



Ranger Rick

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

EDUCATIONAL EXTENSIONS FOR THE APRIL 2016 ISSUE OF RANGER RICK® MAGAZINE

A FEW WORDS ABOUT PUFFINS

Ask students to complete the Puffin Adjectives student page as they read “**There’s Nothin’ Like a Puffin,**” pages 6–11.

Then have them refer to their student pages as the class determines the best adjectives to describe puffins.

Investigate more about puffins by reading aloud the book *Night of the Pufflings* by Bruce McMillan, inviting students to take turns reading two to three paragraphs at a time. The book chronicles the annual activities of children from a tiny island off the coast of Iceland who rescue and care for lost young puffins and prepare them for their first flight out to sea.

TIGHT SQUEEZERS

Write the word *constrictor* on the board. Then read aloud the poem “Boa Constrictor” by Shel Silverstein and ask students to come up with a definition for *constrictor*. (A constrictor is a snake that gets control over its prey by squeezing/constricting it.) Once you’ve set the stage for learning more about snakes that put the squeeze on others, have students read “**Squeezers,**” pages 14–17.

Wrap up the lesson with these questions:

- With no arms and no legs, how do snakes capture their food?
- How are boas and pythons alike? How are they different?
- What types of constrictors live in your habitat?

FUNNY FACTS

As a class, page through the photos in “**In Steppe with Saigas,**” pages 20–25. Ask students if they think saiga antelopes look funny. Then divide students into small groups to discuss the following questions:

- Who decides what’s funny-looking and what’s not?
- Do saigas think they look funny?

- Why do we think of certain kinds of animals—and even certain persons—as better-looking than others?
- Does this affect how we treat them? Is this fair?

Have each small group select a representative to share some of its conclusions with the class. Once students are primed to respect the saiga’s unusual nose, ask them to read “In Steppe with Saigas” and complete the Design a Nose student page.

MEAT-EATING PLANTS

This month’s **Ranger Rick Adventures, pages 26–29**, features two kinds of meat-eating plants: Venus’s flytraps and pitcher plants. Each kind must find nutrients in a place where there aren’t many nutrients in the soil. But each has a different way of solving the problem (e.g. specially shaped leaves, sticky liquid). After the students have read the adventure story, discuss these solutions with the class.

Then ask:

- How else might a plant catch insects or other animals for food? (Let your imagination go wild!)

Invite students to keep this discussion in mind as they design their own meat-eating plants.

Have students name their plants, draw pictures of them in action, and post them on a classroom bulletin board.

SUPER BUBBLES

After students read “**Bubble Power,**” pages 30–35, ask:

- What is a bubble? How would you describe a bubble to someone who has never seen one?
- What makes bubbles useful to the animals in the story?
- Imagine that you could make your own bubbles. What would they look like? How would you use them?

Have students create one-page comic strips in which a super-hero with bubble powers saves the day.

PUFFIN ADJECTIVES



As you read **“There’s Nothin’ Like a Puffin,”** pages 6–11, jot down eight adjectives that describe a puffin. Explain why you chose each adjective.

- 1 Adjective: _____
Why it fits: _____

- 2 Adjective: _____
Why it fits: _____

- 3 Adjective: _____
Why it fits: _____

- 4 Adjective: _____
Why it fits: _____

- 5 Adjective: _____
Why it fits: _____

- 6 Adjective: _____
Why it fits: _____

- 7 Adjective: _____
Why it fits: _____

- 8 Adjective: _____
Why it fits: _____

DESIGN A NOSE



After you read **"In Steppe with Saigas,"** pages 20–25, think about unusual noses that some other animal species have. Now follow the steps below to design a nose that no animal has ever had—but might like to have!

1 What special abilities does a saiga's nose have?

2 What special abilities does your imaginative nose have?

3 What type of animal might like to have this nose?

4 How does the nose work?

5 Draw a close-up of your nose design in the box below.