



Ranger Rick

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



EDUCATIONAL EXTENSIONS FOR THE APRIL 2018 ISSUE OF RANGER RICK® MAGAZINE

ART WITH STRIPES

After reading “Why Do Zebras Have Stripes?” pages 6–11, students will know that zebras have different stripe patterns. These bold black-and-white designs are visually exciting—perfect to inspire an art project. First, give each child a sheet of white paper, as well as black paint or scraps of black paper to make black stripes. Using the photos in the story for ideas, ask students to create sheets of paper that have interesting stripe patterns. Have each child cut out a zebra shape from his or her striped paper. Then arrange the “herd” of zebras on a classroom wall to create an eye-catching display.

Wrap up your lesson on zebras by assigning the student page called Zebra True-and-False.

FISHY NESTS

Before assigning “Fishy Nets,” pages 14–17, ask students:

- What kind of animal do you think of first when you hear the word *nest*? (Most will say *birds*.)

Point out that many other kinds of animals also use nests, including mammals, insects, reptiles, amphibians, and fish. (Even some dinosaurs used nests.) Explain that nests are structures some animals use to hold eggs and/or offspring, and that the story they are about to read is about nests that some fish use.

After reading the story, discuss the following:

- Some fish find a nest to store eggs in. Give some examples from the story.
- Other fish find places to store their eggs on. Give some examples from the story.

CITY CREATURES

After reading “What’s Wild in a City?” pages 18–23, help students think more deeply about the survival needs of a city animal by assigning the City Birds student page.

Then engage students in a brainstorming session about all kinds of wildlife in your city or town (or one nearby). List all the animals you’ve seen there. (Squirrels, rabbits, pigeons, sparrows, hawks, ducks, geese, frogs, turtles, insects, worms, etc.) Match them with specific places where they find what they need to survive. Then use the list as a springboard to create a field guide to local wildlife. For each entry, include (1) an illustration or photo of the animal and its tracks; (2) tips for identifying the animal; (3) information such as what it eats, what eats it, where it finds shelter, and if/how it takes care of its young; and (4) the best nearby place to see it. Share completed copies of your Wild City Guide with your community by distributing it through your local public library, community center, or nature center.

DOWN BY THE RIVER . . .

A water vole named Ratty is a beloved leading character in Kenneth Grahame’s classic children’s story, *The Wind and the Willows*. If students enjoy their brief introduction to Ratty in “Welcome Back, Water Voles,” pages 30–35, consider reading Grahame’s book aloud to the class. The book is a collection of heartwarming adventures of animals who live by a river. After finishing the book, ask students to think of activities that people do when they live or spend time by a river. Encourage children to use some of these suggestions to write their own river adventures.





ZEBRA TRUE-AND-FALSE

Read "Why Do Zebras Have Stripes?" pages 6–11. Then decide if each of the following statements about zebras is correct. Check "T" for true or "F" for false.

- 1 No two zebras have stripes that are exactly alike. ___ T ___ F
- 2 You can tell Grevy's zebras from other kinds of zebras because their stripes are thin and close together. ___ T ___ F
- 3 Scientists now think a zebra's stripes might help it stay cool in hot weather. ___ T ___ F
- 4 Zebra foals (babies) don't get their stripes until they grow up. ___ T ___ F
- 5 African cattle eat the grasses that zebras need. ___ T ___ F
- 6 Farmers' fences keep zebras from hunting livestock. ___ T ___ F
- 7 Zebras bark to greet each other. ___ T ___ F
- 8 It's easier for lions to hunt zebras when the zebras gather together in a herd. ___ T ___ F
- 9 A zebra could kill a lion by kicking it. ___ T ___ F
- 10 Some people hunt zebras for their ivory teeth. ___ T ___ F
- 11 There are more mountain zebras than any other species. ___ T ___ F
- 12 Some African farmers are learning new ways to live that are less harmful to zebras. ___ T ___ F



CITY BIRDS



A city can offer a good life to some kinds of birds. Circle one of the city birds in the box below and pretend you are that bird.



Some Common City Birds
(Circle the bird you want to be.)

house sparrow

European starling

Common nighthawk

chimney swift

American robin

herring gull

rock pigeon

Draw your "bird picture" in the frame above.

THINK LIKE A BIRD

Think about some things you would need to survive in a city. Now answer these questions:

1 What kinds of enemies and other dangers would you find in a city? _____

2 What special physical features or abilities do you have that would help you survive these dangers? _____

3 Where would you and/or your mate find a good nesting place in the city? _____

4 What materials could be used to build a nest there? _____

