Educator's Guide

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

DANDY MACARONI

As you'll read on pages 2-3, the macaroni penguin gets its name from the "feather in its hat." Review the words and tune of "Yankee Doodle" with students. Then have some fun writing new words to the song together—all about a penguin!

STICKY SWEET

After students go "sugaring" with the Fox family in "Swweeet!" (pages 16-20), try making your own maple candy using the instructions in "Maple Yum!" on page 5. Do people make maple syrup where you live? If so, arrange to visit a "sugarhouse" and see the process firsthand. Or invite a syrup maker to speak to students about how it's done, show them some of the tools, and perhaps share syrup samples. If you don't live in maple country, why not investigate another special food produced where you live?

FLAMINGO FLATTERY

Have students read "Flamingos" on pages 6-13. Then discuss the story's premise that these birds are both goofy-looking and beautiful. Which description do students find most fitting? Why? Is it possible to be goofy and beautiful at the same time? Ask them to explain their opinions. Then give them a chance to further explore flamingos' unusual looks by making the flamingo valentines shown on page 13.

SIBLINGS

After students read "Brothers and Sisters" (pages 32-39), conduct small-group discussions about how the animal families in the story compare with students' human families. Can students find similarities between these sibling relationships and their own? Differences? For instance, how do human siblings help each other? What examples from the story show that some animal siblings help each other, too? Why do human siblings sometimes have trouble getting along? Does this happen in the animal world, too? Encourage students to share their own experiences while making connections with what they have learned in the story.

ANIMAL BUDDIES

This month's "Fun on the Run" games (pages 40-43) are all about animal buddies. Giraffes and oxpeckers, pom-pom crabs and sea anemones, gazelles and ostriches, tortoises and finches—these are all examples of species that hang out together and help each other. Have each student choose one of the featured pairs (or another set of animal buddies) and research the relationship. Give each student two index cards; have them draw one of their "buddies" on each card and write a sentence or two about how it depends on the other. Then collect the cards into a deck, add one unpaired card to be the "Old Maid," and let students play this classic pair-matching card game for fun.

NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

SLOTHFUL WAYS

After you read "Hanging with Sloths" (pages 22-27 in the February 2009 issue of *Ranger Rick*), answer the questions below.

1. Name some body parts that help a sloth hang upside-down in trees.

2. How often does a sloth come down out of the trees? What does it do on the ground?

3. Why do sloths move so slowly and sleep so much?

4. What makes a sloth's fur green? How is being green helpful to the sloth?

5. How does a baby sloth use its claws? How will it use them when it's grown up?

6. What do sloths eat? _____

7. What predator eats sloths? _____

8. People often seem to be in a hurry, rushing here and there. What do you think people could learn from the sloth's slow-moving lifestyle?

ICE STRIPES

In "The Buzz" (pages 14-15 in the February 2009 issue of *Ranger Rick*), you can read about striped icebergs. The stripes are layers of ice that formed in different ways. Follow the steps below to make your own striped "iceberg" by freezing layers over time.

1. Start with a clear plastic container. Pour in enough water to cover the bottom. Then put the container outside (if the temperature is below freezing) or in a freezer. Fill in the boxes for Layer 1 on the chart below.

2. When the first layer is frozen, add another layer. This time, try something different. For instance, mix some soil or snow with the water. Or try to freeze the water faster or slower by changing the temperature. Fill in Layer 2 on the chart.

3. Continue adding layers, doing something different each time and recording the information for each layer.

Layer	Temperature (outside or in freezer)	Start time	End time	What's different about this layer?	What does the layer look like when it's frozen?
1				just plain water	
2					
3					
4					
5					

4. When you're done adding layers, pop the "iceberg" out of the container so you can see all of it at once. Draw it on the back of this page and label each layer.

5. Float the iceberg in a dish of water. How much sticks out above the water? How much is underneath? Draw what it looks like on the back of this page.

6. How is your model similar to real striped icebergs in the Antarctic? How is it different?