GO BATTY!
In “Flying Foxes,” pages 6-11, we learned these mammals face many dangers, from habitat loss to natural disasters such as droughts and wildfires. Rescuing injured or orphaned flying foxes takes people, resources, and time. Have children write the steps used to rehabilitate and return flying foxes to the wild, writing each step on a different line or typing with double-spacing between steps. Next, cut out the steps. Have your children shuffle their steps and swap the steps with each other. Have the children place their sibling’s steps in the correct order. Last, ask the siblings to check each other’s work.

FISH WISH
Life would definitely be different if there were something fishy about each one of us! After reading “10 Reasons to Wish You Were A Fish,” pages 14-19, have your children respond to the statements and then share. Ask children to:
• choose the fishy behavior they’d most like to have;
• be able to explain why they chose the fishy behavior; and
• share their behavior and reasoning with the family.

HOP TO IT
Ask your children to hop aboard and read “Hip Hoppers,” pages 22-27. Paying close attention to the section titled “Hopper Tricks,” ask your children to design a “Beginner’s Guide to Eating Grasshoppers” for birds just leaving the nest. As a family, and based on the details provided in “Hopper Tricks,” decide what fledgling birds will need to know as they try to find and catch tasty grasshoppers to eat. Suggestions can include:
• illustrations of local grasshoppers
• bullet points or a brief narrative about grasshopper “tricks”
• tips on catching grasshoppers

THE SIGN SAYS . . .
What an adventure Ranger Rick and his friends had at No Name Key! After reading “Ranger Rick’s Adventures,” pages 29-31, ask your children to identify ways Kaylee the key deer’s accident could have been prevented. Ask them to create a road sign that could be posted at the refuge to inform visitors how they can protect Kaylee and her friends.

SPLASH GRAPHS
“Surprising Swimmers,” pages 32-36, shared the many surprising ways animals use water as a means to survive or for good, old-fashioned fun. Discuss as a family which animal’s swimming story they found most surprising, then take a family vote. Together create a graph (bar, circle, or pictograph) that represents the number of family members who chose each of the eleven animals represented in the story. Children should include a title, graph labels, and a color key. Once completed, display everyone’s finished graphs. Then ask your children to make observations about their sibling’s or other family member’s work. Additionally, encourage the family to leave clarifying questions or words of praise for their family member’s work on sticky notes.
Use the story “A Very Special ‘Toy’” on pages 29–31, along with additional research, to complete the activity. As an endangered species, the key deer is very important and must be protected. Use the boxes below to develop a digital or physical brochure that park rangers at the National Key Deer Refuge could provide to visitors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COVER</th>
<th>ABOUT THE REFUGE</th>
<th>THINGS TO DISCOVER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A cover includes an image and the name of the refuge.</td>
<td>Research the refuge and describe the park to visitors.</td>
<td>Research what activities are available for visitors who are looking to visit the refuge (examples: hiking, bird watching).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY DEER</th>
<th>PROTECTING KEY DEER AND OTHER WILDLIFE</th>
<th>BACK COVER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research the key deer. Include an image, describe its features, and explain why it is an endangered species.</td>
<td>Describe or list how visitors should behave while visiting the refuge.</td>
<td>A back cover includes the physical address, web address, and email contact for the refuge. Consider adding more images.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On summer nights above the city of Melbourne, Australia, thousands of flying foxes take to the skies. Foxes that fly? Have we gone batty?

by Kate Hofmann

photos by Douglas Gimesy

Flying foxes are not foxes at all. They’re large bats with furry, fox-like faces. They’re also known as fruit bats, because they fly out at night to find fruit, pollen, and nectar. Take a look at the nectar-lapping tongue on the one at far right.

As the bats eat, they help with the important work of spreading pollen and seeds. Pollen sticks to their fur, traveling with them from one flower to another. And after they eat fruit, they poop out the seeds in new places!

There are four species of flying foxes in Australia. The ones in this story are all grey-headed flying foxes.

During summer in Melbourne, nearly 50,000 of these bats roost (come together to rest or sleep) in the trees in a park along the Yarra River, which runs through Melbourne. By day, they hang upside down with their wings wrapped around themselves. At night, each bat may fly almost 25 miles to visit flowering and fruiting trees around the city.

When a mother has a young pup, it goes with her, holding on and even nursing as she flies (above left).

Finding inspiration from the story “Flying Foxes,” pages 20–26, write a poem about fruit bats. There are many types of poetry, such as acrostic, free verse, shape, cinquain, and haiku. Use the space below to write a haiku (HY-koo).

**HAiku WRITING GUIDE**

- Haikus are traditionally about nature and have three lines.
- Line 1 is five syllables.
- Line 2 is seven syllables.
- Line 3 is five syllables.
- Punctuation for a haiku poem is up to the poet. You do not have to follow the same grammar rules as when writing a story or letter.

**EXAMPLE**

Love being outside
Exploring and observing
Plants and animals

---

Rangers: Write more poetry! Learn more about each type listed above. Then try out each style, adding your poems to a poetry journal. - R.R.
WEBBY WONDERS

Some spiders make beautiful works of art when they spin their webs. Some spiders spin webs that seem more like finely spun funnels or traps than art. And some, such as cobweb spiders, make messy-looking webs. (Still others spin no webs at all.) No matter what, webs are great tools for catching a meal. Go outside and see what kinds of webs you can spot.

Keep a Record!

Date _____ Time _____ Location _____________ Weather _____________

Helpful Things to Take Along

☐ Magnifying glass
☐ Spray bottle of water

In the boxes below, draw and describe some spider webs you find. You might want to spray the webs lightly with water. (The water drops will help you see the strands of the web better.) If there’s a spider at home, draw and describe it, too!

Notes:
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