



Educator's Guide

Educational extensions for the August 2010 issue of *Ranger Rick*® magazine

CAPTURE THE MOMENT

The winning photos in “Your Best Shots” (page 4) successfully captured some fleeting moments in nature. Ask students to reflect on their summer and what is happening outdoors right now. What moments would they like to capture and remember? Provide an opportunity for them to choose some favorite memories and preserve them in writing or drawings—or to take a camera outside and experiment with capturing a moment in a photo. Arrange a gallery or sharing circle to showcase students’ work.

FAVORITE PHOTOS

Before reading “First Summer” (pages 6-11), invite students to browse through the story’s photos. Ask each student to choose his or her favorite photo of the arctic fox pups. Have students pair up and explain to their partners which photo they chose and why it caught their attention. Then give students a chance to read the story. Ask them to turn to their partners again and describe something they learned from the text that helped them understand more about their chosen photo.

WINTER FOXES

“First Summer” (pages 6-11) describes the life of a baby arctic fox, Anya, and her siblings. The fox pups experience summer for the first time and learn skills they will need to survive their first winter. Have students look at the map of where arctic foxes live. Discuss how life will be different for the pups when winter comes. Then invite students to add to Anya’s story, writing in her voice about how she experiences and copes with the cold season.

A PRICKLY PLAY

In “Ranger Rick’s Adventures” (pages 12-15), students can read about a threat to the saguaro cactus. Using the craft directions in “The Prickly Pair” (page 16), have each student make his or her own cactus character. Then give students time to plan and stage a play about saguaros, using their creations to act it out (puppet-show style). After researching additional facts about the saguaro, student could choose a focus for their play such as the important role saguaros play in the desert ecosystem or how people can help protect them.

BUGS GOOD AND BAD

Insects can be unpopular, but “What Good Are Bugs?” (pages 17-24), describes some of their many benefits. Have students make a “pros and cons” chart for bugs. They can use the story to find examples of both good and bad things about insects from a human’s perspective, adding other examples from their own experiences. Then pose some questions to use as writing or discussion prompts. For example, “Which insects are your most and least favorite? Why?” “What do you think more people should know about insects?” “How would our lives be different if there were no bugs?”

TOTALLY NEW TURTLES

“Totally Weird Turtles” (pages 30-35) features some truly unusual members of the turtle family. After students read the story, ask them to design their own weird turtles. They can draw the turtle and write a short description (modeled after the ones in the story) that explains what makes this turtle different from most and how its unusual features help it survive in its habitat.





WHY SO WEIRD?

Read "Totally Weird Turtles" on pages 30-35 in the August 2010 issue of *Ranger Rick* magazine. These may be unlike any turtles you know, but their "weird" features aren't just for show.

<p>Choose THREE of these examples. For each one, answer this question: <i>How might the turtle's special features help it survive?</i> Use what you learned in the story or make a good guess to come up with your answer.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Snake-necked turtle's extra-long neck• Matamata's fringed head and neck• Sawback turtle's spiked back• Softshell turtle's flat, soft shell• Alligator snapping turtle's super-snappy jaws	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Big-headed turtle's extra-large head and extra-long tail• Radiated tortoise's artful shell• Plowshare tortoise's pointed "weapon"• Pancake tortoise's flat, flexible shell

1. Turtle's name and special feature: _____

2. Turtle's name and special feature: _____

3. Turtle's name and special feature: _____

