Basic Needs of Living Things

Grade 3

Name _____ Date _____

Remember: Animals need food, water, air and shelter. **Plants** need water, air, light, nutrients and space. If needs aren't met, living things can't survive.

Need or want? A need is something you can't live without. A want is nice to have.

What Living Things Need



All living things have **basic needs**. These are the things they must have to stay alive and grow.

Animals need food, water, air and shelter. Food gives them energy. Water keeps their bodies working. Air gives them oxygen to breathe. Shelter, like a den, a nest or a burrow, protects them from bad weather and predators.

Plants need water, air, light and space to grow. Most plants also need nutrients from the soil. Plants don't eat food like animals do. Instead, they use sunlight, water and air to make their own food in their leaves.

When a living thing's needs are not met, it cannot survive. That is why a plant left in a dark closet wilts, and why animals move to new places when food or water runs out.

1. Check your understanding

Circle the best answer.

1. What are basic needs?

(a) Things living things must have to survive (b) Toys and games
(c) Things that are nice to have

2. Why do animals need shelter?

(a) To stay away from food (b) To be protected from weather and predators
(c) To make sunlight

3. How do plants get food?

(a) They eat insects. (b) Farmers feed them.
(c) They make it using sunlight, water and air.

4. What would happen to a plant kept in a dark closet?

(a) It would grow faster. (b) It would wilt. (c) It would turn blue.

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2. Who needs it?

Circle who needs each thing: plants, animals or both.

1	water	plants	animals	both
2	light to make food	plants	animals	both
3	shelter like a den or nest	plants	animals	both
4	air	plants	animals	both
5	nutrients from the soil	plants	animals	both
6	food to eat	plants	animals	both

3. Think like a scientist

Answer in a complete sentence.

1. **A pet goldfish lives in a bowl. Name two things it needs and how its owner provides them.**

Answer Key

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1. Check your understanding

1. What are basic needs?

a **Things living things must have to survive**
b Toys and games
c Things that are nice to have

2. Why do animals need shelter?

a To stay away from food
b **To be protected from weather and predators**
c To make sunlight

3. How do plants get food?

a They eat insects.
b Farmers feed them.
c **They make it using sunlight, water and air.**

4. What would happen to a plant kept in a dark closet?

a It would grow faster.
b **It would wilt.**
c It would turn blue.

2. Who needs it?

1	water	plants	animals	**both**
2	light to make food	**plants**	animals	both
3	shelter like a den or nest	plants	**animals**	both
4	air	plants	animals	**both**
5	nutrients from the soil	**plants**	animals	both
6	food to eat	plants	**animals**	both

3. Think like a scientist

Sample answer.

1. **A pet goldfish lives in a bowl. Name two things it needs and how its owner provides them.**
   It needs food, which the owner sprinkles in, and clean water with air in it, which the owner changes regularly.