Pick four students to perform aloud pages 14–17 from the book. Prior to a public performance, have students look through the pages and identify their character. Students can then use the scripts provided on this CD-ROM to practice their parts. Suggested props: lab coat and sunglasses for Max Axiom, safari hat for Dr. Diaz, winter coat for Dr. Ling.

**Main Script**

**Scene One: Max Axiom is in the desert, riding a camel . . .**

Max: The body features, or physical adaptations, of plants and animals often relate to the environments they live in. For example, a camel’s hump is an adaptation for desert life. When food and water are scarce, the camel uses fat stored in its hump for energy. The camel’s long eyelashes and fuzzy ear hair protect its eyes and ears from blowing sand.

Plants also cope with dry desert conditions. Since plants lose water through their leaves, the creosote bush has adapted. Its leaves have a waxy coating to help the plant hold in water. In many cases, plants lack leaves altogether. The barrel cactus stores water in its fleshy stem.

Narrator: Is fur a good adaptation for the desert? For the fennec fox it is. This fox’s fur keeps it warm at night when the desert is cold. During the day, the light colored fur reflects sunlight to help keep the fox cool.

**Scene Two: Max is in a tropical rain forest . . .**

Max: But what about places like rain forests that are hot and very wet? How do living things adapt to these conditions? I know a biologist just ahead who studies rain forest plant life. I bet he sees adaptations every day. Hi, Dr. Diaz. What are you studying today?

Dr. Diaz: Hello, Max. I’m glad you found me. I’m taking samples of this philodendron plant.

Max: Wow, this leaf feels waxy. Back in the desert, some plants had waxy leaves to hold in water.

Dr. Diaz: That’s true, but the waxy coating has a different purpose in the rain forest. It helps plants repel extra water like a raincoat. In fact, many rain forest plants also have drip tips to help them shed water. These features prevent the growth of bacteria and fungi on the plants.

**Scene Three: Max is scuba diving underwater . . .**

Max: How about instead of surviving in a wet rain forest, you lived completely underwater? Animals and plants have adapted to that environment, too. While I need scuba gear to breathe underwater, fish have gills. Fish also have fins to help them swim, scales to protect them, and streamlined bodies that cut through the water.

**Scene Four: Max is in the arctic . . .**

Max: Just like they do underwater, people need extra gear to survive when it’s cold outside. But arctic animals have adapted to their cold climate. What a beautiful arctic fox, Dr. Ling. It must be a real survivor to live in this frigid climate.

Dr. Ling: You’re right, Max. The freezing temperatures here can be deadly. Like many arctic animals, this fox has thick fur. Its small ears and compact body keep it from losing too much body heat. And the hair under its paws keeps its feet from sinking into the snow, kind of like snowshoes. Well, Max, it’s time for this little guy to return to the wild.

Max: Sounds good. I need to head out as well. Thanks for the information, Dr. Ling.
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