

Characteristics of Living Things



Let's explore the important characteristics of living organisms one by one.

Nutrition

The process by which animals obtain food and utilize it for all the activities is called as nutrition.

Every organism requires nutrition for obtaining energy.



Growth

All living organisms grow and exhibit growth in different ways.

Their body cells divide and grow and thus overall growth is attained.



Respiration

Respiration is necessary for all living organisms.

It is through respiration that the body finally obtains energy from the food it takes.

Some animals may have different mechanisms for the exchange of gases, which is a part of the respiration process.

E.g. earthworms breathe through their skin and fish have gills for using oxygen dissolved in water.

In humans, we respire by breathing in oxygen breathing out the carbon dioxide.

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Response to Stimulus

Changes in our surroundings that makes us respond to them are called stimuli.

All living beings react to changes in their surroundings.

E.g. In response to increased temperature in summer, we use fans to cool our homes.



Excretion

All living things take food.

Not all the food that is eaten is really used, only a part of it is utilised by the body.

Unused/remaining food becomes waste and needs to be excreted.

Our body also produces some wastes, like urea, in other life processes.

Living organisms get rid of all this waste material and the process is known as excretion.



Reproduction

All living organisms give rise to a new organism of their own kind, by a process called reproduction.

The mode of reproduction may be different, in different animals and plants.

Some animals produce their young ones through eggs.

Some animals give birth to the young ones.

Plants produce seeds which germinate into new plants.

Some plants also reproduce through parts other than seeds.

E.g.: a part of a potato with a bud, grows into a new plant

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Movement

Animals move from one place to another and also show other body movements.

Plants are generally anchored in the soil so they do not move from one place to another.

However, various substances like water, minerals and the food synthesised by the plants move from one part to other.

Plants also show other kinds of movement like the opening and closing of flower buds.