

**3-LS2-1 Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy, and Dynamics**

California Alternate Assessment for Science—Item Content Specifications

# 3-LS2-1 Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy, and Dynamics

| California Science Connector | Focal Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities | Essential Understanding |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Recognize that animals within a group help the group obtain food for survival, defend themselves, and survive changes in their ecosystem. | 1. Ability to recognize that animals within a group help the group obtain food for survival. 2. Ability to recognize that animals within a group help the group defend themselves. 3. Ability to recognize that animals within a group help the group survive changes in their ecosystem. | Recognize that some animals form groups to survive. |

## CA NGSS Performance Expectation

Students who demonstrate understanding can:

**Construct an argument that some animals form groups that help members survive.**

## Mastery Statements

Students will be able to:

* Recognize that animals in a group work together to find food
* Recognize how one animal’s behavior helps the entire group find food
* Recognize how one animal’s behavior helps the entire group protect themselves from other animals
* Recognize how animals work together to survive changes in the environment

## Possible Phenomena or Contexts

*Note that the list in this section is not exhaustive or prescriptive.*

**Possible contexts include the following:**

* Colonizing insects, such as bees and ants
* Penguins grouping together for warmth
* Herbivores watching for danger and issuing a warning
* Dolphins herding fish into a group to catch them
* Beavers building dams
* Prairie dogs building and sharing group burrows
* Elephants leading their group to new watering holes during drought
* Ants taking on new roles within a colony

## Additional Assessment Boundaries

* Avoid depictions of violent scenes.
* Avoid predator/prey relationships (hunting in groups).

## Additional References

California Science Test Item Specification for 3-LS2-1

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/documents/itemspecs-3-ls2-1.docx>

The *2016 Science Framework for California Public Schools Kindergarten through Grade Twelve* <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/sc/cf/cascienceframework2016.asp>

Appendix 1: Progression of the Science and Engineering Practices, Disciplinary Core Ideas, and Crosscutting Concepts in Kindergarten through Grade Twelve

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/sc/cf/documents/scifwappendix1.pdf>

Posted by the California Department of Education, July 2025