

# EXPLORING TRAITS IN PLANTS AND ANIMALS

## First Grade Science

This week, our first graders embarked on an exciting new science unit focused on plants and animals, specifically diving into the fascinating world of shared traits between baby animals and their parents. Through hands-on activities and thoughtful discussions, students made observations and gathered evidence that baby animals resemble their parents because of these shared characteristics.



## What Are Shared Traits?

The lesson began with students learning what shared traits are, how to identify them, and why recognizing these traits is such an important skill. For example, we discussed how animal rescuers often need to recognize baby animals by their traits in order to care for them properly. Understanding these similarities helps us understand more about different species and their needs.





## Matching Baby Animals with Their Parents

Students practiced analyzing the similarities and differences between adult and baby animals, matching them based on their specific traits. They observed animals like elephants, cheetahs, bald eagles, and sloths, paying close attention to things like size, shape, color, and specific features like beaks, feathers, or fur patterns. This hands-on exercise helped the children strengthen their observation skills while learning about the animal kingdom.



To make the lesson even more engaging, we conducted a "baby bird rescue" where students worked with partners and in table groups to identify lost baby birds based on shared traits. They compared characteristics such as beak shape, feathers, feet, and overall structure to match the baby birds with their parents. Each student then circled the traits that they found to be shared and justified their thinking by presenting their findings to the class.



The excitement and engagement in the room were contagious as the students eagerly participated in the rescue mission. Their thoughtful observations and deeper level of thinking were a joy to witness, and the teamwork they demonstrated showed their growing collaboration skills.

We're thrilled with how much our first graders are already learning in this key science standard and can't wait to see how their knowledge of plants and animals continues to grow throughout the year!