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| **Adaptation** | **Purpose** | **Examples** |
| Mouth |  |  |
| * Terminal (at the end of the snout) | Feeds throughout the water | Walleye, sauger, northern pike |
| * Under the snout/longer upper jaw | Feeds on prey it sees below it; usually feeds off the lake or river bottom | Bullhead, whitefish, carp,sucker |
| * Angled upward/longer lower jaw | Feeds on prey it sees above it; small fish, or aquatic insects, often at surface of water | Goldeye, rock bass, smallmouth bass, tullibee |
| * Ventral (under the head) | Feeds off the bottom | Sturgeon |
| * Sucker-shaped | "Vacuums" up food off the bottom; eats aquatic insects, vegetation | Sucker, sturgeon |
| * Strong jaws and well-developed teeth | Feeds on other fish | Northern pike, walleye |
| * With barbels | Feeds off the bottom; Can sense food in murky water | Catfish, bullhead, stonecat, sturgeon |
| Eyes |  |  |
| * Large | Feeds by sight | Walleye, perch, goldeye, bass |
| * Small | Likely feeds off the bottom and relies on barbels to detect food | Catfish, bullhead, stonecat, sturgeon |
| Spines | For protection or to stiffen fins for swimming | Catfish, bullhead, stonecat, perch, walleye, bass, sturgeon |
| Body Shape |  |  |
| * Rounder, flat bellied | Feeds off or rests on the bottom; less conspicuous to predators | Sucker, catfish, sturgeon |
| * Oval, fairly long | Prefers more open water or a few weeds | Walleye |
| * Oval, very long, eel-like | Fast-moving in quick bursts; Agile around rocks and weeds | Northern pike, burbot |
| * Thin, shorter, disc-shaped | Agile around rocks/weeds; round shape harder for predators to swallow | Bass, perch |
| * Torpedo-shaped | Stream-lined for high speed or swimming in currents | Brook trout, rainbow trout, arctic char |
| Scales |  |  |
| * Large | Used for protection; speed not needed to catch food | Carp, sucker |
| * Small or non-existent | Fish more streamlined and fast-moving to catch prey | Northern pike, catfish, burbot |
| Colouration |  |  |
| * Fairly uniform, no markings | Swims in open water | Walleye, goldeye |
| * Stripes | Hides in weeds for protection or to ambush prey | Perch, smallmouth bass, rock bass |
| * Mottled | Hides in rocks or on bottom | Northern pike, young sturgeon |
| * Dark on top | Less visible to predators above it | Catfish, sturgeon, carp |
| * Light coloured belly | Less visible to predators below it | Perch, walleye, sturgeon, sucker, catfish |