



Ranger Rick

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



EDUCATIONAL EXTENSIONS FOR THE DECEMBER/JANUARY 2018 ISSUE OF RANGER RICK® MAGAZINE

TEAMS OF MEERKATS

Before assigning “The Meerkat Mob,” pages 6–11, flip through the article with your students, asking: What are some physical characteristics of meerkats? What do their actions in the photos seem to suggest? Tell the class that scientists often study meerkats to learn more about cooperation among mammals. Do any of the meerkats in these photos seem to be working together? If so, how?

After reading the article, lead students in a discussion about teamwork and group dynamics. Start by asking children to describe groups they belong to. What helps to keep these groups working well? (*Possible answers include common goals, good communication, clear roles, and respect for others.*) Ask students how meerkats seem to share some of these practices.

FESTIVE SEA LIFE

The opening photo on pages 14–15 of “...When It’s a WORM!” may look like a bunch of trees draped in holiday lights. But they’re *not* trees; they’re worms (called Christmas tree worms). Each lives in a tube on a coral reef.

Other underwater creatures might remind students of holiday symbols or treats, too. Divide children into groups and have each group report on one of these festive-looking creatures: hydroid, harp sponge, sea angel, peppermint shrimp, candy-cane sea star, candy-striped hermit crab, flaming reef lobster, snowflake moray eel.

INTERVIEW WITH A WILD VISITOR

Have each student write an interview with one of the animal visitors in “Feeder Friends,” pages 21–25. Encourage children to glean information from the story’s text and photos, as well as from other sources, to create informative pieces written in a question-and-answer

format. The Wild Interview student page can guide students through the process, or children can come up with their own questions to answer.

Finally, set up a schoolyard feeder and share your feeder-watching discoveries with scientists at Project FeederWatch. Visit feederwatch.org for details.

GET TO KNOW REINDEER

After reading “Reindeer,” pages 30–35, have students complete the student page called Reindeer: Facts and Opinions. Encourage children to refer to their completed pages, as you guide them in a discussion about “the deer of the Far North.” Below are suggested discussion questions:

- How are reindeer different from other deer?
- How do reindeer keep warm in the extreme cold?
- How do they find food throughout the year?
- What are their main predators, and how do reindeer defend themselves against them?
- How is climate change affecting reindeer?
- What other challenges do reindeer face? What do you think can be done to help reindeer?

Review the definitions of *fact* and *opinion* that appear on the student page. Then ask students to provide examples of facts and opinions about reindeer.

EXTREME HABITAT

The Alaskan animals in this issue’s **Just 4 Fun**, pages 37–39, live in an extreme environment of cold temperatures, ever-changing ice, and frigid seawater. Engage students in a discussion about how animals can survive there. What are their adaptations for (1) keeping warm, (2) finding food and shelter? How are these adaptations similar to and different from the ways reindeer cope with the cold? (See “Reindeer,” pages 30–35.)





WILD INTERVIEW

The *Munchtime News* wants you to interview one of the hungry animals visiting the feeding station in "Feeder Friends," pages 21–25. Use what you have learned from reading the story, as well as information from other knowledgeable sources, to complete this question-and-answer piece.

INTERVIEW WITH _____

1 What kind of animal are you? _____

2 What do you like to eat? _____

3 How did you find your way to this feeding station? _____

4 Do you come here often? Why or why not? _____

5 Where else do you find food? _____

6 How's life treating you these days? (Describe in detail.) _____



REINDEER: FACTS AND OPINIONS



Write five facts and five opinions about reindeer in the chart below. Use information you learned from reading "Reindeer," pages 30–35, to help you.

<p>FACTS A fact is something that is true. You can support it with evidence.</p>	<p>OPINIONS An <i>opinion</i> is something you feel or believe to be true. It cannot be proven. And it is not always true.</p>
<p>1 _____ _____ _____ _____</p>	<p>1 _____ _____ _____ _____</p>
<p>2 _____ _____ _____ _____</p>	<p>2 _____ _____ _____ _____</p>
<p>3 _____ _____ _____ _____</p>	<p>3 _____ _____ _____ _____</p>
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