ISLAND GIANTS

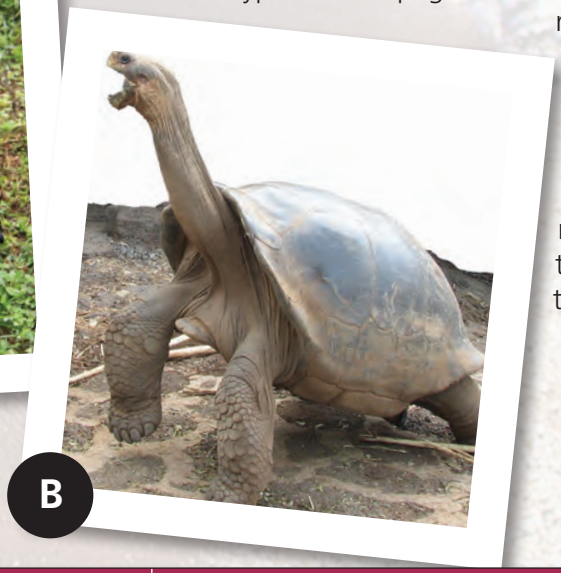
ACTIVITY 4

The Galapagos Islands were named for the giant tortoises that live there. A tortoise is a turtle that lives on land instead of in or near the water. The Galapagos Tortoise is the biggest tortoise on Earth. Its shell can be 5 feet long, and they can weigh 500 pounds!

As you saw in the film ***Galapagos: Nature's Wonderland***, there are two types of Galapagos Tortoise. One type has a shell that curves down in the front. The other type has a shell that curves up in the front, so the tortoise can stretch its neck almost straight up.

Here are pictures of the two types of Galapagos Tortoise. Study the pictures, then answer the questions by writing A or B on the blank line.

A



B

_____1. Scientists call one type of Galapagos Tortoise *domed* because its shell looks like the dome on a building. Which picture shows a domed tortoise?

_____2. Scientists call the other type of Galapagos Tortoise *saddleback* because its shell is shaped like a horse's saddle. Which picture shows a saddleback tortoise?

_____3. Both types of Galapagos Tortoise eat plants. Which type would you expect to find in a habitat where the plants grow high off the ground?

_____4. Which type would you expect to find in a habitat where the plants grow close to the ground?

Do you notice any other differences between the two types of Galapagos Tortoise? Use this chart to record your observations. First write *domed* or *saddleback* to identify the type of tortoise you are observing. Then describe anything you notice that makes one type look different from the other.

A	B
Type: _____	Type: _____
Observations: _____	Observations: _____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Now share your observations in a class discussion. Use what you have learned about the two types of Galapagos Tortoise to explain how one type has adapted to life in a moist habitat with lots of plants growing close to the ground, while the other type has adapted to life in a dry habitat with fewer, mostly tall plants.