owl, bat

Prey

zebra, gazelle, donkey, rabbit, snail, slug, squirrel, deer, cow, sheep, goat, horse, camel, birds, and insects (ladybird, bee, wasp, fly, mosquito, dung beetle, mophane caterpillar, butterfly)

Both predator and prey

lizard, snake, frog, cat, hyena, ant, rat, chameleon, spider, sea lion, racoon, wild boar, jellyfish, octopus, scorpion, wild dog, mongoose, stoat, weasel, skunk, shrew, fennec, cheetah, bird, dragonfly, praying mantis.

how to play

- Call out any animal from these three sections above.
- Each time you call out a **prey** animal, learners must **sit down**; when you call out an animal that is **both prey and predator**, they must **stand up**; if you call out an animal that is just **predator**, learners must **crouch**. You can speed up the game as the players get warmed up.
- Twist: if learners get one wrong, they are 'out' or have to complete the game on one leg. Last one left in the game wins, or the last learners left when you run out of animals to call out.
- Learners' reactions will provoke discussions about who eats whom.
- You can ask learners to provide a reason for their choices, and ask if others agree with them before you tell them the answer.