

1. Items encountered in the natural environment and their recognized affordances

- Sticks
 - Affords lengthening reach
 - Can be used to push, grab, hold onto, or touch other things that are out of arms reach
 - Affords support
 - Can be used as a tool to lean on when tired (like a walking stick)
 - When many of them are put together can create structures
 - Affords burning
 - Sticks can be used as fuel for fire → can then be used as a tool to provide light, heat, or food
 - Affords being used as a typical tool
 - Depending on the size, a large stick could be used like a hammer or something similar
 - Could also be used as a club or a bat, which would offer protection
- Trees
 - Afford protection
 - Canopy of the tree can provide some protection from natural elements
 - Depending on the size of the tree, shelter could be built in it (treehouse)
 - Affords entertainment
 - Can be climbed as an activity
 - A swing could be hung from the branches
 - Affords food
 - Some trees grow fruit or nuts to be consumed
- Rocks
 - Afford building
 - Can be stacked on top of each other to create structures
 - Can be carved into tools/weapons
 - Affords art
 - Can be carved or etched into to create a statue or etching
 - Affords destroying other things
 - Can be used to crush or break other things under its strength or weight.

3 examples of plants, animals, or insects and describe how they may be able to apprehend the natural environment and how they use things in the natural environment

Focusing on 3 main “non-sentient” organisms:

- Otters
- Crows
- Vine plants

All of the above organisms have the ability to use affordances in their environment, and in the case of otters and crows, they are able to recognize affordances as well.

Crows

How they interact with their environment and typical affordances

- Birds mainly use their beaks to interact with their environment, using them to grab, hold, carry, and place things
- Like many other birds, crows can recognize many affordances in their environment
 - a tree affords shelter and support for a nest
 - the ground affords walking and a source for bugs to eat
 - sticks and twigs can be used to create a nest

How they recognize affordances

- based on survival instinct and their own experience throughout their lives, birds are able to recognize what parts of their environment can be useful to them
- living in flocks, they can learn from each other

How they use affordances

- However, crows have been found to be far more intelligent than other birds, and they often use tools
 - Fashioning hooks and spears out of sticks and twigs to grab prey
 - Building compound tools out of sticks, rocks, and even trash in the environment to get into spaces they normally wouldn't be able to access
 - Using tools to carry multiple objects at once
 - Crows have also been known to use sticks in a weapon like fashion to protect their territory

Otters

How they interact with their environment and typical affordances

- Water affords floating and swimming
- Kelp forests afford protection from predators and an anchor for them to rest
- Urchins afford consumption

How they recognize affordances

- It is most likely that otters are able to recognize affordances in their environment based on survival instincts, or that they were taught by their parents or other members of their group

How they use affordances

- The most common tool that otters use are rocks
 - Otters use rocks to break open sea urchins, shells, and crabs for food
 - Use larger rocks on the shoreline like an anvil to crack things open on them as well
 - Rocks also afford entertainment – they are known to juggle rocks
 - Rocks also afford a sentimental value
- Kelp
 - Otters use kelp as an anchor, holding onto it and each other so they don't float away when they are resting

Vine Plants

How they interact with their environment and typical affordances

- Ground affords food
 - nutrients and minerals in the water that the plant absorbs through its roots
- Ground affords protection
 - The plant digs its roots into the ground so that it doesn't get blown away or crushed from other things in the environment

How they recognize affordances

- In the case of plants, they aren't able to recognize affordances, they simply make use of their environment to grow → without the affordances easily accessible to them, they would die quickly

How they use affordances

- Trees, sticks, steaks, fences, other tall structures afford support and protection
 - Vines grow vertically, grabbing onto vertical surfaces and using them as support to get closer to a light source.
 - Because vines are able to latch onto surrounding surfaces and grow up rather than be stuck on the ground, they are protected from being eaten, crushed, or drowned