

Listen and fill in the blanks

In today's lecture, we will continue our talk about animal behavior. Much of animal behavior can be explained as instinct—that is, behavior that is already programmed into animals at birth. It is behavior that does not need to be learned. For example, animals instinctively reproduce and care for their young. And they instinctively behave in certain ways to survive in nature.

One of the stark realities of the animal world is that most species fall into one of two categories—predators (those that hunt other animals for food) . . . or prey (those hunted by predators). In fact, many animals actually play both roles in nature—sometimes as predators and sometimes as prey. For those that are prey, instinct drives them to behave in ways that protect them from predators in order to survive. For example, fish swim in huge _____, moving almost as one organism as they search for food. By traveling in a group, they can confuse predators. But more importantly, this behavior increases the chance that predators will choose to eat the fish that are not swimming in the school.

In order to hunt, predators also often travel in groups—or _____. They work together and use their combined intelligence to single out their prey from the _____ or the _____, increasing the chance of success and ensuring their own survival. Hunting in a pack also makes it possible to kill prey that are larger than the predators are. For example, while one lion couldn't kill a young elephant alone, several lions hunting together could.

Instinct also drives animals to either lead or follow. In a _____, or even in a _____ of predators, some animals are born to be more dominant than others. Animals will often fight each other for that top position. For example, in a _____ of horses, the strongest or the smartest horse may play a more dominant role in the herd and lead the others—which is crucial for everyone's survival.

Another aspect of the predator / prey relationship is what is called a “fight or flight” response. When predators approach their prey, the prey may instinctually respond in one of two ways. One way is to stand its ground, using _____, _____, _____, or _____ to fight back and drive the predator away. However, if it can't do that, it will try to get away as quickly as possible.