



Ranger Rick

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

EDUCATIONAL EXTENSIONS FOR THE MARCH 2021 ISSUE OF RANGER RICK® MAGAZINE

POUCH PERFECT

After reading “**Life Down Under**” on **pages 6-11**, students might think the pouch life is a great way to grow up! But do all marsupials have the same pouch experience? Assign groups to investigate a marsupial other than the kangaroo (for example, a koala, wombat, or opossum). Have them explore the young’s pouch experience and compare and contrast that experience to that of a young western gray kangaroo. Leave it up to each group to share their findings creatively with the rest of the class. Pose one final question. Students can share in pairs, “Which perfect pouch life would you pick and why?”

TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT

As we read in “**Hooray for Harpies**” on **pages 14-19**, deforestation and urbanization have created dire circumstances for the harpy eagle. Work with students to define *deforestation* and *urbanization* so everyone is starting from the same understanding. Identify the consequences of urbanization and deforestation, thinking beyond impacts on wildlife, to include the economy and people in and around these areas. Have students look for:

- examples of deforestation and urbanization in the United States,
- patterns of deforestation and or urbanization (location within the United States or proximity to specific communities), and
- ideas for solutions.

GREAT ADAPTATIONS

Animals around the world use adaptations to catch prey, hide from predators, and find mates. After reading “**Cuttlefish**” on **pages 22-27**, discuss the ways these ocean animals have adapted to survive and succeed.

Discuss the cuttlefish’s adaptations (changing color and pattern, shooting blobs of ink, gathering in groups), then split the class into smaller groups. Instruct students to identify three animals found in their own community and identify one adaptation each uses to survive. Survival adaptation can include predator/prey interactions and mating. Allow time for student groups to share the adaptations for each animal with the entire class.

NATURE’S RECYCLERS

All living things are *producers*, *consumers*, or *decomposers*. A producer makes its own food from soil, sunlight, and air. A consumer gets its energy by eating food. And a decomposer gets energy by breaking down dead plants and animals. Decomposers are nature’s recyclers, and earthworms are a great example. Ask students to reread “**Earthworms**” on **pages 32-36**. Then, as a class, discuss the following questions.

- What is a decomposer? What living things, besides the earthworm, are also decomposers?
- How is a decomposer different from a producer? What living things are examples of producers?
- How is a decomposer different from a consumer? What living things are examples of consumers?

With answers in hand, instruct students to create a visualization/graphic organizer that defines these terms and provides some examples. These graphical representations can be taped into their science notebooks for future review.

Using your document camera and projection system, a secondary activity would be to complete an earthworm dissection. Here you can identify the body parts talked about in the story. If a physical dissection isn’t possible, check out this virtual earthworm dissection, <https://youtu.be/aCnwF6vtE2g>.





PREY FOR ENERGY

You learned a lot about the harpy eagle in **“Hooray for Harpies”** on **pages 14–19**. Food gives harpy eagles the energy they need to take care of their day-to-day needs, such as hunting, grooming, and taking care of their young. Check out the food choices from the images below. Circle the foods below that will provide the harpy eagle with energy.



PIQUIÁ FLOWERS



AÇÁÍ BERRIES



SLOTH



SNAKE



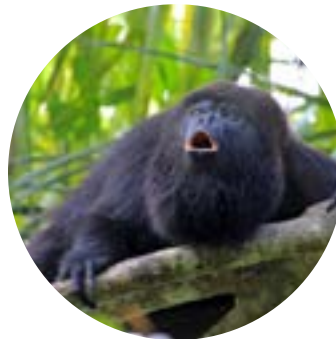
PARROT



ARMADILLO



BRAZIL NUTS



MONKEY



UXI FRUIT



PATAUÁ FRUIT

circle: sloth, snake, parrot, armadillo, monkey

ANSWERS





WRITERS WANTED

Ranger Rick and friends learned in **“Making a Magazine”** on **pages 28-31** that it takes a lot of work to bring *Ranger Rick* magazine to readers each month. Let’s pretend! You are a *Ranger Rick* magazine staff member. Your assignment for an upcoming issue is to write about an animal of your choice. The editor says your article must be no longer than 300 words and include three pictures. Write a list of questions you need to answer in order to write your article. Here’s one question to help you get a jump start.

_____ (ANIMAL CHOICE)

1 Where is the animal found?

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

After writing your questions, find the answers in books or online. When you have your answers, write and illustrate your story using the template on the next page. Remember to review the editor’s story requirements.



Ranger Rick

