

THE ARTICLE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2103/210309-animal-ears.html>

Have you ever wondered what animal has the biggest ears? Of course, it's the African elephant. We all know this. Scientists know this. However, scientists have looked at what animal has the biggest ears for its body size. The elephant has big ears but it also has a giant body. Zoologists from the American Museum of Natural History in New York City have found out which animal has the biggest ears relative to its body size. And the answer is... the long-eared jerboa. Not many people know about this cute, big-eared creature. It is a rodent. It lives in the deserts of China and Mongolia. It is a nocturnal creature, which means it is active at night and sleeps during the day.

Zoologist Mary Ellen Holden described the jerboa. She said its body measures about 10 centimetres (not counting its long tail). Its ears are 3.8 to 5 cm long. This means its ears are 40 to 50 per cent as long as its body length. The elephant's ears are just 17 per cent of its body length. Professor Holden said: "The jerboa has the longest ears for the size of its body in the entire animal kingdom." Professor Holden explained why some animals have large ears. They usually live in very hot areas. Large ears help an animal to keep cool in the heat. Their ears are large, thin and have many tiny blood vessels. The blood releases heat from the body into the air, which helps the animal cool down.

Sources: <https://www.livescience.com/largest-animal-ears-relative-to-body-size.html>
<https://www.bollyinside.com/news/which-animal-has-the-biggest-ears/>
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/article/biggest-ears-elephants-jerboa-bats>

WARM-UPS

1. EARS: Students walk around the class and talk to other students about ears. Change partners often and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, talk about these topics or words from the article. What will the article say about them? What can you say about these words and your life?

wondered / ears / African / elephant / body / size / answer / creature / rodent / active
zoologist / measure / entire / animal kingdom / hot areas / cool down / blood / air

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. FEATURES: Students A **strongly** believe ears are the least attractive features of our face; Students B **strongly** believe otherwise. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

4. BODY PARTS: How important are these body parts? What function do they do? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners often and share what you wrote.

	How Important?	Function
Ears		
Nose		
Eyes		
Mouth		
Fingers		
Brain		

5. SCIENTISTS: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "scientists". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

6. CUTE ANIMALS: Rank these with your partner. Put the cutest at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- long-eared jerboa
- koala
- tiger
- rabbit
- elephant
- sheep
- tortoise
- pig

VOCABULARY MATCHING

Paragraph 1

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 1. wondered | a. A very, very tall or large person, animal, or plant. |
| 2. giant | b. When compared to something else. |
| 3. zoologist | c. Wanted or was curious to know something. |
| 4. relative | d. An animal like a rat, mouse, squirrel, hamster, etc. that has strong front teeth. |
| 5. creature | e. An animal, but not a human being. |
| 6. rodent | f. Done, occurring, or active at night. |
| 7. nocturnal | g. An expert in or student of animals. |

Paragraph 2

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| 8. described | h. A thin tube in the body that carries blood. |
| 9. measure | i. All of something. |
| 10. length | j. All of Earth's creatures as a whole. |
| 11. entire | k. Said what something looked like. |
| 12. animal kingdom | l. Find out the size, amount, or degree of something. |
| 13. heat | m. The quality of being hot. |
| 14. vessel | n. The quality of being long. |

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2103/210309-animal-ears.html>

1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- a. The African elephant is the animal with the biggest ears. **T / F**
- b. The African elephant doesn't have the biggest ears for its body size. **T / F**
- c. A jerboa has the biggest ears relative to its body size. **T / F**
- d. The long-eared jerboa is more active during the day than at night. **T / F**
- e. The long-eared jerboa is 10cm long from head to tail. **T / F**
- f. An elephant's ears are 17% as long as the length of its body. **T / F**
- g. Animals with large ears usually live in cooler regions. **T / F**
- h. The long-eared jerboa's ears help to keep it cool in the heat. **T / F**

2. SYNONYM MATCH: (The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| 1. wondered | a. discovered |
| 2. giant | b. emit |
| 3. found out | c. functional |
| 4. cute | d. whole |
| 5. active | e. lovable |
| 6. described | f. thought about |
| 7. entire | g. normally |
| 8. usually | h. very small |
| 9. tiny | i. huge |
| 10. release | j. detailed |

3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. We all | a. 3.8 to 5cm long |
| 2. scientists have looked at what animal | b. a giant body |
| 3. it also has | c. vessels |
| 4. Not many people know | d. know this |
| 5. it is active at night and | e. about 10 centimetres |
| 6. its body measures | f. cool down |
| 7. Its ears are | g. about this |
| 8. in the entire animal | h. sleeps during the day |
| 9. many tiny blood | i. kingdom |
| 10. helps the animal | j. has the biggest ears |

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2103/210309-animal-ears.html>

1. What kind of elephant has the largest ears?
2. What kinds of scientists looked into ear size?
3. What family of animals does the long-eared jerboa belong to?
4. Where in China and Mongolia do long-eared jerboas live?
5. What does the long-eared jerboa do during the day?
6. How long is the body of the long-eared jerboa?
7. How long are an elephant's ears in relation to its body size?
8. Where do big-eared animals usually live?
9. What do large ears help animals do?
10. What does the article say blood from an animal's ears releases?

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2103/210309-animal-ears.html>

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'animal' and 'ears'.

animal	ears

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• wondered• African• giant• history• cute• night	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• described• tail• length• entire• thin• helps
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EARS DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. What did you think when you read the headline?
2. What images are in your mind when you hear the word 'animal'?
3. Have you ever wondered what animal has the biggest ears?
4. What do you think of your ears?
5. What animal has the cutest ears?
6. What animal has the strangest ears?
7. What do you know about how our ears work?
8. What do you think of elephants' ears?
9. What do you know about rodents?
10. What do you know about nocturnal animals?

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EARS DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

11. Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
12. What do you think of when you hear the word 'ears'?
13. What do you think about what you read?
14. What do you want to know about the jerboa?
15. What different functions do your ears have?
16. How do you keep cool in the heat?
17. What would it be like to have really great hearing?
18. What sounds do you like and dislike?
19. How important is hearing compared to the other senses?
20. What questions would you like to ask the zoologists?