



Animal Signs - Activity 6: Why leave the sign?

Animals are hard to spot for a reason-they don't want to be found! That being said, signs do get left behind and animals usually have a good reason for leaving them. This activity is meant to get students thinking critically about the animal signs they discover.

Goals

- Understand why animals leave signs behind
- Think critically about animal behaviours

Materials

- Animal Signs Biodiversity Sheet
- Worksheet

Activity

All animals need water, food, shelter, and space for life. A lot of the time, the signs left behind by animals are when they are looking for one of these things. In this activity, have students go through the different animal signs on the biodiversity sheet and ask themselves, why did the animal leave this sign? A good clue is to think about how the animal made the sign. If the sign was made by chewing with teeth, it is usually because the animal was looking for food! Have students fill out the worksheet by putting each animal sign in the appropriate category. Keep in mind that an animal sign may go in more than one category!





Why leave the sign? Worksheet: ANSWERS

Look at the different animal signs on your biodiversity sheet. Can you tell why that sign was left behind- was it because the animal was looking for food, shelter, or some other reason? Put them in the column that makes the most sense! If you think that the animal left the sign for a reason other than food and shelter, make sure you say what you think the animal was doing. Hint: some signs can go in more than one category!

Food	Shelter	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Beetle larvae tunnels -Beaver tree chewing -Leaf miner tunnels -Willow pine cone gall -Goldenrod ball gall -Elliptical goldenrod gall -Thistle gall -Goldenrod bunch gall -Pileated Woodpecker feeding holes -Porcupine bark chewing -Eastern Cottontail chewing -Sapsucker holes -Red Squirrel spruce tip chewing -Red Squirrel spruce cone chewing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Beetle larvae tunnels -Beaver tree chewing -Leaf miner tunnels -Willow pine cone gall -Goldenrod ball gall -Elliptical goldenrod gall -Thistle gall -Goldenrod bunch gall -American Goldfinch nest -Cooper’s Hawk nest -Eastern Gray Squirrel nest -Praying Mantis egg case -Organ Pipe Mud Dauber nest -Paper Wasp nest -Bald-faced Hornet nest -Eastern Tent Caterpillar nest -Carpenter Bee nest hole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Deer antler rub (marking territory) -Owl pellets (getting rid of roughage)