



# THE KANGAROO HOP

Hop like kangaroos to understand body adaptations



## GRADES 2-4

### MATERIALS

- aquarium net
- ping pong ball

### STANDARDS

- SCI.2.3.1
- SCI.4.3.3

### OBJECTIVE

- Students will learn how kangaroos use their adapted body parts in order to move quickly.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Kangaroos are among 100 types of marsupials found in Australia.
- Kangaroos come in many different shapes and sizes. Three examples of kangaroos are Doria's tree kangaroo, the Western gray kangaroo, and the red kangaroo. Inhabiting every niche, they include the wallabies, bettongs, pademelons, wallaroos, and tree kangaroos.
- Some, such as red kangaroos, are up to seven feet tall and weigh 200 pounds, while others, like the tree kangaroo, are as small as a rabbit.
- Kangaroos use body adaptations such as enlarged hind feet and a strong tail to help them hop.
- These adaptations allow some species of kangaroo, such as red and grey kangaroos, to efficiently hop 10 feet vertically, 40 feet horizontally, and reach speeds of over 30mph.

### PROCEDURES

- Divide the class into two teams.
- Have students practice hopping like a kangaroo.
- Then, give each team a small aquarium net with a ping pong ball inside, this is the "joey".
- Have a relay to see which team can hop a given distance in the shortest time, without dropping the "joey".

### ASSESSMENT

- Ensure student participation.





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Name \_\_\_\_\_

- The hind legs of a kangaroo are very powerful. The kangaroo also has very large hind feet.
- The legs and feet give kangaroos the ability to jump up to 10 feet high!
- Along with the legs, the kangaroo's thick, muscular tail forms a "tripod" to carry the kangaroo's weight. The tail also helps to balance the kangaroo when it jumps.
- As a kangaroo starts to jump, it tucks its hind legs forward then pushes them back. Both legs move together.
- Next, it brings its tail and forefeet forward and sets them down to form a tripod. Now it can bring its hind legs forward and start over.
- They can reach speeds of over 30 mph. Kangaroos can cover 40 feet in one hop when traveling at top speed.

