



Educator's Guide

Educational extensions for the February 2011 issue of *Ranger Rick*® magazine

TIME AND TECHNOLOGY

Read "He's a Winner!" (page 5) to find out how childhood experiences led to a fascination with nature for one of *Ranger Rick*'s editors. Then ask students to imagine that they had no phone, computer, or TV. What would they do with their time? Would they be drawn to nature or to something else? They could even compare an imagined "low-tech" day with their current daily schedule and consider whether they'd like to adjust how they currently spend their time. Have students reflect on these questions in small group discussions or in writing.

DOLPHIN LEGENDS

As you'll read in "A Different Dolphin" (pages 6-12), native people in the Amazon region have legends about the magical powers of Amazon dolphins. Have students write their own legends about the river dolphins that swim through the trees.

LOVE FOR THE PLANET

Following the lead of Ranger Rick and friends in "Ranger Rick's Adventures" (pages 14-16), make your own recycled decorations and cards for Valentine's Day. See "What's New with Old Paper!" (pages 26-29) for more ideas.

EDIBLE INSECTS PROS AND CONS

Would you eat bugs? Over two billion people around the world do, as you'll learn in "Welcome to the Creepy Crawly Café" (pages 17-22). But that doesn't mean you'll rush out to fill your plate! Ask students to make a pro and con list for eating insects. For example, they are nutritious and have a low environmental

impact. But they aren't widely accepted as food in our culture. When students' lists are complete, ask them to decide whether or not they would sample an insect if they had the chance.

CELEBRATE IN THE SNOW

Check out the ideas for a wintertime picnic in "Be Out There: Snowy Picnic" (page 23). Then have one! Engage students in making invitations, planning a menu and games, choosing a location, and preparing food. Then head out and have fun! Even if there's no snow where you live, an outdoor meal in winter can be an out-of-the-ordinary treat.

RECYCLED PAPER INVESTIGATION

After you learn about recycled paper in "What's New with Old Paper!" (pages 26-29), plan an activity to investigate the topic further. You could:

- Visit your local recycling facility for a tour or arrange for a speaker to visit your class.
- Conduct an inventory of local stores to see what kinds of paper they sell. Rank the options according to the criteria in the article.
- See what kind of paper your school uses in printers and copiers. Is it an environmentally responsible choice?

BUILD YOUR BOWER

Who are those "Mystery Builders" on pages 30-35? Read about bowerbirds. Then get hands-on by inviting students to build their own model bowers, diorama-style. They might choose to make a realistic representation of a bower they see in the story or invent one that reflects their own favorite colors and objects. Then give each "bird" time to show off its bower to the others!



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NATURE NEWS: REAL OR NOT?

Some of the nature news in “The Buzz” (pages 24-25 in the February 2010 issue of *Ranger Rick*) almost sounds made up! A shoe-stealing fox, a living toilet, and jaguars obsessed with the scent of cologne? Really? But it’s all true. Choose three of these news items and write a one-sentence summary of them.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Then write a fourth sentence describing a made-up nature news item.

4. _____

Now read your sentences to 10 people who haven’t read this issue of *Ranger Rick*. Ask them to guess which one is false. Keep track of how many votes each item gets. (Make a tally mark beside the chosen sentence as each person casts a vote.) Did more people pick the “fake” story or one of the true stories? Why do you think that’s the case?





DOLPHIN ADAPTATIONS

“A Different Dolphin” (pages 6-12 in the February 2011 issue of *Ranger Rick*) tells about Amazon river dolphins and how they are different from dolphins that live in the ocean. What makes these dolphins adapted for life in a freshwater river? Below are three features that a river dolphin has. Explain how each one helps it survive in its habitat.

Flexible neck.

Wide flippers and a low hump instead of a tall fin on its back.

Echolocation.

