



Educator's Guide

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

GREEN YOUR SCHOOL

“Dear Ranger Rick” (page 4) asks readers to describe their families’ eco-friendly actions. And “How to Green Your Parents” (pages 18-25) explains how some kids are getting their parents on the green bandwagon. Want to turn your school into a cleaner, greener place? Eco-Schools USA is a step-by-step program that involves the whole school community in greening the building, grounds, and curriculum. Find out how it works—and register your school—at eco-schoolsusa.org.

ART WITH STRIPES

After reading “Horses of a Different Stripe” (pages 6-11), students will know that different species of zebras have different stripe patterns. These bold black and white designs are visually exciting—perfect to inspire an art project. Using the photos in the story for ideas, have students create striped paper. On a sheet of white paper, they can use black paint or glued-on strips of black paper to make stripes. Then have them cut out a zebra shape from the striped paper. Arrange the “herd” of zebras on a classroom wall for an eye-catching display!

BETTER THAN BALLOONS

“Ranger Rick’s Adventures” (pages 12-15) reveals the danger that balloon launches pose for wildlife. Engage students in some discussion and research about this issue. Does the place where you live have a policy about balloon launches? If not, students could write letters to city officials to suggest creating one. They could also brainstorm fun, wildlife-friendly alternatives to releasing balloons for local celebrations.

GET IN A FLAP

Check out “For the Record” (page 17 in “The Buzz”) for the statistics about how fast hummingbirds and certain insects flap their wings. Have students multiply wing beats per second by 60 to determine wing beats per minute. Then challenge them to see how many times they can flap their own “wings” in a minute. Ask them to compare their rate with the rates of the featured animals.

LOOKING AT LEAVES

“Ask Rick” (pages 26-27) explains that leaves, like fingerprints, are all different. Enjoy the colors of autumn as you investigate this claim. You could:

- **Draw leaves.** Choose several leaves of the same species, paying close attention to the details and differences as you sketch.
- **Make a collage.** Make a collage using a variety of leaf shapes and colors to create a design.
- **Start a collection.** Press each leaf, glue it to a page, and label it with species name and other details.
- **Make flashcards** with a pressed leaf on the front and the species name on the back. Quiz each other to sharpen your tree identification skills.

LEARNING FROM CUTTLEFISH

“Secrets of the Cuttlefish” (pages 30-36) describes how cuttlefish can change the color, pattern, and texture of their skin to blend in, stand out, and communicate. As a writing or discussion prompt, ask students to imagine what it would be like to have this ability. Then ask if they can think of ways that humans could learn from the cuttlefish to design new technology. Search “biomimicry and cuttlefish” online to see some interesting real-life applications!

Answers for Zebra True and False Student Page: 1.T, 2.F, 3.F, 4.T, 5.T, 6.F, 7.T, 8.F, 9.T, 10.T, 11.F, 12.T



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ZEBRA TRUE AND FALSE

Read "Horses of a Different Stripe" (pages 6-11 in the September 2010 issue of *Ranger Rick* magazine). Then decide if each of the following statements about Grevy's zebras is correct. Check "T" for true or "F" for false.

1. You can tell Grevy's zebras from other kinds of zebras because their stripes are thin and close together. T or F
2. Grevy's zebras are the smallest members of the zebra family. T or F
3. The foals (babies) don't get their stripes until they grow up. T or F
4. Zebras are a kind of wild horse. T or F
5. Grevy's zebras live in a very dry habitat. T or F
6. They save their energy by staying in one place and waiting for rain to fall. T or F
7. Grevy's can smell water even when it is underground. T or F
8. It's easier for lions to hunt zebras when the zebras gather together in a herd. T or F
9. Thirty years ago, there were more than five times as many Grevy's zebras as there are today. T or F
10. Cows, sheep, and goats eat the grass that zebras need and scare them away from water holes. T or F
11. People are helping Grevy's zebras by pumping water from underground to make places where the zebras can swim to cool off. T or F
12. No two zebras have the exact same pattern of stripes. T or F





CUTTLEFISH DICTIONARY

In "Secrets of the Cuttlefish" (pages 30-36 in the September 2010 issue of *Ranger Rick* magazine), you learn that cuttlefish change the way they look to communicate certain things. Below, write some entries for a "dictionary" of cuttlefish body language. First describe how the cuttlefish looks, and then explain what it means. The first example is done for you.

Body language: *A male cuttlefish shows black-and-white "zebra stripes."*

What it means: *The look warns other males to stay away from a female that he is interested in.*

Choose three more examples from the story to add to the dictionary.

1. **Body language:** _____

What it means: _____

2. **Body language:** _____

What it means: _____

3. **Body language:** _____

What it means: _____

Now make up your own entry. Think of something else a cuttlefish might want to say and how it could use its ability to change its skin color, pattern, or texture to say it.

4. **Body language:** _____

What it means: _____

