

Rubric: Living Systems, Plants and Animals

Task

Students present a labelled model or report on living systems: plants and animals.

Curriculum alignment

Students analyze and describe how plants and animals interact with each other and within environments ([Outcome](#)).

Represent various food chains in local and other Canadian environments ([Skills](#)).

Classify animals in a food chain as carnivores, herbivores, or omnivores ([Skills](#)).

Investigate and discuss how plants and animals respond to stimuli in their environments in order to survive ([Skills](#)).

Rubric

Criterion	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
Food Chain Representation	Shows plants and animals but no clear order or connection.	Shows a food chain with some correct order but missing one or two organisms.	Shows a complete food chain with plants, herbivores, and carnivores in correct order.	Shows multiple food chains with clear labels and accurate order in different environments.
Animal Classification	Names animals but does not classify them by diet.	Classifies some animals as carnivore, herbivore, or omnivore with minor errors.	Correctly classifies all animals as carnivore, herbivore, or omnivore based on what they eat.	Classifies animals accurately and explains why each animal belongs in its group.
Labels and Details	Few or unclear labels; minimal information about organisms.	Most organisms labelled; some details about what they eat or where they live.	All organisms clearly labelled with details about diet or habitat that show understanding.	Detailed labels include diet, habitat, and how each organism responds to its environment.
Communication	Presentation is hard to follow; unclear drawings or writing.	Presentation is mostly clear; drawings or writing shows effort but has gaps.	Presentation is clear and organized; drawings or writing is easy to understand.	Presentation is well organized and engaging; visuals and text work together effectively.

Scoring

Add the level for each criterion. A student working at Proficient on all four criteria earns a total of 12 points. Use this scale:

4 to 7 points: Beginning

8 to 11 points: Developing

12 to 15 points: Proficient

16 points: Exemplary

Notes for the teacher

- Look for evidence that the student understands the direction of energy flow in a food chain (plants to herbivores to carnivores), not just that organisms are listed together.
- Accept food chains from local environments or other Canadian regions, as specified in the curriculum outcome, such as a prairie, boreal forest, or Canadian coastal ecosystem.
- When a student classifies an animal, ask "How do you know?" If they can explain what the animal eats, they have met the criterion even if their drawing is rough.
- Differentiate by environment: Beginning students may work with a provided food chain to label and sort. Exemplary students may research and present two or three chains from different Canadian habitats and explain how animals in each chain respond to their surroundings.