



Ranger Rick

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

EDUCATIONAL EXTENSIONS FOR THE AUGUST 2014 ISSUE OF RANGER RICK® MAGAZINE

PUTTING ON APPEARANCES

In “So Cute ...” (pages 6–11), students discover that some very cute animals are not always as cute as they look. Ask students to cite examples from the article. Then discuss how the “uncute” side (i.e., unpleasant feature or behavior) of each species can help it survive.

Now ask the class to consider the reverse. Could some scary-looking animals actually be less scary (or dangerous) than they first appear? Have each student do a little research and return with information on a few animals that fit this description. For example, star-nosed moles, proboscis monkeys, scarlet king snakes, and basking sharks are all less dangerous than they look. Have everyone share their findings. Then discuss the meaning behind the old saying, “Appearances can be deceiving.”

“FISHY” FISH

Although sea stars live underwater and are sometimes called “starfish,” they are not fish. After students have read “What’s So Super About Sea Stars?” (pages 14–21), ask if they can figure out why. Answer: Most fish have fins and scales, but sea stars never do. And while fish propel themselves with their tails, sea stars have tiny tube feet to help them move along. Discuss these differences with the class as well as the facts that all fish have backbones and breathe oxygen through gills. Then show students photos of the following sea creatures and see if they can detect which are not fish, and why: crayfish, dolphin, shark, seahorse, octopus, sea nettle, mudskipper.

DOGGY THINKMARKS

Before reading “Dogs on Duty” (pages 26–31), give each student a blank strip of paper about the length and width of a standard bookmark. Ask students to write

the word “Thinkmark” at the top of the strip, followed by their name. Under their name, have them write two questions: (1) “How do dogs help people?” and (2) “What traits make dogs helpful?” Advise children to leave a few inches of space between the questions so that as they read the article, they can jot down helpful notes related to each.

Once everyone has completed this reading assignment, discuss answers to the two questions. Encourage students to refer to their notes for ideas and supportive information.

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Have each student choose the working dog they most admire in the “Dogs on Duty” (pages 26–31) article and write a letter recommending this dog for the “Canine Employee of the Month” award. The letter should use appropriate letter format and describe in convincing detail the excellent work the dog performs. Encourage children to read their letters aloud. Then vote for a winner!

CREEPY-CRAWLY FILES

After your class has read “Daddy Longlegs” (pages 34–36), point to the large illustration on the opening spread and ask a student to (1) identify the main features of a daddy longlegs and (2) describe how each feature helps the creature to survive. Remind students that some daddy longlegs probably live in their neighborhoods. As a class, make a list of other local creepy-crawlies (e.g., centipedes, ground beetles, earthworms, crickets, spiders). Using the daddy longlegs diagram as a model, have each student select a creature from the list to research and then illustrate with captions that explain important creature features. Compile the diagrams into a book called “The Creepy-Crawly Files.”





SUPER STARS

Read "What's So Super About Sea Stars?" pages 14–21. Then read the following sentences. They describe "super" facts about sea stars, but only some are true. Circle *T* for true or *F* for false for each one. Rewrite the false sentences to make them true.

1. **T or F** Sea stars can walk up glass without falling!

2. **T or F** There are about 20 species of sea stars, and they are found in rivers throughout the world.

3. **T or F** Some sea stars are bigger than a garbage can.

4. **T or F** How does a sea star eat a clam? It pushes out its teeth through its mouth and then slides the teeth into the opening of a clam shell and devours the clam.

5. **T or F** A sea star can have thousands of sticky hairs along the bottoms of its arms.

6. **T or F** Sea stars are covered with scales.

7. **T or F** Most sea stars have long, pointed arms.

8. **T or F** Some sea stars can grow a whole new body from a single arm.





WORK IT OUT!

In "Dogs on Duty," pages 26-31, you read about the helpful work some dogs do for people. Many dog breeds have a long history of helping. Look at the breeds listed in the box below. Choose the breed that matches each work history and write its name on the blank line next to it.

DOG BREEDS	
boxer	collie
cairn terrier	dachshund (DOCKS-hund)
chihuahua (chee-WHA-wha)	pekingese
cocker spaniel	saint bernard

1. Used in Germany to follow badgers down into their burrows and chase them back out.

2. A very old Spanish breed used to hunt woodcocks.

3. Chased, caught, and killed rodents living among the cairns, or rock pikes, of Scotland.

4. An old German breed used as a guard dog.

5. A religious symbol to Toltec and Aztec Indians in Mexico, and often eaten for dinner.
Hint: World's smallest dog.

6. Used as a guide and rescue dog for people lost in the Swiss Alps; named for the monastery where it was first bred.

7. Thought to be sacred by ancient Chinese; had its own palaces and servants; became a royal lap dog of Chinese emperors.

8. A very old Scottish breed used to herd sheep in the highlands.

