Create-a-Creature (Adaptability)

**Topic:** How do animals adapt to their habitats?

**Grade Level:** K-6

**Time to teach lesson:** 3-4 class periods

**Concept:** Students will gain an understanding of the ways animals have adapted to their habitats.

**Overview:** Students will learn that some animals have special physical features that are adapted to their habitats.

**Objectives/Goals:** Students will:
1. use the Internet and other sources to gather information.
2. create a new animal to live in a specific habitat.
3. write a description of the creature and how it is specially adapted to its habitat.
4. share.

**Materials:**
- Internet access for research
- Encyclopedias or other printed materials on habitats
- Art supplies
- Recycled or household materials

**Procedures:**

**Initiating Activity:**
Engage students with a discussion of animals with special features for their habitat. For example: Did you know that manatees have big flat teeth (molars) in the back of their mouths? Why do you think they have flat teeth instead of sharp, pointed teeth?

**Strategies:**
1. Give examples of physical features. (big eyes, long beaks, long tails, etc.)
2. Explore habitats. Begin with the website The Indian River Lagoon: A Mosaic of Habitats (http://www.sms.si.edu/IRLSpec/Whatsa_Habitat.htm). Scroll down to the table, which includes animals and plants.
3. Give students art supplies and recycled materials. Students will create an original creature specially suited to its habitat.
4. Write. Each student will write 1 or more paragraphs describing the creature and how it is adapted to its habitat. Be sure to name the creature, tell what it eats, where it lives, where it sleeps, etc.

**Culminating Activities:**
Share your creature and explain its adaptations.
Evaluation:
Teacher observation
Presentation

National Standards:
Standard 1: How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report geographic information.
Standard 8: The characteristics and spatial distribution of ecosystems on Earth’s surface.

Sunshine State Standards:
L.A.A.1.3: uses the reading process effectively.
L.A.A.2.3.5: locates, organizes, and interprets written information for a variety of purposes, including classroom research, collaborative decision making, and performing a school or real-world task.
L.A.B.1.3.1: organizes information before writing according to the type and purpose of writing.
L.A.B.1.3.2: drafts and revises writing.
L.A.B.1.3.3: produces final documents that have been edited.
L.A.B.2.3: writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.
L.A.C.1.3: uses listening strategies effectively.
L.A.C.2.3: uses viewing strategies effectively.
L.A.C.3.5: uses speaking strategies effectively.
SC.D.2.3: understands the need for protection of the natural systems on Earth.
SS.B.1.1.1: determines the absolute and relative location of people, places, and things.
SS.B.2.1.1: identifies some physical and human characteristics of places.

List of Websites:
The Indian River Lagoon
http://www.sms.si.edu/IRLSpec/Whatsa_Habitat.htm

Everglades National Park Habitats
http://www.nps.gov/ever/eco/habitats.htm