

For Creative Minds

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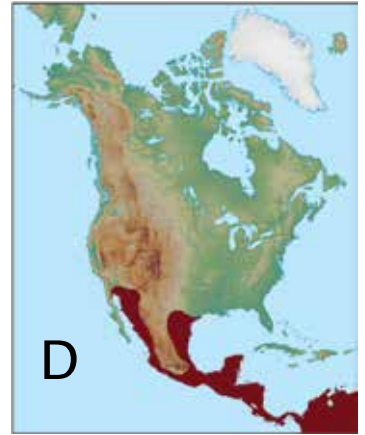
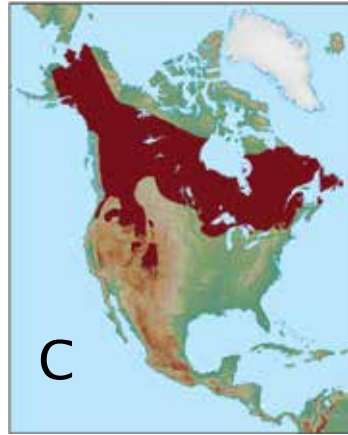
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Cat Comparisons

	cougar	bobcat	house cat
Scientific name	<i>Puma concolor</i>	<i>Lynx rufus</i>	<i>Felis catus</i>
body length (not including tail)	3-6 feet .9-1.8 meters	26-41 inches 66-104 cm	18 inches 46 cm
tail length	25-37 inches 64-94 cm	4-7 inches 10-18 cm	12 inches 30 cm
weight	120-200 lbs 54-91 kg	11-30 lbs 5-14 kg	8-16 lbs 4-7 kg
distance they can jump	20-40 feet 6-12 meters	10 feet 3 meters	8 feet 2.4 meters
lifespan	8-13 years	10-12 years	12-18 years
most active	at dusk and dawn (crepuscular)	at dusk and dawn (crepuscular)	at dusk and dawn (crepuscular)
Is it dangerous to pet?	Yes, you should not approach or try to pet wild animals. They may be scared and try to defend themselves from you.		Depends on the cat! Some like to be petted, some don't.

Cat Maps

There are four types of wildcats in North America. Match each cat map to the description of the cat's habitat and range.



Bobcats live across most of the United States, except for a portion of the Midwest near the Great Lakes. They live in many different types of habitats, like forests, swamps, deserts, and suburban areas near people.

Ocelots live in warm, tropical habitats where there is dense vegetation. Tropical rainforests, grasslands, and marshes are all home to ocelots.

Cougars are mostly found in the western part of North America, although there is one type of cougar found in Florida. Like bobcats, cougars live in many habitats, including swamps, forests, grasslands, and cities. Cougars can also be called mountain lions, pumas, panthers, or catamounts.

Lynxes live in boreal forests in the northern part of North America. Boreal forests are snowy forests of coniferous trees, like pine and spruce.

Which North American wildcat lives mostly in Canada?



Which lives mostly in Mexico and Central/South America?

Are there any regions where cougars and bobcats might meet in the wild? Where?

Answers: A-bobcat.
B-cougar. C-lynx.
D-ocelot.

Tail Adaptations

Adaptations help animals succeed in their habitat. An animal's tail is a type of **physical adaptation**. Different animals can have tails that look very different, but serve a similar purpose.

Two of the animals in this book have tails that help them turn. Gophers spin around inside their burrows. Bobcats change directions as they dart through rocks and grass.

Two of the animals in this book have tails that help them balance. Cougars use their long tails to balance as they leap. Hawks use their winged tails to balance and steer as they soar through the air.

Two of the animals in this book have tails that help them defend themselves. Skunks raise their tails to spray predators. Lizards' tails come off when a predator grabs them, allowing the lizard to escape.

Can you think of any other animals that use their tails to turn, balance, or defend themselves? Can you think of other uses for tails?

An animal's physical adaptations can tell you something about the animal and the habitat it lives in. Match the adaptations below with how it helps the animal.

Can you think of any animals that have these adaptations?

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. thick fur | A. sense things near its face |
| 2. webbed toes | B. stay warm in cold habitats |
| 3. sharp teeth | C. protect itself from attack |
| 4. hard outer shell | D. paddle through wet habitats |
| 5. whiskers | E. tear through meat |



turn

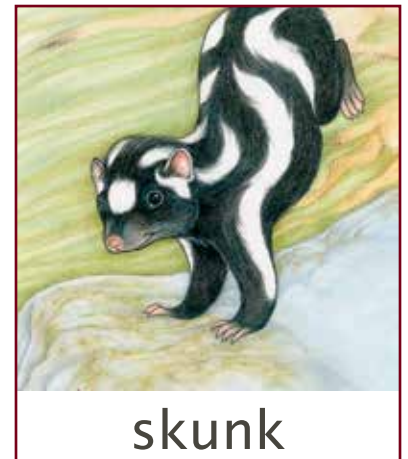
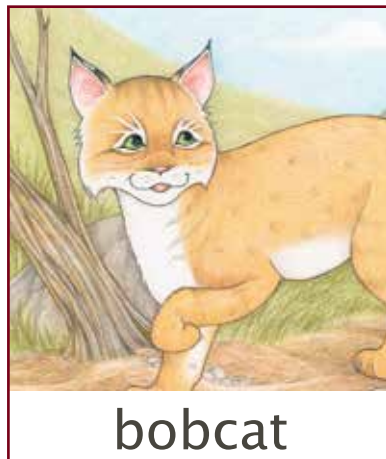
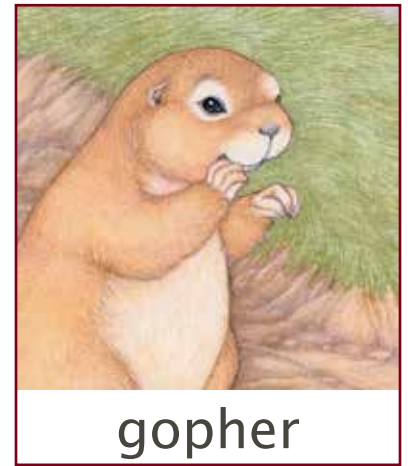
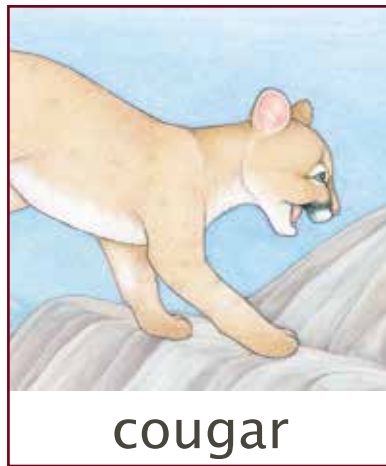
balance

defense



Answers: 1B, 2D, 3E, 4C, 5A

Match the Tail



Answers: A-skunk, B-hawk, C-bobcat, D-gopher, E-cougar, F-lizard