

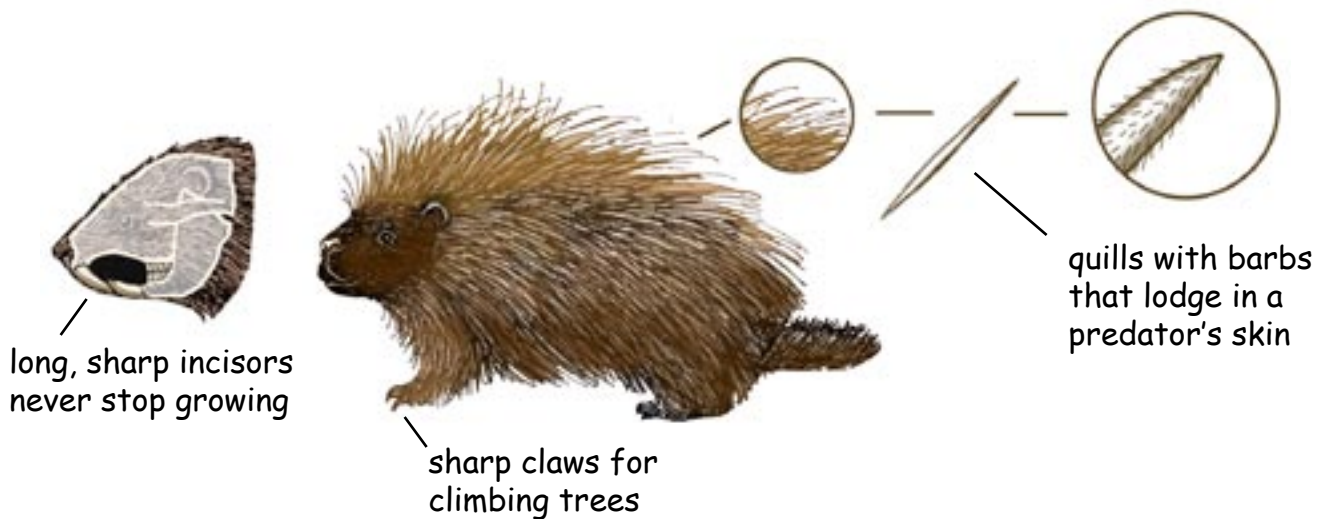
SHORT FILM WORKSHEET



The Sharp Adaptions of Porcupines

Read About Porcupines

Porcupines are very well adapted for their lives in the woods. They rodents with long, sharp front teeth that grow throughout their lives. They eat leaves, twigs, buds and even bark. They have sharp claws and can climb trees to feed on the bark and twigs high off the ground. They don't hibernate and feed all winter, usually at night (nocturnal), but can be seen during the day. They have a slow lumbering walk, so cannot run from predators and are often struck by cars making their way across roadways. There are very few predators that can successfully attack and feed on a porcupine because of the 30,000 quills that cover them. The quills are an ingenious defense because they each sit in a sheath that allows them to release easily when a predator touches them. Further, their pointed end has a tiny barb, like a fishhook, that once entered into an animals skin does not pull out easily. As the predator's muscle work, they further embed the painful quills. Porcupines, when approached by a predator, will turn its back and raise its quills to make the more accessible to a predators face. Many pet dogs have fallen for this trick and gotten too close with their sensitive noses. Ouch!



Name some of the adaptations that make porcupines so successful.

The questions to ask: What physical feature allows porcupines to feed on woody stems?

What physical feature allows them to climb up trees to twigs and soft bark in winter?

What physical feature allows porcupines to defend themselves from predators?

See the diagram to identify the important traits that have helped the porcupine survive in their habitat.



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Name some of the adaptations that make porcupines so successful.

The questions to ask: What physical feature allows porcupines to feed on woody stems?

Sharp incisors that keep growing throughout the life of the porcupine.

What physical feature allows them to climb up trees to twigs and soft bark in winter?

Sharp claws and strong leg muscles.

What physical feature allows porcupines to defend themselves from predators?

They are covered with sharp quills that release and stick into attackers.

See the diagram to identify the important traits that have helped the porcupine survive in their habitat.

