



Ranger Rick

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

EDUCATIONAL EXTENSIONS FOR THE NOVEMBER 2013 ISSUE OF RANGER RICK® MAGAZINE

LETTERS TO TAKHI

The takhi in “Wild Comeback” (pages 6-11) were reintroduced to the wild from zoos. Imagine the wild takhi could write letters back to the zoo takhi about their new lives. What would they say? How might the zoo takhi respond? Ask students to discuss some differences between the takhis’ lives. Then pair up students, with one taking on the zoo role and one the wild role. Have them write letters to exchange with each other.

ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATION

“The Buzz” (pages 12-13) describes how concern about the declining condition of mountain biking trails led a student to investigate and report on this issue in an award-winning video. Ask students to consider an environmental issue that concerns them in your community. What questions do they have? How could they find out more and share what they learn with others? Carrying out this challenge would make a rewarding class project or extracurricular activity for a motivated student or group. Visit www.yre-usa.org for tips and student journalism resources.

CHIMP LESSONS IN ACTION

The young chimps in “Chimp School” (pages 14-19) learn skills that will serve them well when they are reintroduced to other chimps at the Ngamba Island refuge. Ask students to describe how each of the four “lessons” in the article—grooming, playing, communicating, and tool use—might be put to use later in the chimps’ lives. In what specific situations would the chimps use these skills? Encourage students to act out these scenes for each other in short skits.

WHAT CAN YOU DO IN ONE MINUTE?

“In Just a Minute” (pages 20-21) is an eye-opening snapshot of some things that happen in one minute of time. Equip students with stopwatches and challenge them to experiment with what *they* can do in one minute. How far can they run? How many times can they “flap their wings”? How many jumping jacks can they do? How many times do their hearts beat? What other things can they measure? Have them keep track of their results and then create an illustrated list inspired by the *Ranger Rick* article. Each student could make his or her own, or (for more math practice) you could have students average the results and make one list that represents the whole class.

HOMETOWN WOODPECKERS

Read “Woodpeckers” (pages 30-35) and point out to students how the article includes profiles of a number of different woodpecker species. Do any of these woodpeckers live in your area? Which other woodpeckers live there, too? Have students research these species and write similar profiles for all of your local woodpeckers. Compile the profiles to create a woodpecker field guide that you can put to use in the activity below.

WATCH WOODPECKERS

After reading about which treats will attract woodpeckers (page 35), set up your own woodpecker café in a place that students can observe regularly. Which woodpecker species (and other birds) do you see visiting? What foods do they seem to like best? What other observations can students make about the woodpeckers’ behavior? Keep a class journal to document your findings.



DRAGON FACTS AND FICTIONS



Komodo dragons seem too strange to be real. Can you sort out what's true about these lizards? Read "Dragon!" (pages 22-26) carefully, and mark each statement below true or false. (Hint: Only a few are correct!) Then rewrite each false claim to make it true.

1. A Komodo dragon can grow as large as a *Tyrannosaurus rex*.
True / False _____

2. Komodo dragons live on islands throughout the world.
True / False _____

3. Komodo dragons eat almost any kind of meat, including rats, deer, wild boars, water buffalo, and even cobras!
True / False _____

4. The one thing a Komodo will never eat is another of its own kind.
True / False _____

5. A Komodo dragon must hunt and eat every day to survive.
True / False _____

6. You can tell where a dragon has eaten a meal because there will be a pile of bones, skin, fur, feathers, or hooves left behind.
True / False _____

7. Not only do Komodo dragons have stinky drool that is full of harmful germs, they also have venom glands in their jaws.
True / False _____

8. When baby Komodo dragons hatch from their eggs, Mom is waiting to teach them all the tricks of dragon life.
True / False _____





A DAY AT CHIMP SCHOOL

“Chimp School” (pages 14-19) is about a refuge where rescued young chimps learn all they need to know to fit in with other chimps. The caretakers teach the chimps how to *groom* each other, *play*, *communicate*, and *find food*. Imagine you are one of the “teachers” at chimp school. Write a plan for one day’s lessons for your chimp students.

- Be sure to include a lesson in each of the four “subjects” above.
- The lesson can be about one small thing. (Think about how your school lessons focus on learning just one thing at a time in each subject.)
- Don’t forget to include time for meals, resting, and recess!

TIME	LESSON OR ACTIVITY
8:00 - 8:30	Breakfast

