



Ranger Rick

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

EDUCATIONAL EXTENSIONS FOR THE APRIL 2014 ISSUE OF RANGER RICK® MAGAZINE

"READING" A PHOTO

Before students read "Harvest Mice" (pages 6-11), pique their interest in the article and help enhance text comprehension by having students examine the large photo on pages 6-7. Ask the following questions:

- What do you think is happening in the photograph?
- What information helped you decide that?

After students have read the article, ask them to look at the photo again and describe what is happening.

Discuss: (1) how keen their initial observations were and (2) what else they have learned about the action in the photo from reading the article.

RAINY DAY FUN

In "It's Raining!" (pages 24-30), students learned how wild animals deal with downpours. Many animals have special coverings that can block out the rain; others head for shelter under leaves or ledges. Some animals ignore the rain, while others don't mind it at all. Ask students to describe how some animals (e.g., elephants, earthworms, spadefoot toads) make good use of the rain.

On a rainy day that's not too chilly and is free from lightning, have children don raincoats, rain hats, and rubber boots and head out for some of their own wet fun. Take a walk in the rain, stopping to stomp in a few shallow puddles. Then, in a place where the rainwater is running downhill, build a waterway using rocks, sticks, sand, and/or mud to shape its path. Just go with the flow!

WANTED: AQUARIUM DIVER

"Time for Lunch" (pages 32-35) describes what 20 scuba divers must do each day to feed and care for the more than 1,400 animals residing at the National

Aquarium in Baltimore, Maryland. After students read the article, tell them that one of the 20 scuba divers has just quit, so it is up to them to write an exciting want ad that describes the job opening. The want ad should list the daily duties of an National Aquarium diver as well as necessary education, skills, and experience. If you live near a public aquarium, arrange a field trip during feeding hours to see divers or other aquarium feeders in action.

TREE-MENDOUS TREES

April 25 is Arbor Day, the special time when we celebrate trees. Have students take the "Why We Love Trees" quiz on page 12 to learn about some wonderful things trees do for us. Refer to a field guide to discover which tree species thrive in your region, as well as what they look like, how they differ from one another, and how they serve their natural community.

On a nice day, head outside to a patch of trees. Have each student select a tree that interests him or her. Allow students time to get to know their tree: the size, shape, colors, leaves, branches, and bark. Have them observe what's growing around it and what animals might use it. Then ask students to take turns introducing "their tree" to the group, identifying its name (with the help of a field guide, if necessary) and sharing their observations about the tree.

SAVE THE FROGS

Frogs are in trouble. There aren't as many of certain species as there once were, and a few kinds have gone extinct. You and your students can help them by participating in Save the Frogs Day on April 26. Go to savethefrogs.com to learn more.





MICE-CAPADES

Harvest mice can perform some amusing feats. After reading "Harvest Mice" (pages 6-11) in the April 2014 issue of *Ranger Rick*, answer these questions about their unusual activities.

#1: HANGS FROM TOPS OF GRASS STALKS

How does a harvest mouse use its body to do this? _____

Why does it do this? _____

#2: WEAVES GRASS

How does a harvest mouse use its body to do this? _____

Why does it do this? _____

#3: MOVES BABIES FROM NEST TO NEST

How does a harvest mouse use its body to do this? _____

Why does it do this? _____

#4: WRAPS TAILS WITH OTHER MICE

Why does a harvest mouse do this? _____



