**Good afternoon, Wildlife Explorer!**

I am so happy that you agreed to embark on this two day expedition of knowledge acquisition! All the instructions can be found below in your electronic field journal, but let me give you a brief overview. On day one and in your team of two (it’s never safe to go alone into the wilderness), you will complete the base-camp training to define adaptations. Next, you will use this knowledge to explore the environment and characteristics of the wondrous Naked Mole Rat. You are to keep track (in your journal) of features found in the environment and the adaptations of this animal. In addition, you will need to justify how each adaptation helps Naked Mole Rats to survive by linking the benefit to the animal to an environmental factor. For example, Polar Bears have fur and fat to keep them warm in their cold environment. You will return to camp at the end of the day to discuss your findings with your fellow explorers.

On day two, your team will set out to choose another animal to observe. Similar to the first animal encounter, you will need to research the adaptations that are beneficial for the animal to survive in its natural environment. Then you will choose a completely different environment in which to put your animal. What adaptations do you think will benefit your animal in its new and unknown environment? For example, a Polar Bear that moves from the Artic to a desert no longer needs all that fur! Help your animal survive by giving it adaptations to help it survive and explain the benefit in terms of the environment you chose. Then at the end of day two, we will return to camp to discuss you’re the new species you created and how your research helps the scientific community better understand how adaptations occur!

Good luck,

**S. Stark**

The Wildlife Explorer Expedition Leader

P.S. Should you have questions during your exploration, the Expedition Leader is a great resource!