Educator's Guide

Educational extensions for the August 2009 issue of *Ranger Rick*® magazine

TIME TO RHYME

Call students' attention to the frog photo on pages 2-3 and the poem, "Full House," that accompanies it. Then ask each student to choose another photo in this issue of *Ranger Rick* that catches his or her eye and compose a short poem about it. Invite students to share their writing with each other.

MOOSE-ICAL FUN

"Mighty Moose!" (pages 6-12) describes the largest member of the deer family. Have students turn themselves into these magnificently goofy creatures by making moose headbands. Here's how: Students trace their hands, fingers outspread, onto construction paper to make antler shapes. They cut out the antlers and tape them to strips of paper, then bend and tape the strips into rings that will fit around their heads. As a group, make up a silly skit or song about moose that students can perform while wearing their headbands. Use some of the moose puns in the story ("moose-tery," "moose-ic"), and others you devise, to add to the fun.

MAKE A GREEN WISH

In the movie *Shorts*, a mysterious rainbow-colored rock grants wishes to anyone who holds it. (For more details, see page 14 in "The Buzz.") Invite students to submit a green wish for their school to the "Eco-Schools USA: Rock Your Green Wish with the Movie *Shorts*" contest at **nwf.org/ecoschools/sweepstakes.cfm**. The grand prize is a solar tent to be used as an outdoor classroom. *Shorts* will be in theaters August 21st. The contest entry deadline is September 17th.

BUZZ BUSTER

Why do bees buzz? "Ask Rick" (page 19) explains that the sound is made by the insects' wings moving through the air. It goes on to report that not all bees sound alike. Take students outdoors to investigate this claim. Can they find several different kinds of bees or other buzzing insects? Do they sound different? Challenge students to come up with a hypothesis about what factors affect the pitch of the sound (size of insect? size of wings? wing-beating speed? flying speed?) and then make additional observations to see if they support the hypothesis.

IF I WERE A BUTTERFLY . . .

In "Pretty Tricky" (pages 20-25), students read about some of the many "tricks" butterflies use to avoid predators. Ask students to imagine that they are butterflies. Which of these defenses would they want to have? Ask students to write about why they think this particular strategy would work best for them.

FOLLOW THE RIVER

As students read "Riding the River" (pages 30-36), ask them to look for clues about where the story takes place. Then have them locate the Grand Canyon on a map and trace the path of the Colorado River through it—the path the rafters in the story followed. Challenge students to find out more about the geography, geology, and natural history of the Grand Canyon and share what they learn with the rest of the group.

LUCKY DUCKS

Harlequin ducks are very different from the rest of the duck family—and they have lots of nicknames that describe their special features. Read "White-Water Ducks" on pages 16-18 in the August 2009 issue of *Ranger Rick*. Then use what you learned in the story to explain why these ducks are called by each of the following names.

Harlequin duck. What does "harlequin" mean? Why is it a good name for these ducks?

Circus duck. Why are they also sometimes called by this nickname?

Squeaker. What do harlequin ducks do that gives them this nickname?

Surfer duck. How did harlequin ducks earn this nickname?

Now make up your own nickname for a harlequin duck and explain why you chose it.

Name:

Why:

WACKY BUT WORTHY

In "The Buzz" (pages 14-15 in the August 2009 issue of *Ranger Rick*), you can read about a hamster-powered paper shredder. The person who invented it wanted to inspire people to come up with new Earth-friendly ways to power products.

Now it's your turn to be a "green" inventor! Brainstorm some ways to get power that don't depend on fossil fuels (coal, oil, or gas). Then design your own eco-invention—something that does a useful task with help from a power source that doesn't pollute.

What is your invention called? _____

What useful task does it do? _____

_____

_____

_____

What powers it? _____

_____

_____

_____

Draw a picture of your invention in the box below: