



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## GREAT-HORNED OWLS

Have you ever heard a hoot as the sun goes down? This may be the cry of a great-horned owl. She is looking for her dinner.

Great-horned owls have sharp eyes and ears. They see and hear small animals. Then, they swoop down and grab their prey.

Great-horned owls eat mice, frogs, snakes, and small birds. They also eat insects. They can fly without making a sound.

Great-horned owls hoot to other owls in the forest. Their brown and black feathers make them hard to see in the daytime. You may see one flying at dawn or dusk. Be very quiet. Then, you may hear owls calling out to each other through the trees.



### STORY QUESTIONS

- In this passage, the word *swoop* means . . .
  - run.
  - fly.
  - skip.
  - skate.
- Which statement is **false**?
  - Great-horned owls don't see well.
  - Great-horned owls fly in silence.
  - Great-horned owls eat snakes.
  - Great-horned owls have feathers.
- What colors are the great-horned owl's feathers?
  - black and white
  - blue and red
  - brown and orange
  - brown and black
- Which animal does the great-horned owl **not** eat?
  - frog
  - snake
  - small bird
  - bear



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## CATS

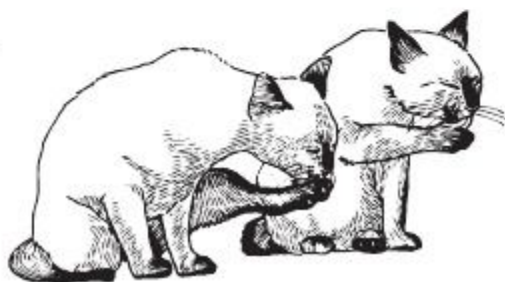
Do you have a cat at home? If so, you know what amazing creatures they are.

Cats learn about the weather from their whiskers. They can tell if it is hot or cold, wet or dry. Their whiskers also help them to find their way in the dark.

Indoor cats like to play with balls. They also love to play with string. You can toss a catnip mouse and train your cat to bring it back to you.

One of the best things about cats is their fur. They keep themselves very clean. They are soft and warm. Most cats like to be brushed and petted. They also like to sit on your lap.

Many cats do not have a home. They are cold and hungry. You can adopt one from your local shelter. Then, you will have an amazing creature of your own.



### STORY QUESTIONS

- Cats learn about the weather from their . . .
  - tails.
  - fur.
  - whiskers.
  - teeth.
- You can train your cat to . . .
  - cook dinner.
  - bring back a catnip mouse.
  - brush your hair.
  - play football.
- How do you think a cat cleans its fur?
  - by taking a shower
  - by swimming in the ocean
  - by soaking in the bathtub
  - by licking itself
- In this story, the word *shelter* means . . .
  - a place that holds stray cats.
  - a teepee.
  - a doghouse.
  - a tent.



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## THE CROW

You can find crows almost any place. These birds are very smart. They can even talk! Crows can live in forests. They can live near houses. They can even live in big cities. They eat bugs, berries, fruit, and scraps of food.

Crows have large brains. They hide bits of food and save them for later. They can learn how to crack nuts. They even make tools out of twigs.

Crows talk to each other. They caw and squeak. They can learn human language, too. Some crows can learn to ring a bell when asked. Others can laugh on command. Crows are interesting birds!



### STORY QUESTIONS

- Why do you think crows can live almost any place?
  - They carry big suitcases.
  - They can eat many different types of food.
  - They like to ride the subway.
  - They steal people's beds.
- Which statement is **true**?
 

a. Crows can learn to drive a car.	c. Crows can make their own tools.
b. Crows can live on the moon.	d. Crows are not very smart.
- In this story, the words *on command* mean . . .
 

a. when asked to do so.	c. when thrown in jail.
b. when forced to do so.	d. when someone says "pretty please."
- Why would a crow need to make a tool?
 

a. to fix its car	c. to record itself laughing
b. to repair a sink	d. to get bugs out of the cracks in trees



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## THE POLAR BEAR

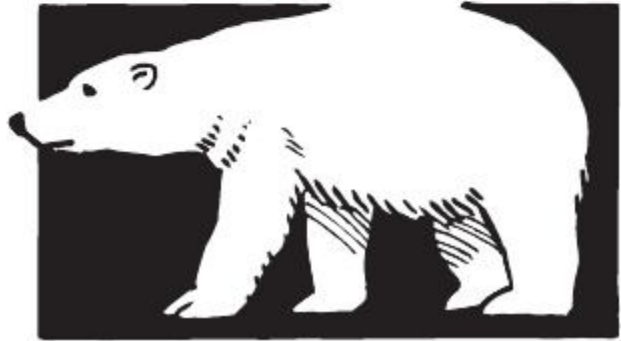
The polar bear makes its home in the cold and icy Arctic. Other animals might freeze or starve. But the polar bear knows how to live in the snow.

Polar bears have thick blubber, or fat, that protects them from the cold. They also have a thick fur coat.

The polar bear's coat is white. This allows it to blend into the snow. That way, the polar bear can sneak up on its prey.

Polar bears swim well. They eat seals, walruses, small whales, and rodents. In the summer, they may eat berries.

Polar bears will also eat people. They may look cute and furry, but be careful of this big bear!



### STORY QUESTIONS

- Polar bears are found in . . .
  - sunny Florida.
  - tropical jungles.
  - the freezing Arctic.
  - the Pacific Ocean.
- Polar bears can live in the cold because . . .
  - they have fireplaces.
  - they have thick fur coats.
  - they wear socks.
  - they eat blubber for lunch.
- Which sentence is **true**?
  - Polar bears blend into the snow.
  - Polar bears are black.
  - Polar bears blend into brown rocks.
  - Polar bears are white and black.
- Which of the following do polar bears not eat?
  - people
  - walruses
  - rodents
  - salad



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## DOGS

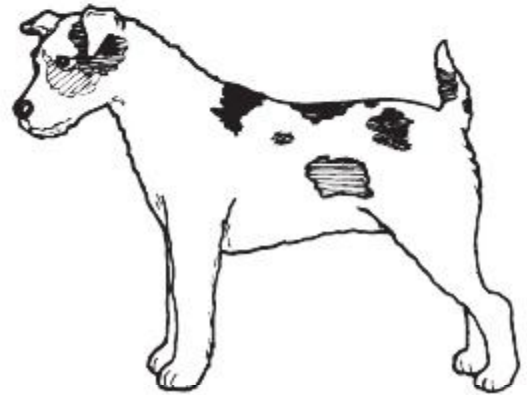
Have you ever shaken hands with a dog? If so, you know that most dogs love people. They will do tricks and even help in a crisis.

Dogs are very nice. They make loyal friends. Many dogs are happy as pets. They love to be with people and do tricks.

You can teach a dog to shake hands. Dogs can jump through hoops. They can roll over. They can also fetch a stick. They are very smart animals.

Dogs can also rescue people. Some dogs bark if a stranger enters the house. Other dogs save people from fires. Police dogs help to fight crime.

Dogs are wonderful animals. Adopt one, and you will have a friend for life!



### STORY QUESTIONS

- In this story, the word *crisis* means . . .
  - spilled milk.
  - an emergency.
  - a stubbed toe.
  - running out of gas.
- Which statement is **true**?
  - Dogs are mean.
  - Dogs do not like people.
  - Dogs are our enemies.
  - Dogs make good friends.
- What trick is a dog unable to do?
  - shake hands
  - fetch a stick
  - drive a truck
  - jump through a hoop
- What does the phrase "fight crime" mean?
  - to punch a robber in the face
  - to beat up a criminal
  - to kick and scratch a bully
  - to keep people safe from danger



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## EMPEROR PENGUIN

Emperor Penguins can't fly, but they can dive and swim. They can also walk miles and miles over ice and snow.

The Emperor Penguin lives in Antarctica. These penguins can dive far down into the ocean.

Emperor Penguins can hold their breath for 20 minutes. They can swim very fast after their prey. They eat fish and squid.

Every spring Emperor Penguins walk far across snow and ice. Then, they lay their eggs. Males care for the eggs. Females leave to find food. Later, they come back to feed the new babies.

Even though they can't fly, Emperor Penguins are amazing birds.



### STORY QUESTIONS

- What does the word *prey* mean in this story?
  - to sit with your hands together
  - to ask for something
  - food
  - eggs
- What would be another good name for this story?
  - "Too Bad They Can't Fly"
  - "The Amazing Emperor Penguin"
  - "Warm-Weather Birds"
  - "Fish are Great"
- Who cares for the Emperor Penguin's eggs?
  - the squid
  - the female penguin
  - no one
  - the male penguin
- Which statement is a fact?
  - Female penguins feed their new babies.
  - Male penguins abandon their babies.
  - Female penguins don't like their babies.
  - Mother and father penguins can fly.



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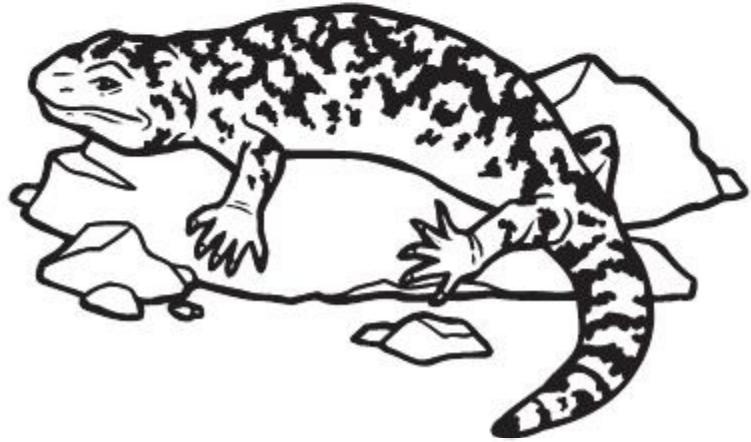
## GILA MONSTER

The Gila monster is a large lizard. You can say its name like this—"Heela." It is pretty. But it is also scary.

The Gila monster lives in the desert. Its skin is black, pink, orange, and yellow.

The Gila monster is two feet long. It walks slowly. It eats rodents, small birds, and eggs.

This lizard has poison in its teeth. It won't kill you. Still, the Gila monster bites people. It can hold on tight to a leg or arm with its teeth. Be careful!



### STORY QUESTIONS

- How do you pronounce *Gila*?
  - Gee-la
  - Heela
  - Guy-la
  - Hilla
- Why is the Gila monster scary?
  - because it lives in the desert
  - because it eats eggs
  - because it walks slowly
  - because it has a poisonous bite
- The Gila monster holds poison in its . . .
  - teeth.
  - tail.
  - eyes.
  - claws.
- Why should you be careful around Gila monsters?
  - because they move quickly
  - because they eat rodents
  - because they bite and hold on tight to people
  - because they are black, pink, orange, and yellow



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## MILLIPEDES

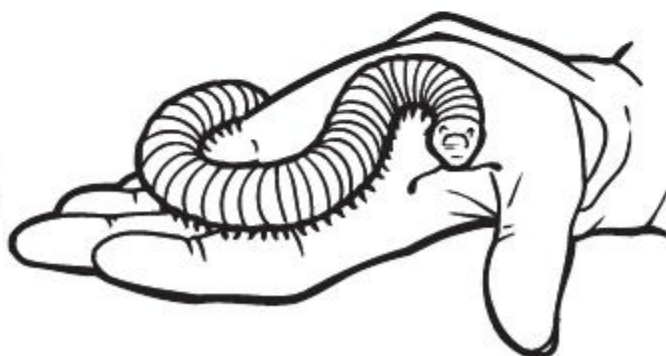
The millipede is small but strong. It can have between 80 and 400 legs!

Millipedes walk slowly. Still, they can dig long tunnels. They wave their legs and push underground head first.

These creatures eat dead leaves and plants. They wet the food and scrape at it with their jaws.

When scared, the millipede curls into a ball. Its back is hard, like armor. This protects its legs. Millipedes also have poison. It burns ants, but it doesn't hurt people.

Never step on a millipede. It has places to go and tunnels to dig!



### STORY QUESTIONS

- How many legs can a millipede have?
  - 40
  - 90
  - 600
  - 10
- How do millipedes dig tunnels?
  - with a shovel
  - with their teeth
  - with their legs and heads
  - with a spoon
- In this story, *scrape* means . . .
  - to gnaw at something.
  - to skin your knee.
  - to carve a branch.
  - to get into trouble.
- Why should you never step on a millipede?
  - because it burns ants
  - because it has lots of legs
  - because it has tunnels to dig
  - because it curls into a ball





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## IVORY-BILLED WOODPECKER

For many years, people thought the ivory-billed woodpecker was gone. In 2005, a man saw one.

Ivory-billed woodpeckers are almost two feet long. They have a white bill. Males also have red feathers on the top of their heads. They have large, curved claws.

The ivory-billed woodpecker uses its bill to find food. It peels the bark off trees to uncover bugs. Its bill makes a knocking sound against the wood.

Long ago, people hunted these birds. They also cut down trees. These trees were home to the ivory-billed woodpecker. Soon, these birds disappeared.

Recently, scientists have found at least one male bird in an Arkansas swamp. Welcome back, ivory-billed woodpecker!



### STORY QUESTIONS

- What is **true** about ivory-billed woodpeckers?
  - They are tiny birds.
  - They are all gone.
  - They eat watermelon.
  - One was discovered in a swamp.
- In this story, the word *bill* means . . .
  - a dollar.
  - a law.
  - a beak.
  - a notice sent in the mail.
- How do ivory-billed woodpeckers use their bills?
  - They use it to uncover bugs.
  - They use it to dig holes in the sand.
  - They use it to pop balloons.
  - They use it to talk to bugs.
- Why did these birds disappear?
  - They moved to Italy.
  - They all got sick.
  - They lost their homes.
  - They got lost in swamps.



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## PEREGRINE FALCON

The peregrine falcon is the fastest animal on the earth. These lovely birds are fierce hunters.

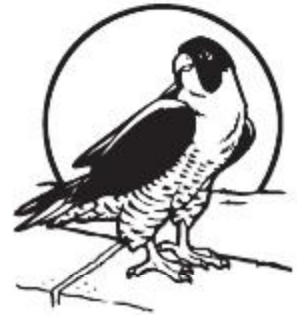
The peregrine falcon has blue-gray wings. They have white faces with a black stripe on each cheek. Their wingspan is about three feet.

This falcon eats other birds. It likes pigeons, starlings, parrots, and ducks. It flies high in the sky. When it sees a bird, it goes into a dive. This is called a stoop.

Peregrine falcons can dive at over 200 miles per hour! They ball up their feet. Then, they knock prey out in midair.

Most young peregrine falcons die in their first year. Animals steal baby chicks and eggs. Pesticides also hurt these falcons.

People are helping to save peregrine falcons. Now, there are many pairs of these birds. Some of them live in cities. They make nests on high bridges and skyscrapers. Have you seen one?



### STORY QUESTIONS

- The peregrine falcon is famous for its . . .
  - stripes.
  - speed.
  - smile.
  - nest.
- In this story, the word *stoop* means . . .
  - something to sit on.
  - duck.
  - dive.
  - bend down to pick up something.
- Why do peregrine falcons die in their first year?
  - Animals steal baby chicks from their parents.
  - They fly into rocks.
  - Parrots eat them.
  - They live on bridges.
- You may spot the nest of a peregrine falcon on a . . .
  - bus.
  - boat.
  - apple tree.
  - high bridge.



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## ANTEATER

What animal likes to eat ants? An anteater, of course!

Anteaters like swamps and forests. They live in South America. They like hot weather. Anteaters have sharp claws. They can climb trees. Their claws are also weapons in case of an attack.

They also have long, sticky tongues. Anteaters use their tongues to pick up food. First, they open an ant nest. Then, they scoop up ants with their tongue.

Big anteaters are four feet long. Small anteaters are the size of a rat. Big or small, they all love to eat ants.



### STORY QUESTIONS

1. How do you think anteaters got their name?
  - a. They love to eat ants.
  - b. They like to play with ants.
  - c. Ants love to eat them.
  - d. Ants like to climb trees.
2. What is a fact about anteaters?
  - a. They don't have claws.
  - b. They like hot weather.
  - c. They live in North America.
  - d. They scoop up ants with their tails.
3. Anteaters climb trees using their . . .
  - a. tails.
  - b. tongues.
  - c. ants.
  - d. claws.
4. The smallest anteater is the size of a . . .
  - a. rat.
  - b. man.
  - c. whale.
  - d. cow.



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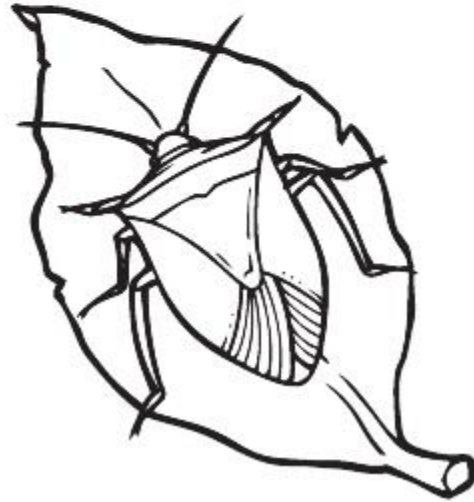
## STINKBUG

One bug leaves a bad smell wherever it goes. It is the stinkbug.

Stinkbugs are broad, flat insects. They can be green, gray, and brown. They can even be red.

Stinkbugs smell. This bad odor protects them from enemies. When they walk across a leaf, the leaf smells bad, too.

There are 5,000 kinds of stinkbugs. Some stinkbugs eat plant juice. Others eat insects. No matter what they eat, they stink!



### STORY QUESTIONS

- Stinkbugs can be . . .
  - sweet-smelling.
  - purple.
  - green.
  - delicious.
- In this story, *smell* means
  - sniff.
  - snort.
  - inhale.
  - stink.
- The stinkbug's smell protects it from . . .
  - plants.
  - enemies.
  - leaves.
  - juice.
- Which sentence is a fact?
  - There are 5,000 kinds of stinkbugs.
  - There are two kinds of stinkbugs.
  - Some stinkbugs eat elephants.
  - Stinkbugs smell good.



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## GIANT PANDA

The Giant Panda is a beautiful bear. It is also rare.

Giant Pandas are black and white. They have black spots over their eyes. They have a short tail. They have paws with five fingers.

Giant Pandas eat bamboo plants. Sometimes they eat bugs, eggs, and fish.

Very few Giant Pandas live in the wild. People build near their homes. They don't have many babies.

All over, groups try to save this beautiful bear.



### STORY QUESTIONS

- Which of the sentences below is **true**?
  - Giant Pandas have hands.
  - Giant Pandas have white spots over their eyes.
  - Giant Pandas are rare.
  - There are many Giant Pandas in the wild.
- What do Giant Pandas eat?
 

a. tacos	c. pizza
b. bamboo	d. egg salad
- Why aren't there many Giant Pandas?
 

a. They don't have many babies.	c. They eat bamboo.
b. They fight all the time.	d. They have five fingers.
- In this story, save means . . .
 

a. bank.	c. store.
b. keep.	d. protect.



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## BLACK WIDOW

What spider has a red spot that means poison? The black widow.

The female black widow is black and shiny. She has a red spot. The male black widow is smaller. He is dark brown with a yellow spot.

Black widows are poisonous. They catch insects in their webs. Then, they sting them and eat them.

The bite of a black widow can hurt people. Some get very sick. A few die.

Black widows have many babies. Females live a long time. Males do not. Sometimes the females eat the males.

If you see a red spot on a black spider, be careful!



### STORY QUESTIONS

- Which statement is **true**?
  - The male black widow lives longer than the female.
  - The female black widow has a red spot.
  - The male black widow has a red spot.
  - The female black widow doesn't live long.
- How do black widows catch food?
 

a. They go fishing.	c. They use a catcher's mitt.
b. They hold out their hands.	d. They build webs.
- What could happen if a black widow bites you?
 

a. You could get sick.	c. You could eat insects.
b. You could turn black.	d. You could make a web.
- What should you do if you see a black widow?
 

a. walk away	c. eat it
b. pick it up	d. touch it with your finger



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## GIRAFFE

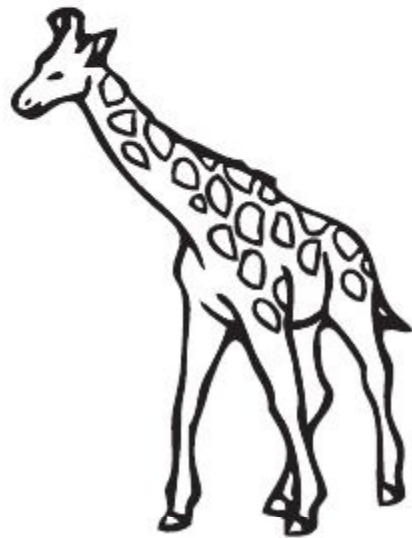
The giraffe is famous for its long neck. We also know it because of its spots.

Wild giraffes live in Africa. They are very tall. They eat leaves high up in trees.

The giraffe has a long, sticky tongue. It uses its tongue to clean bugs off its face. It also has a big heart. A giraffe's heart can weigh 24 pounds!

Giraffes can run fast. They kick with strong legs. They need only an hour of sleep each day.

You can see giraffes in the zoo. You can also see them on a trip to Africa.



### STORY QUESTIONS

- The giraffe is famous for . . .
  - its long nose.
  - its short neck.
  - its long tail.
  - its long neck.
- The giraffe uses its tongue to . . .
  - eat ants off leaves.
  - clean bugs off its face.
  - clean its tail.
  - run fast.
- How can a giraffe hurt its enemy?
  - It can lick enemies in the face.
  - It can run away.
  - It can climb trees.
  - It can kick enemies with strong legs.
- Where can you see giraffes?
  - in a zoo
  - in Texas
  - in the mall
  - in bed