



Educator's Guide

Educational extensions for the February 2010 issue of *Ranger Rick*® magazine

ANIMAL VALENTINES

Check out all the great flamingo valentines that readers sent in to “Dear Ranger Rick” (page 4). Using this idea as a starting point, invite students to get creative and design their own assortment of animal valentines. They can start by cutting out a heart to serve as the base and then add embellishments to turn it into the animal of their choice.

TRAVEL SAMPLER

On page 5, Debbie Edwards explains that she learns about places as she researches and writes about them—and then she gets an urge to visit! Ask students if they have ever read about a place and then wished they could visit it. Have students look through *Ranger Rick* and choose a featured place they would like to experience. In small groups, students can then discuss the places they chose, why they chose them, and what they would hope to see and do on a visit there.

OWL GAMES

After reading “Growing Up Snowy” (pages 6-11), get students out of their chairs with two owl exercises.

- 1) Compare students’ “wingspans” with a snowy owl’s. Draw a 5-foot wingspan on the board. Have students stand in front of it and spread their arms wide.
- 2) Test students’ “owl ears.” Blindfold one student (the owl) and have other students take turns being mice. The mice try to sneak up to the owl, while the owl points at a mouse as soon as it hears one. The mice must stop moving when they are pointed at. The further away the mice are when stopped, the sharper the owl’s hearing.

ADAPTATIONS MAP

In “Sea-Going Snakes” (pages 16-19), you learn that sea snakes have many adaptations for life in the ocean, such as nostrils on the top of their heads and paddle-shaped tails. Have students organize information about these adaptations on a concept map. Go to nwf.org/rrguide, scroll down, and click on #3, the Resource Collection. You will find two blank concept maps to print, one basic and one more complex. Choose the one that will work best with your students’ level of experience.

GREAT APE LESSONS

In “Life in the Trees Is a Breeze” (pages 32-39), you learn that young orangutans spend 12 years with their moms before going off on their own. Have students fold a sheet of paper in half to make a comparison chart. On one side of the page, ask them to write down things that an orangutan might need to learn in those 12 years. On the other side, have students list things they need to learn from their parents and teachers before they are ready to be on their own. Discuss similarities and differences between the two lists.

POETRY PERSPECTIVES

Read the poem “Feeder Frenzy” (page 43). Then discuss point-of-view with students. What animal is narrating this poem? How does its perspective shape the poem? How would the poem change with a different narrator? After your discussion, invite students to write their own poems, this time from the perspective of one of the other birdfeeder visitors.





POSTCARD FROM PONGO

In “Life in the Trees Is a Breeze” (pages 32-39 in the February 2010 issue of *Ranger Rick*), Pongo tells you lots of things about the life of a young orangutan. What do you think Pongo would say if he wrote you a postcard? What would you write to him? Fill in the postcards below—one from Pongo to you, and one from you back to Pongo.

