**BOAR STORIES**

Have students read “Meet the Boars,” pages 6–11. Then explain that *adaptations* are physical characteristics or behaviors that help an animal survive in its environment. For example, a boar has a long, strong snout with a flexible tip that helps it drill down into the ground and dig up roots and bulbs to eat. Have children explore other boar adaptations by completing the Boar Adaptations student page.

Next, ask students if they are familiar with Rudyard Kipling’s *Just So Stories*. If not, explain that Kipling used his imagination to make up stories about how some animals came to look or act. Read a few of these stories aloud. Then ask students to write and illustrate their own “just so” story about a boar adaptation. Encourage them to share their completed stories and artwork with the class.

**PHOTO “READING”**

Before students read “Little Penguins,” pages 18–23, pique their interest in the article and help enhance text comprehension by having students examine the large photo on pages 18–19. Ask the following questions:

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

Direct children’s attention to the smaller photo on the spread and ask the same questions.

After students have read the article, ask them to look at the two photos again and describe what is happening. Discuss (1) how keen their initial observations were and (2) what else they learned about what’s going on in the photos from reading the article.

**TURTLE HELPERS**

After reading “Giving Terrapins a Head Start,” pages 30–35, use the following as writing or discussion prompts:

- Describe a day in the life of a young terrapin living in the Chesapeake Bay.
- Why is the terrapin population declining in the Chesapeake?
- How are some students in Maryland helping young terrapins to survive in the Chesapeake?

Encourage students to learn more about threats to terrapin survival (and possible ways to help) by completing the Terrapin Troubles student page.

**THANKSGIVING CELEBRATIONS**

Thanksgiving is a great time to show appreciation for the good things in our lives—including wildlife and the great outdoors!

**Appreciating Animals.** Tell students they are going to explore reasons they should be thankful for animals. Divide them into small groups, assign each group an animal, and ask: “How does your animal help our planet?” Instruct groups to do research on their animals, discuss possible answers to the question, and report their conclusions to the class.

Then, using proper letter-writing format, have each student write a thank-you note to his or her assigned animal, pointing out some of its important contributions.

**Appreciating Plants.** As a class, make a list of reasons the world should be thankful for plants and post it on a bulletin board titled “Thank You, Plants!”

Appreciating the Great Outdoors. Complete one or more of the outdoor activities listed in “Outdoor Thanksgiving Fun,” pages 24–25.
An adaptation is a physical characteristic or behavior that helps an animal to survive. Explain how each of these adaptations helps a boar to thrive. The first one is done for you.

**PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS**

1. Long, strong snout: Helps a boar drill down into the ground and dig up roots and bulbs to eat.

2. Two layers of thick fur: 

3. Tusks: 

4. Hooves: 

**BEHAVIORS**

1. Lives in a group: 

2. Is not a picky eater: 

3. Often wallows in mud during the summer:
Below are things that can make it hard for young diamondback terrapins to survive. Do some research on these “terrapin troubles” and summarize what you find. Include some ways that people can help.