

A STEM in the Park

Take Home Activity

STEM

in the **PARK**™

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

Amazing Animal Adaptations at Home

What You Need

- Various Household Tools and Utensils - tongs, chop sticks, spoon, scissors, pliers, eye dropper, straw, etc.
- Various Food Items of Different Shapes and Sizes - rice, gummy worms, noodles, water, peanuts, apple sauce, etc.
- Various Containers - vase, glass, bowl, plate, etc.



What To Do

1. Select each food item and place it in a unique container, such as water in the vase and rice in the bowl.
2. Try each tool and see which one is the best at getting the food out of the container.
3. Record each of the best tools each time in a data table with the food and container listed.
4. Review the data collected. Is there a tool that works for more than one combination? Is there a tool that doesn't work for any combination?
5. Repeat the process with new combinations or try to find the best combination for each tool.
6. Based on your observations, see if you can name an animal that has a body part for finding food that can do the same job as each tool.

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The Science

The tools that you are using to try to get the food are similar to the many body part (or physical) adaptations that animals have. An adaptation is a trait that helps an animal to survive, and that includes being able to eat! In place of having so many specialized parts, humans use these tools to get jobs done. Using tools is also an adaptation shared by dolphins, chimps, and many others!

Note: *An adult should help the child with the activity and selecting tools that are appropriate for the child's age and ability.*

Investigate

Visit the Toledo Zoo and pay special attention to how animals in other parts of the world, such as the Arctic or Africa, have adaptations that help them survive in those habitats.

This activity is brought to you by Toledo Zoo & Aquarium

