***Language Arts 3B***

***Unit 4: Meet the Challenge***

***Week 4: Adaptations Discussion***

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How do animals adapt to challenges in their habitat?

Adapt means “to change.” Challenges are difficult situations or obstacles. Habitat means “a place where a plant or animal lives.” On page 286 of the Reading/Writing Workshop, we see a photo of an ermine. An ermine adapts to challenges in its environment, or the natural features of where it lives, such as the weather, type of land, and plants that grow there. Ermines are normally brown in color, but in the winter, their fur becomes denser and white. This helps ermines stay warm and also helps them blend into their environment. While it helps to have warm fur, ermines also need some kind of shelter to protect them from their environment. Ermines often seek shelter in dens or caves that are no longer used by other animals. In “Gray Wolf! Red Fox!” the author tells about both the gray wolf and the red fox. He compares and contrasts them. For example, the red fox has an orangish-red color, while gray wolves are mostly gray. The red fox also adapts to its environment. As people keep building more and more apartments, malls, and shopping centers, the red foxes and gray wolves will have to adapt. The red fox adapts well, residing near people’s homes and picking through trash in the night. However, the gray wolf adapts by moving farther and farther from people’s homes. This is how both kinds have adapted to people. Red foxes and gray wolves also adapt in their way of hunting. Gray wolves usually prefer to travel in packs of four to seven, hunting for food such as moose or deer. However, red foxes eat much smaller things, such as birds. This is an adaptation as these smaller animals are usually found near people, where red foxes live, while bigger animals are found in places untouched by people, where gray wolves live. This is how the red foxes and gray wolves have adapted to their environment as a whole. In “Amazing Wildlife of the Mojave,” we learn that animals have different ways of adapting to challenges in their habitat. Some animals have adapted their physical features and characteristics to survive and some have adapted to the environment around them to survive. The author thinks that desert animals are fascinating in their adaptations and abilities to live in such a hot, dry environment. On page 328, he says desert animals are fascinating. On page 336, he says the desert iguana has an “amazing ability for warming and . . . cooling.” On page 337, he says that roadrunners are “wonderfully adapted to thrive in a dry, hot environment.” In “Little Half Chick,” Little Half Chick adapted by exploring and helping those he met along the way. He became a helpful part of Mexico City by turning into a weather vane. Evidence: On page 340, the chick cleared weeds from the steam. On page 341, he protected fire from rain and untangled the wind. Finally, he accepted the job of being a weather vane.