



## Animal Diversity

**Grade Level:** preK – 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>

**Where Taught:** On the Bio-Bus only

**# Students:** up to 15 students, plus only one observer

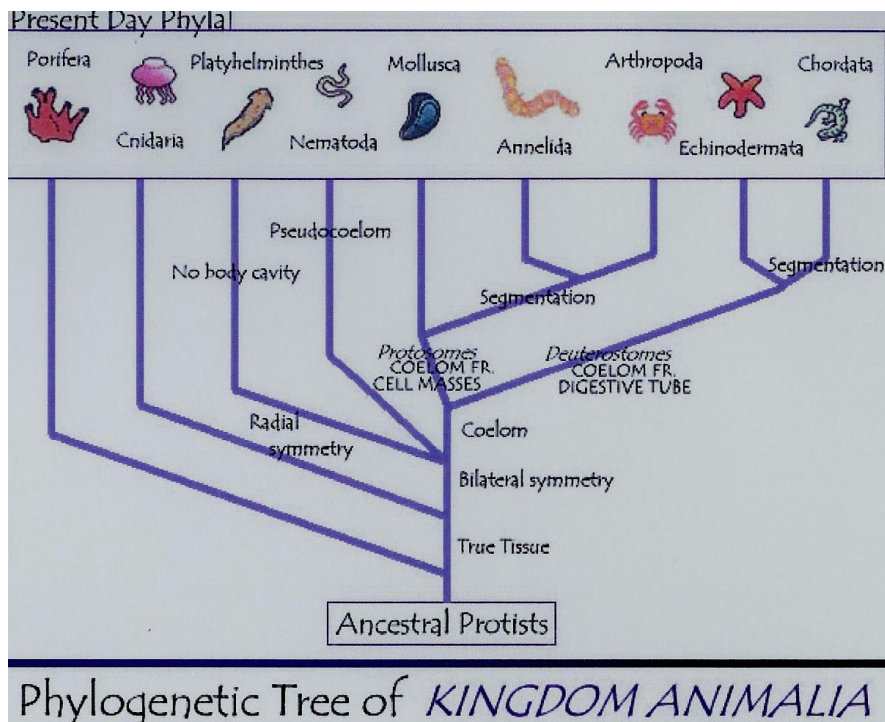
**Time needed for presentation:** 30-45 minutes

**Georgia Performance Standards:** Kindergarten 1 a, b, 2 a, c, d, e; 1<sup>st</sup> grade 1 b, d; 2<sup>nd</sup> grade 1 a; 3<sup>rd</sup> grade 1 d; 4<sup>th</sup> grade 2 a, b; 5<sup>th</sup> grade 1 a; 7<sup>th</sup> grade 1 a, b, 4 a, b, c, d.

The purpose of the “Animal Diversity” module is to share with students our excitement and enthusiasm over the amazing diversity of living organisms. We introduce the students to phyla in the animal kingdom, concentrating on nine phyla (out of about 35). We discuss the similarities and differences that define the groups.

For example, we might show a preserved specimen of a jellyfish, pointing out the tentacles and discussing how they sting to immobilize their prey. Then we all switch to a microscope connected to a wide-screen monitor which is focused on live hydra who, like the jellyfish, also use tentacles to sting their prey. We drop in a few water fleas, which hydra love to eat, and watch the hydra go to work. (This can get pretty intense for the students, since we never know whether or not a particular hydra is going to succeed in catching a water flea or whether the water flea is going to succeed in getting away. Some kids cheer for the predator, some for the prey.)

The goal of this module is to introduce students to the tremendous diversity of life in the animal kingdom, so that students can then discuss similarities and differences between the various phyla, and the progression of changes that allow animals to adapt to their specific environments.



- chart from [http://www.sidwell.edu/us/science/vb5/Labs/Classification\\_Lab/Eukarya/Animalia/](http://www.sidwell.edu/us/science/vb5/Labs/Classification_Lab/Eukarya/Animalia/)