



What Living Things Need! Year 1 Science at Home

You can help! Your child is learning about what plants and animals need to survive. You can help them notice these needs all around you!

Why are we learning this? Living things and Country

Up here in the north, caring for living things is part of everyday life. The plants and animals around us need specific things to survive — and so do we. First Nations peoples have always known which plants need water near the creek, where certain animals shelter in the dry season, and how to care for Country so living things can thrive. When your child learns about the needs of living things, they are connecting to knowledge that has been on Country for thousands of years.

My child will learn to:

✓ Know what living things need

Understand that plants and animals need air, water, food or shelter to stay alive.

✓ Identify where they live

Describe the places where plants and animals live and how those places meet their needs.

✓ Compare needs

Notice how different living things have different needs.

✓ Connect to everyday life

See how we look after pets and plants at home.

Big ideas to know:

Basic needs

All living things need air, water, food and shelter to stay alive. Different living things need different amounts and types of each.

Habitat

The place where a plant or animal lives is called its habitat. The habitat provides what the living thing needs to survive.

Caring for living things

When we look after a pet or a plant, we are making sure its needs are met — water, food, shelter and space.

What do living things need?





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Where do living things live and what do they need?

Living thing	Where it lives (habitat)	What it needs
Kangaroo	Grassland, scrub and bush	Grass and plants to eat, water, open space
Fish	Rivers, creeks, ocean	Clean water, food, shelter under rocks or plants
Bird	Trees, grassland, wetlands	Seeds or insects to eat, trees for shelter and nesting
Plant / tree	Soil — near water or in sun	Sunlight, water, minerals in soil, air
Dog (pet)	Our home	Food from us, fresh water, shelter, company

Think Like a Scientist — Needs Spotter

Next time you are outside, choose one plant and one animal. For each one, find evidence that its needs are being met. Where does it get water? Where does it shelter?

Ask your child: "What would happen to this plant or animal if it did not have water? What if there were no shelter?" Let them think and predict!

Things to look for:

1. Water nearby (creek, puddle, dew on leaves)
2. Food sources (insects, seeds, leaves, flowers)
3. Shelter (under a rock, in a tree, in the ground)
4. Signs of animals (tracks, nests, burrows)
5. A plant — does it get enough sunlight?

Questions to ask your child

1. What does that animal eat? Where does it find its food?
2. Where does it sleep or shelter? Why do you think it chose that spot?
3. What would happen if this place had no water during the dry season?
4. What does our pet need every day? Who makes sure those needs are met?

5. Does that plant get enough sunlight where it is growing?
6. Can you name a living thing for each need — air, water, food and shelter?
7. How do First Nations people care for the plants and animals on Country?

There are no wrong answers here — the goal is to notice and wonder! Even simple questions like 'Where do you think that bird sleeps?' are doing science.

Key words to know:

Living thing	Something that is alive — grows, needs food and water, and can reproduce
Needs	The things a living thing must have to stay alive — air, water, food, shelter
Habitat	The place where a plant or animal lives
Shelter	A place that protects a living thing from weather and danger
Survive	To stay alive
Predict	To make a smart guess about what will happen
Observe	To look carefully and notice details

Key words to look up

Living thing · Needs · Habitat · Shelter · Survive · Predict · Observe

What school will check

Your child needs to identify the basic needs of plants and animals and describe how the places they live meet those needs.

Try it at home!

Plant a seed or cutting in a cup. Water it and put it in the sun. Ask your child what it needs each day — and check together whether those needs are being met!