



# Ranger Rick

## EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

EDUCATIONAL EXTENSIONS FOR THE DECEMBER/JANUARY 2017 ISSUE OF RANGER RICK® MAGAZINE

### RANGER RICK'S 50<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY

Encourage your students to celebrate *Ranger Rick* magazine's 50th birthday with some of these activities:

- Send Ranger Rick a homemade birthday card with a personal message. (See pages 12–13 for inspiration and his address.)
- Find 50 raccoons hidden inside the pages of the December-January issue. (Answer key is online at [nwf.org/50raccoons](http://nwf.org/50raccoons).)
- Make a birthday cake to share with the wildlife in your schoolyard. Use the recipe on page 25.
- Draw animals out of the numerals “50.” Get more details on page 24.
- Learn more about the history of *Ranger Rick* magazine and its characters by completing the Just for Fun games on pages 35–38.
- Take the Ranger Rick Pledge on page 39.

### CHANGING COLORS

After the class reads “Chameleons,” pages 6–11, discuss the following:

- What circumstances cause chameleons to change color? (Mood, temperature, light)

Point out that people often use “colorful phrases” to communicate their moods or feelings. Discuss the meanings of these expressions:

- true blue
- green with envy
- tickled pink
- white as a ghost
- red with rage

Words aren't the only way people use color to express themselves. Some people may actually change color slightly when they are angry (red), scared (white), and so

on. These changes are not as obvious as a chameleon's, but what if they were? Assign the “Colorful Tale” student page and encourage students to imagine “colorful tales” of their own.

### BISON AND THE GREAT PLAINS

After reading “American Bison,” pages 14–19, have students use the diagram on pages 14–15 to help them sculpt miniature bison out of modeling clay. Encourage kids to include all the physical features labeled in the diagram and to use toothpicks to etch in details. Then point to the map on page 18 and ask the class to locate the two geographical formations that mark the boundaries of the Great Plains (the Mississippi River and Rocky Mountains). Prompt an in-depth discussion about the history of bison on the Great Plains with these questions:

- Why do you think more bison lived on the Great Plains than anywhere else?
- How did some of their physical characteristics help them survive on the Plains?
- How did bison help the native people of the Plains to survive?
- What is the main reason that bison herds were wiped out on the Great Plains?
- Why do you think some people are trying to bring bison back to the Plains?
- What are they doing to bring them back?

### UNDERSTANDING MANATEES

Test students' comprehension of “Manatees,” pages 26–40, by assigning the Manatee Matters student page.

Wrap up with the lesson with these questions:

- Why are manatees endangered?
- What can people do to help manatees?







# MANATEE MATTERS

Read **“Manatees,”** pages 26–30. Then read the statements below. You’ll quickly see that they’re all wrong! Rewrite them to tell the true story about manatees.

**1** Manatees don’t sleep much because they must come to the surface so often to breathe.

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**2** Manatees eat fish, shrimp, and other small water animals.

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**3** Seals and walrus are close relatives of manatees.

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**4** Manatees prefer only cool ocean waters.

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**5** Baby manatees are usually born with lots of brothers and sisters.

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**6** If you watched manatees in a group, you’d get the idea that they aren’t very friendly and would rather be left alone.

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**7** Some manatees have “turf” that they fight over with other animals.

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**8** In special manatee areas, boating, swimming, and diving aren’t allowed. That’s to keep people safe from these dangerous animals.

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