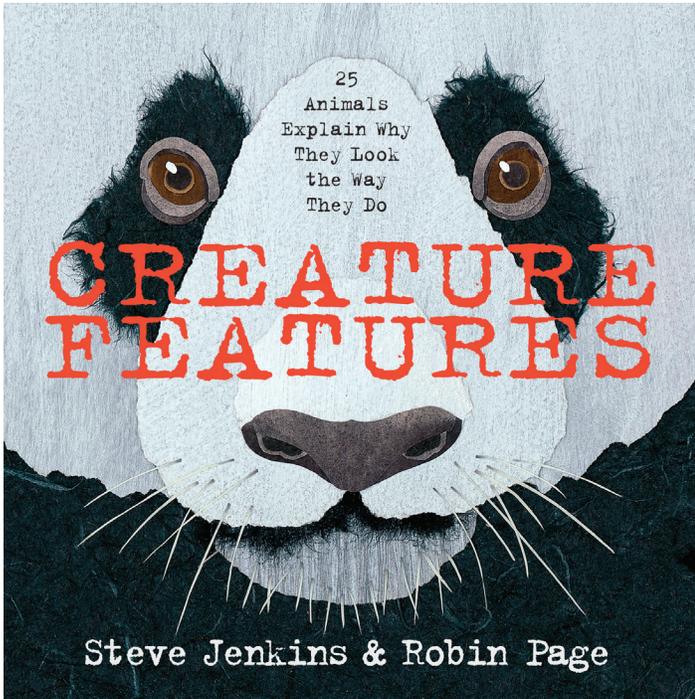


CREATURE FEATURES

by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page



Creature Features:
Twenty-Five Animals Explain Why They Look the Way They Do

By Steve Jenkins & Robin Page

The activities for this book are aligned with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts for grades K–1, but standards for other grades may also apply and the book can be used effectively with grades K–3.

Creature Features assembles a group of unusual animals and uses a fun question-and-answer format to explain the good reasons for their odd features. An appendix provides more details about the home and diet of the animals.

Objective:

Students will listen to the teacher read the book aloud, extend vocabulary, participate in class discussion and activities, and complete individual writing projects.

Pre-Reading

- Hold the book up and show the class the front and back covers and flaps and title page, reading the text aloud. Can students explain what purpose each of these areas serves? Do they like the front cover? Does it make them want to read the book?

- Tell students to raise their hands and ask about any unfamiliar words as you read.

Post-Reading Class Discussion:

- Lead a discussion about the animal illustrations in the book. Did students enjoy them? Are they realistic? Do students think photographs would be better? Why do students think the creators chose to show just a close-up of the animals' head, and not their whole body?
- Can students name some of the reasons for the animals' unusual features? Did they learn any new animal facts from this book? Did they enjoy learning the “gross” facts? Which was the most disgusting? Why do these facts seem disgusting to them? What if they had to do these things in order to survive?
- Talk about the humor in the text. Do students enjoy funny stories? Have they read other nonfiction books that were funny? Do they think that using humor makes it easier to learn facts about the animals?
- Show the students the front cover of the book again. Can they identify which person is the author and which is the illustrator? Do they think that two people could share the writing and drawing duties for a book? Do they ever collaborate on creative projects with their friends or siblings?

Classroom Activities

- Stage a readers' theater and “perform” the book as a class. Go around the room with each student reading a question or answer until everyone has had a chance to be either an interviewer or animal subject. Encourage reading “with expression” and adding animal noises! Note: You can download and print masks of some of the animals in the book at www.scribd.com/doc/235639250/Creature-Features-Mask-Kit.
- Visit Steve Jenkins's website and watch the slideshow about the making of *Creature Features*: stevejenkinsbooks.com/creaturefeatures. Do students think two years is a long time to wait for a book to be finished?
- Hand out art supplies and ask students to invent a new animal with an unusual feature. Have students take turns showing their animal to the class and explaining how the feature is used.

CREATURE FEATURES

by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page

Individual Activities

- Have students choose four animals NOT in the book and write questions/answers for each of them, following book's format.
- Ask students to write a story about one or more of their chosen animals and make "thumbnail" sketches as they would if they were making their story into a book.
- Have students write an opinion essay about why they liked or did not like this book, giving specific reasons for their answer.

English Language Arts Standards (K–1) this guide aligns with the following:

Reading:

RL.K.1, RL.K.3, RL.K.4, RL.K.5, RL.K.6, RL.K.7, RI.K.1, RI.K.2, RI.K.3, RI.K.4, RI.K.5, RI.K.6, RI.K.7, RI.K.10, RF.K.1, RF.K.2, RL.1.1, RL.1.3, RL.1.5, RI.1.1, RI.1.2, RI.1.3, RI.1.4, RI.1.6, RF.1.1, RF.1.2

Writing:

W.K.1, W.K.2, W.K.3, W.1.1, W.1.3, W.1.3

Speaking and Listening:

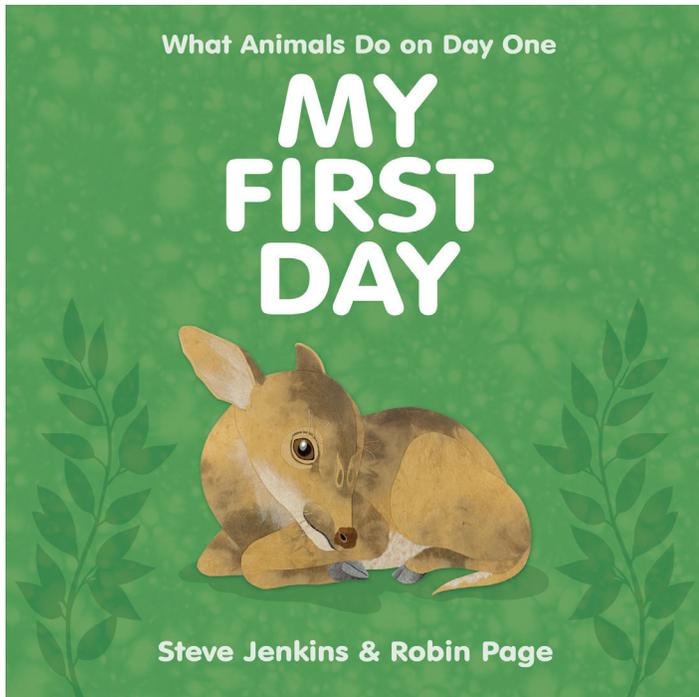
SL.K.1, SL.K.2, SL.K.3, SL.K.5, SL.K.6, SL.1.1, SL.1.2, SL.1.3, SL.1.5, SL.1.6

Language:

L.K.1, L.K.2, L.1.1, L.1.2

MY FIRST DAY

by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page



My First Day:
What Animals Do on Day One
By Steve Jenkins & Robin Page

The activities for this book are aligned with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts for grades K–1, but standards for other grades may also apply and the book can be used effectively with grades K–3.

My First Day explores some of the fascinating things that animals do on their first day. An appendix provides more detailed information about each animal described.

Objective:

Students will listen to the teacher read the book aloud, extend vocabulary, participate in class discussion and activities, and complete individual writing projects.

Pre-Reading

- Hold the book up and show the class the front and back covers, flaps, and title page, reading the text aloud.
- Ask students to keep a list of all the animals mentioned as you are reading the book.
- Tell students to raise their hands and ask about any unfamiliar words as you read.

Post-Reading Class Discussion:

- Ask students why they think that babies and baby animals are so cute? Have students seen Internet videos with puppies and kittens or other animals?
- Of all of the animals described in the book, whose first day would students like to experience most?
- Which animal babies do things humans can do too? Which animal is most like a human baby? Which is most unlike a human baby?
- Have students seen any of these baby animals? Others not in the book? Where— at the zoo, in the park?
- Can students name some of the ways that animal parents can find or recognize their children?
- Ask students to share some of the interesting facts they learned by listening to this book. Can they tell the difference between a fiction and nonfiction book? Which kind is this book? Would they rather hear a book that “tells a story” or one that just tells facts?

Classroom Activities

- Post a world map at the front of the class and reread the appendix of the book, marking each animal’s home on the map. How many of the animals live close to your classroom? How many live in far-away places?
- Divide students into small groups and have each group choose four animals from the book. Have students design flash cards for their animals, including a picture, name, each one's home, and at least one interesting fact. Have each group present their flash cards to the class.

Individual Activities

- Ask students to bring in a baby picture of themselves and ask a parent to tell them what their own first day was like. Have them write a story called “My First Day” and tell it to the class. Put all of the stories and photos together to make a classroom photo album. Note: If students can’t find out what really happened on their first day, ask them to imagine what happened for their story.
- Have students choose an animal family from the book and write a “script” for the babies’ first day, imagining the conversations if the animals could speak English.

MY FIRST DAY

by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page

English Language Arts Standards (K–1) with which this guide aligns:

Reading:

RL.K.1, RL.K.3, RL.K.4, RL.K.5, RI.K.1, RI.K.2, RI.K.3, RI.K.4, RI.K.5, RF.K.1, RF.K.2, RI.1.1, RI.1.2, RI.1.3, RI.1.4, RI.1.5, RF.1.1, RF.1.2

Writing:

W.K.1, W.K.2, W.K.3, W.K.8, W.1.3

Speaking and Listening:

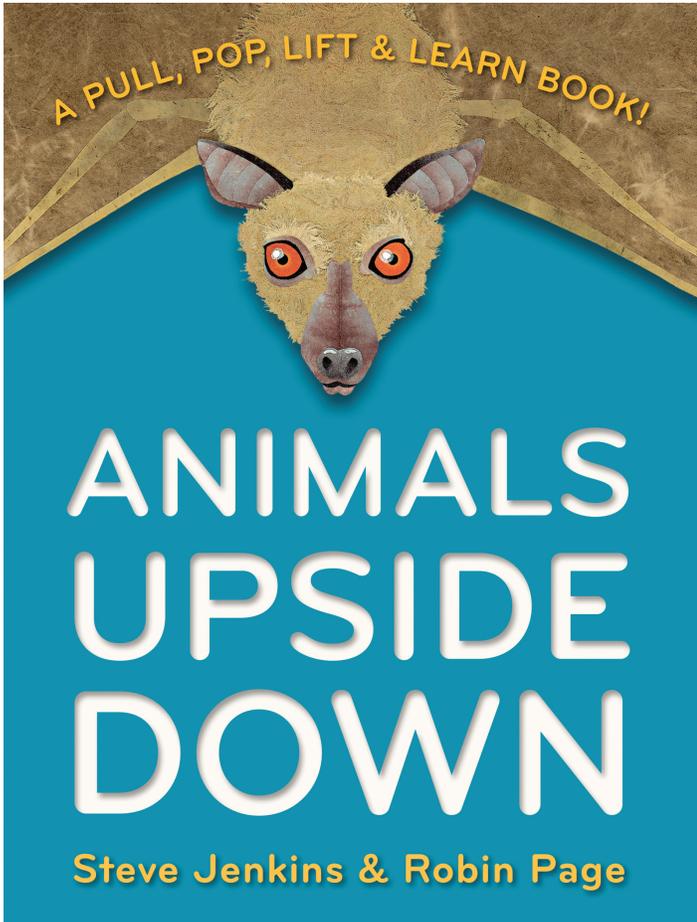
SL.K.1, SL.K.2, SL.K.3, SL.K.5, SL.K.6, SL.1.1, SL.1.2, SL.1.5, SL.1.6

Language:

L.K.1, L.K.2, L.K.4, L.K.6, L.1.1, L.1.2

ANIMALS UPSIDE DOWN

by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page



Animals Upside Down

By Steve Jenkins & Robin Page

The activities for this book are aligned with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts for grades 1–2, but standards for other grades may also apply and the book can be used effectively with grades 1–3.

Animals Upside Down is an interactive book with pop-ups, pul tabs, and lift-the-flaps that help students discover the many reasons animals need to turn upside down. An appendix provides more detailed information about each animal described.

Objective:

Students will read the book independently, extend vocabulary, participate in a class discussion and team activities, and complete individual research and writing projects.

Pre-Reading

- Explain that there may be unfamiliar words in the book and ask students to keep a vocabulary list as they read, recording the word and its definition. If they can't identify a definition from context, then have them use a dictionary to determine meaning.

Post-Reading Class Discussion:

- Ask students to share their vocabulary lists and definitions.
- Can students name some reasons why animals turn upside down? Have any students seen upside-down animals, and where? Why was that animal upside-down?
- Do students wish they could do some of the things the animals in the book can do, such as changing color, spraying toxins, swimming upside down? What ability would they choose to have in order to protect themselves? What abilities can humans use to protect themselves?
- Can students name some types of food that the animals eat? Which animals eat the same things? Would they try eating any of these? Can students eat while hanging upside down?
- Do students enjoy reading books with the pop-up format? Why or why not? Does it make the animals seem more real? Are books more interesting when they have an interactive format?

Team Activities

Divide the class into five teams and assign a group of animals from the book to each team.

- **Team 1:** nuthatch, weaverbird, hanging parrot, hummingbird, sparrowhawk, bird of paradise
- **Team 2:** darkling beetle, net-casting spider, housefly, pale green weevil, Australian leaf insect
- **Team 3:** fire-bellied toad, pangolin, hog-nosed snake, monkey skink, woolly monkey
- **Team 4:** skunk, harvest mouse, fruit bat, opossum, three-toed sloth

ANIMALS UPSIDE DOWN

by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page

- **Team 5:** upside-down jellyfish, trumpetfish, flamingo, mallard, upside-down catfish

Have the teams read the book again together and make a simple chart of the animals in their group, including the following:

- Name of animal
- Where they live, geographically
- What type of home they live in
- What they eat
- Why they turn upside down
- Other special abilities

Post all of the charts in the classroom.

The cover of the book shows an upside-down bat. Have each team choose one of the animals in their group and come up with reasons why that animal should have been on the cover instead. Each team will present their reasons to the class.

Individual Activities

- Have students choose an animal from the book, research more about that animal, and write a report that extends beyond the information in the appendix. Have them present that report to the class.
- Have students write a short story or draw a comic strip featuring an animal from the book in an upside-down adventure.
- Have students choose two or more animals from the book and compare them to each other. Do they eat the same things? Do they protect themselves in the same way? How are they alike and different?

English Language Arts Standards (1–2) with which this guide aligns:

Reading:

RI.1.1, RI.1.2, RI.1.3, RI.1.4, RI.1.5, RI.1.6, RI.1.7, RI.2.1, RI.2.4, RI.2.5, RI.2.6, RI.2.7

Writing:

W.1.2, W.1.3, W.2.2, W.2.3

Speaking and Listening:

SL.1.1, SL.1.2, SL.1.5, SL.1.6, SL.2.1, SL.2.2, SL.2.6

Language:

L.1.1, L.1.2, L.1.3, L.2.1, L.2.2, L.2.3

EGG

by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page



Egg:
Nature's Perfect Package
By Steve Jenkins & Robin Page

The activities for this book are aligned with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts for grades 2–3, but standards for other grades may also apply and the book can be used effectively with grades K–3.

In *Egg: Nature's Perfect Package*, the authors take a look at the curious world of animal eggs, introducing students to the variety of colors, shapes, and sizes of eggs and exploring the many ways animals lay and protect their eggs. An appendix provides more detailed information about each animal described.

Objective:

Students will read the book independently, extend vocabulary, participate in a class discussion and art projects, and complete individual research and writing projects.

Pre-Reading

- Explain that there may be unfamiliar words in the book and ask students to keep a vocabulary list as they read, recording the word and its definition. If they can't identify a definition from context, then have them use a dictionary to determine meaning.
- Ask students to keep a list of any animals that are new to them.

Post-Reading Class Discussion:

- Ask students to share their vocabulary lists and definitions.
- Do students understand the word *predator* and the relationship between predator and prey? Can they remember and explain why eggs are important to predatory animals' diets? Has everyone in the class eaten an egg? Does that mean students are predators?
- Can students name some places where animals lay their eggs? Which place do they think is the strangest? The safest? The most dangerous?
- Have any students seen eggs in their yard? In other places, like the park, zoo, or beach? What kind of eggs were they?
- Which animals lay many eggs? Which animals lay just one? Which has the largest egg? The smallest?
- Ask students to compare their lists of unfamiliar animals. Were there any animals new to ALL students?

Classroom Activities

- Bring in a hard-boiled egg for every student and provide them with art materials. Ask them to design a "suitcase" that will protect their egg and then share their creation with the class.
- Have students to choose an animal and design an informational poster about the animal and its eggs.

Independent Research & Writing

- Have students choose one of the other egg books from the "Additional Reading" section at the back of the book, and compare/contrast that book with this one. Which book do they like better? Why? What about the writing or illustra-

egg

by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page

tion makes it a better book, in their opinion?

- Ask students to choose two animals with very different egg behaviors and write a report comparing them, using the book's content and appendix along with additional outside research. Have them present this report to the class.
- The book presents examples of both female and male animals "parenting" their eggs. Have students research and report on other animal types where both "moms" and "dads" share birth, protection and child-raising duties.

English Language Arts Standards (2–3) with which this guide aligns:**Reading:**

RI.2.1, RI.2.4, RI.2.5, RI.2.6, RI.2.8, RI.2.9, RI.3.1, RI.3.2, RI.3.4, RI.3.7, RI.3.9, RF.2.4, RF.3.4

Writing:

W.1.2, W.1.3, W.2.2, W.2.3

Speaking and Listening:

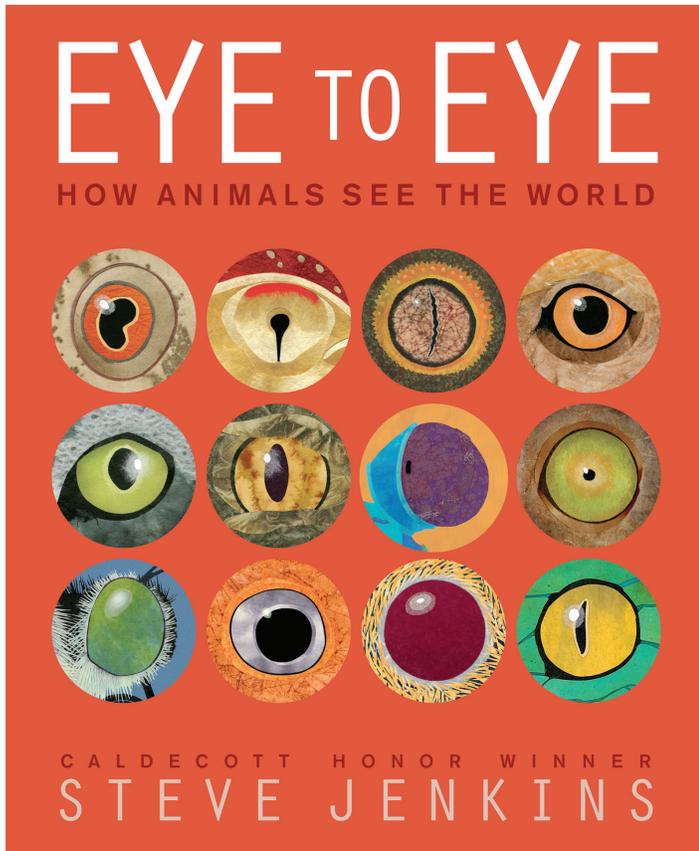
SL.2.1, SL.2.2, SL.2.3, SL.2.6, SL.3.1, SL.3.3, SL.3.4, SL.3.6

Language:

L.2.1, L.2.2, L.2.3, L.2.4, L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.3, L.3.4

EYE TO EYE

by Steve Jenkins



Eye to Eye:
How Animals See the World
By Steve Jenkins

The activities for this book are aligned with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts for grades 2–3, but standards for other grades may also apply and the book can be used effectively with grades K–3.

Eye to Eye: How Animals See the World gives readers a close-up view of animal vision. From bullfrogs to buzzards, animals use their eyes in surprising ways. An appendix, charts, and a glossary provide more details about the animals and their type of vision, diet, and habitat.

Objective:

Students will read the book independently, extend vocabulary, participate in a class discussion and team activities, and complete individual research and writing projects.

Pre-Reading

- Explain that there may be unfamiliar words in the book and ask students to keep a vocabulary list as they read, recording the word and its definition. If they can't identify a definition from context, then have them use a dictionary to determine meaning.

Post-Reading Class Discussion

- Ask students to share their vocabulary lists and definitions.
- Ask students what they think is the strangest location for an animal's eye. Which animals have more than two eyes? Who has the most eyes? Who has the largest eye and how big is it?
- Do students think that vision is an animal's most important sense? A human's? If not, what do they think is the most important sense?
- Share one or both of Steve Jenkins's Internet videos about how his books are made and then lead a discussion about his research and creative process:
stevejenkinsbooks.com/making_books_video.html
www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhJ1wtHSPc4

Team Activities

- Divide the class into small groups and ask each group to create a book of photos and/or drawings depicting your community from the perspective of one or more animals. For example, what does a bird see as it flies overhead? What does a dog see as it crosses a street?
- Provide each group with a world map and have them use the "animal facts" section of the book and other sources to locate each animal's home. Have them creatively identify the animals on the map using drawings or photos and then post the maps.

Independent Research & Writing

- Have students choose an animal from the book and write a short story looking through that animal's eyes.
- Ask students to identify an animal whose vision is NOT their most important sense, write a report about it, and present their report to the class.

EYE TO EYE

by Steve Jenkins

- Have students choose one of the eye types mentioned in the book and write a report about it using this book, other books, and the Internet. The report should include an explanation of the eye type and how it works, in addition to examples of animals with that eye type and photos or diagrams as needed.
- Ask students to identify an animal whose vision is NOT their most important sense, write a report about it, and present their report to the class.
- Ask students to choose two animals from the book with different types of eyes and to write a report comparing them.
- Many of the eyes in the book are very different from the human eye. Ask students to write about what they could do if they could see like of the animals does. For example, "If I had eyes on both sides of my head, I could . . ."

English Language Arts Standards (2–3) with which this guide aligns:

Reading:

RI.2.1, RI.2.4, RI.2.5, RI.2.6, RI.3.1, RI.3.2, RI.3.4, RI.3.5, RI.3.7, RF.2.4, RF.3.4

Writing:

W.2.1, W.2.2, W.2.3, W.2.5, W.2.6, W.2.7, W.2.8, W.3.1, W.3.2, W.3.3, W.3.4, W.3.7, W.3.5, W3.6, W.3.7, W.3.8

Speaking and Listening:

SL.2.1, SL.2.2, SL.2.3, SL.2.6, SL.3.1, SL.3.2, SL.3.3, SL.3.4, SL.3.6

Language:

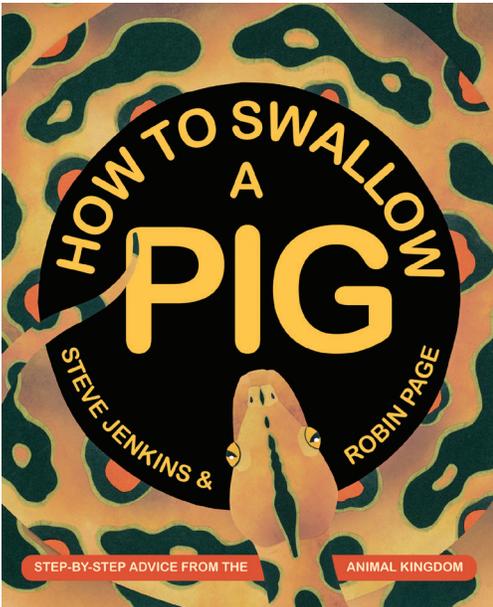
L.2.1, L.2.2, L.2.3, L.2.4, L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.3, L.3.4

Visit the [Common Core State Standards website](http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards) to read about the individual standards.
www.corestandards.org/the-standards

HOW TO SWALLOW A PIG:

STEP-BY-STEP ADVICE FROM THE ANIMAL KINGDOM

BY STEVE JENKINS & ROBIN PAGE



The activities for this book are aligned with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts for grades 2–3, but standards for other grades may also apply and the book can be used effectively with grades 1–4.

How to Swallow a Pig reveals the skills animals use to survive in the wild in an imaginative and humorous how-to format. With step-by-step instructions, readers learn about specific behaviors; how to catch thousands of fish like a humpback whale or how to sew up a nest like a tailorbird. An appendix provides more detailed information about each animal described.

Objective:

Students will read the book independently, extend vocabulary, participate in a class discussion and complete individual and team activities exploring the book.

Pre-Reading:

Explain that there may be unfamiliar words in the book and ask students to keep a vocabulary list as they read, recording the word and its definition. If they can't identify a definition from context, then have them use a dictionary to determine meaning.

Post-Reading Class Discussion Questions:

- Which animal traits do students most admire and wish they could claim? Would they like to have a shovelhead like the ant lion larva, or the leaf-cutter ant's scissor-like jaw? Which traits would they NOT like to have? Why?
- In the appendix, readers discover that the spider in the book is a barn spider, like Charlotte in the book *Charlotte's Web*. Can students name other animals who are the "stars" of fiction stories? Can they suggest one of the featured animals in this book who would make a good character in a fiction book? Why?
- Ask students to identify and name some of the positive traits the animals have. Examples: sharing (monkeys), creativity (tailorbird), collaboration (whales). Then ask for examples of bad traits portrayed. Discuss how humans exhibit some of these traits, both positive and negative.
- Some of the activities in the book may be disgusting to some students and fascinating to others. Lead a discussion about this—why is it that disgusting things are compelling? Why are people fascinated with scary, creepy, or gross things?
- Do students think that having instructions using both words and pictures made the steps easier to understand? More enjoyable? Did they learn things from the pictures that they didn't "get" from the words? Can they give examples?

Team Activities:

Vocabulary Garlands

Divide the class into four teams and provide each with some white card stock cut into large triangles. Using their vocabulary lists, have each team add their words to the triangles, decorate them, and then share them (definitions too!) with the rest of the class. String each team's words together and hang these festive word chains around the classroom.

Step by Step

Divide the class into 4 teams and ask each team to brainstorm some other animals and activities that could have been included in the book. Have

HOW TO SWALLOW A PIG:

STEP-BY-STEP ADVICE FROM THE ANIMAL KINGDOM

BY STEVE JENKINS & ROBIN PAGE

them each choose two of these and design step-by-step instructions following the format in the book. Then have each team present theirs to the class. Have the class vote on their three favorites!

Individual Activities:

Have students complete one or more of these creative writing and art activities:

- Design a simple “infographic” using the animals in the book. They can draw a simple three-section piechart, and then draw small pictures of the animals, placing them in their appropriate section: land, sea, or air.
- Choose their favorite animal from the book, complete further research on it, and write a report to share with the class.
- Imagine and write about a fictional encounter with a python and a pig.
- Build and decorate a nest like the satin bowerbird.
- Design a new cover for the book, featuring a different animal chosen from those in the book.
- Choose two or more of the animals in the book and describe how they are like, or unlike, each other. What do they have in common? How are they different?
- Compose and design a menu for a restaurant that would serve many of the animals in the book.

English Language Arts Standards (2-3)

this guide aligns with:

Reading: RI.2.1, RI.2.2, RI.2.3, RI.2.4, RI.2.5, RI.2.6, RI.2.7, RI.3.1, RI.3.2, RI.3.4, RI.3.7, RF.2.3, RF.2.4, RF.3.3, RF.3.4

Writing: W.2.2, W.2.3, W.2.5, W.2.8, W.3.2, W.3.3, W.3.4, W.3.7, W.3.8

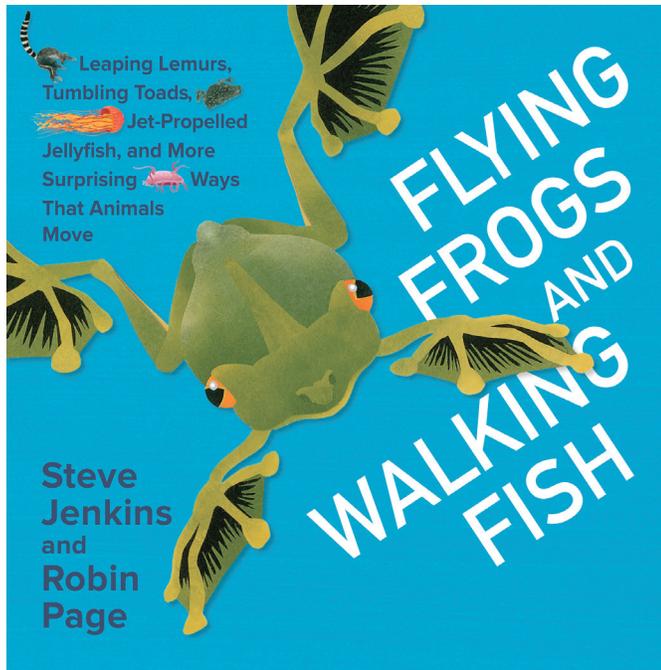
Speaking and Listening: SL.2.1, SL.2.2, SL.2.3, SL.3.1, SL.3.2, SL.3.3, SL.3.4, SL.3.6

Language: L.2.1, L.2.2, L.2.3, L.2.4, L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.3, L.3.4

<http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards> — visit the Common Core State Standards website to read about the individual standards.

FLYING FROGS AND WALKING FISH

by Steve Jenkins



Flying Frogs and Walking Fish:
Leaping Lemurs, Tumbling Toads, Jet-Propelled Jellyfish, and More Surprising Ways That Animals Move
 By Steve Jenkins & Robin Page

The activities for this book are aligned with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts for grades 1–2, but standards for other grades may also apply, and the book can be used effectively with grades PreK–3.

In this eye-catching escape into the animal kingdom, Jenkins and Page show how animals roll, fly, walk, leap, climb, swim, and even flip, melding science, art, biology, and the environment together in a detailed and well-researched book about how animals move. An appendix provides additional information about each animal described.

Objective:

Students will read the book independently, extend vocabulary, participate in a class discussion, and complete individual activities exploring the book.

Pre-Reading

- Explain that this book uses many action words. Ask students to keep a list of these words as they read and to consult a dictionary for any words they aren't familiar with.

Post-Reading Class Discussion

- Ask students if they were able to visualize the various animals' movements as they read the book and looked at the pictures. How does the artist use color, line, and shape to depict movement on the page? Does the movement shown in the pictures enhance the description as portrayed in words?
- Which animal movement(s) surprised students the most? Have any students witnessed these movements while on a zoo trip or while watching television?
- Do students think that watching animals move is more interesting than watching them sit still? By observing still animals, how can you anticipate their movements? Choose an animal from the book and ask students to list observations of that animal while it is still, and then while it is moving.
- Which animals would students like to have on their swim team? On their track team? On their gymnastics team? Do students have a favorite movement category? Do they like the runners best, or the fliers? Why?
- What are some of the reasons that animals walk, run, fly, or swim? Can students think of other reasons not mentioned here?
- What are the similarities and differences between the reasons why animals and humans move? What kinds of movements are humans able to do that animals are not?
- Which students have pets? How do these pets get around?
- Can students name some of the different habitats mentioned in the book? Have they visited any of these?
- Ask if students have read other books about animal characteristics. How does this book compare with those? Do they think this is an interesting way of examining animals? Why or why not?

FLYING FROGS AND WALKING FISH

by Steve Jenkins

- Using their lists of action words as a reference, can students suggest other action words that the authors did not use? Can they suggest words that are the opposites of some of the action words?

Individual Activities

Have students complete one or more of these creative writing, research, and art activities:

- Using the list of action words compiled while reading, ask students to use each of these words in a sentence (not necessarily about animals).
- Write a short story based on “The Tortoise and the Hare” using two of the animals in the book.
- Choreograph a dance using several of the animals in the book and their way of moving. Perform the dance with classmates.
- The animals in the book are arranged by movement category, as shown in the book’s glossary. Using the glossary as a guide, have students reorder the same animals using another selector, such as habitat or class.
- Choose two animals from the same movement category and research more about them. Then write an essay comparing and contrasting the two animals. What do they have in common? How are they different?
- Choose one movement category OR habitat, and choose 5 animals from the book that belong to it. Complete further research on the 5 animals and create a chart that highlights at least 5 facts about each one.
- Choose an animal and draw a series of sketches of that animal in slow motion. Do these sketches reveal any further clues about how the animal moves?

English Language Arts Standards (2–3) with which this guide aligns:

Reading:

RI.1.1, RI.1.2, RI.1.3, RI.1.4, RI.1.5, RI.1.6, RI.1.7, RI.2.1, RI.2.4, RI.2.6, RI.2.7, RF.1.4, RF.2.4

Writing:

W.1.2, W.1.3, W.2.2, W.2.3

Speaking and Listening:

SL.1.1, SL.1.2, SL.1.4, SL.2.1, SL.2.2

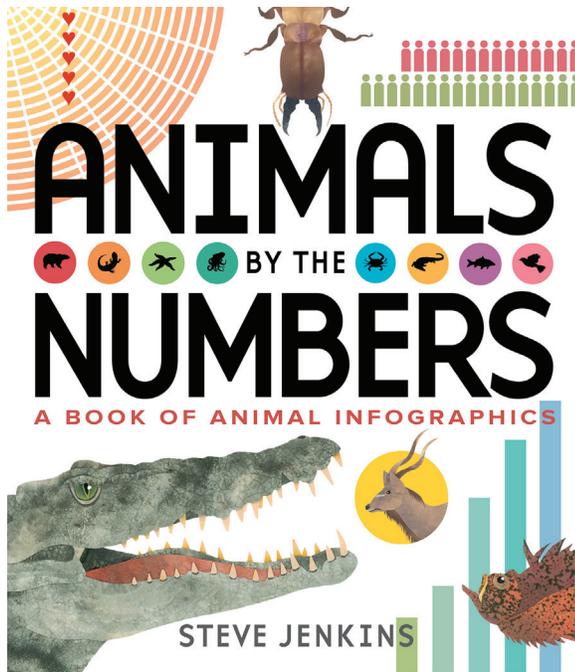
Language:

L.1.1, L.1.2, L.1.4, L.2.1, L.2.2, L.2.3, L.2.4, L.2.5

Visit the Common Core State Standards website to read about the individual standards.
www.corestandards.org/the-standards

ANIMALS BY THE NUMBERS

by Steve Jenkins



Animals by the Numbers: A Book of Animal Infographics
by Steve Jenkins

The activities for this book are aligned with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts for grades 2–3, but standards for other grades may also apply and the book can be used effectively with grades 1–4.

In *Animals by the Numbers*, Steve Jenkins presents mind-boggling animal facts, figures, and comparisons with colorful, easy-to-understand infographics and illustrations. These infographics give a unique and interesting way of looking at animals and understanding some of the amazing things that they can do.

Objective:

Students will read the book independently, extend vocabulary, participate in a class discussion, and complete individual activities to explore and interpret the book.

Pre-Reading

Give students the following list of words and have them consult a dictionary to find and record their meanings:

Species
Infographic
Biomass
Scale
Decibel
Toxic
Venomous
Extinct
Migration

Post-Reading Class Discussion

- Ask students to provide answers to the following questions:
 - Do all the insects in the world weigh more than all the humans?
 - Which animal can survive both boiling water and the vacuum of space?
 - Which animal sleeps more, a python or a bat?
 - Which animal is more dangerous: a shark or a hippopotamus?
 - Which animal has the longest life span? The shortest?
 - Which animal is the fastest?
 - Which animal migrates the farthest distance?
 - Which animal can jump the furthest?
- If students were easily able to answer these questions, do they think it was due to the format of the book? Do they think Jenkin's illustrative approach to presenting facts was interesting and informative? Did they learn a lot of new facts? How does this approach compare to other nonfiction books they've read? Would they rather learn about animals from a nonfiction book, or from a fictionalized story?
- Were students familiar with some of the styles of charts and graphs used in the book? Which ones? Ask them to give examples of other ways they have seen these types of graphics used.
- Share some infographics from newspapers, magazines, and the Internet. Aside from providing information, can students name some other objectives that companies might have in using them? Poll the class to find out who would rather read an infographic than "regular" text.

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Individual Activities

Have students complete one or more of these creative writing, research, and art activities:

- Create a graphic in the style of the one on page 6–7 that depicts animals with or without backbones. The new graphic will use the criteria:
 - Animals that fly
 - Animals that walk
 - Animals that swim
- Using the information on pages 12–15 about biomass, research and estimate the biomass of ten animals not presented in the book. Then create an infographic that shows the results as Jenkins did.
- Create an infographic similar to “Decisions, decisions” on page 30 that interprets one of the following:
 - “I’ve been spotted by a human!”
 - “I’ve lost my mother!”
 - “I’m hungry!”
- One of the most interesting questions the book answers is “Which animals cause the most human deaths?” Dream up your own interesting animal question, research the answer, and depict it using an infographic. Create a poster to display in the classroom.
- Choose twelve animals and research their eating habits. Then create a bar graph like the one on page 16 that portrays how much the animals eat and whether they are carnivorous or not.
- Create an infographic similar to “Little & big” on page 10 that illustrates colorful animals vs. black/brown ones.
- Choose two or three animals from the book and write a fictional adventure story with them as the main characters, using one of their special traits that you learned about from this book.
- Choose an animal that is not mentioned in the book. Research and write a report on the animal, using books and online sources. Pay special attention to the animal’s statistics. Give an oral report to the class on what you’ve learned, using charts, photos, and videos to enhance your presentation.

- Read the author’s bio and chart on the back flyleaf of the book. Create a pie chart of how your time is spent during the span of one week.

English Language Arts Standards (2–3) with which this guide aligns:

Reading:

RI.2.1, RI.2.4, RI.2.5, RI.2.9, RI.3.1, RI.3.2, RI.3.4, RI.3.5, RI.3.7, RF.2.4, RF.3.4

Writing:

W.2.2, W.2.5, W.2.8, W.3.2, W.3.3, W.3.4, W.3.7, W.3.8

Speaking and Listening:

SL.2.1, SL.2.2, SL.3.1, SL.3.4

Language:

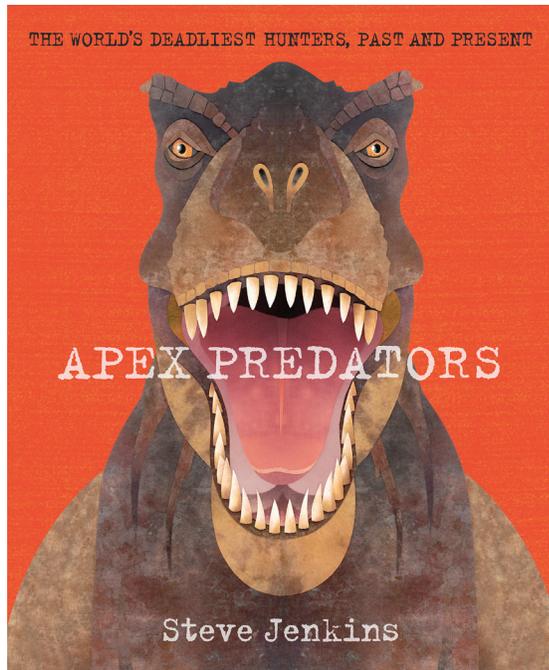
L.2.1, L.2.2, L.2.4, L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.3, L.3.4

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This guide was written by Bobbie Combs.

APEX PREDATORS

by Steve Jenkins



Apex Predators: The World's Deadliest Hunters Past and Present

by Steve Jenkins

The activities for this book are aligned with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts for grades 2–3, but standards for other grades may also apply and the book can be used effectively with grades 1–4.

In this book, the award-winning author and illustrator Steve Jenkins introduces readers to apex predators—the animals that are at the top of their food chains and have no natural enemies. Using his signature art style, Jenkins illustrates how these animals dominate their different ecosystems using speed, strength, and even cooperation and cunning. Take a trip through history and discover apex predators both past and present, from the earliest sea creatures to the modern African lion and giant freshwater ray, which can grow to over fifteen feet.

Objective:

Students will read the book independently, extend vocabulary, participate in a class discussion, and complete individual activities to explore and interpret the book.

Pre-Reading

- Show the cover of the book to the class and ask if anyone knows what the title phrase “apex predators” means. Discuss and define the words “prey” and “predator” and ask students to share examples of some predator and prey animals and the relationship between them.
- Do students think the cover art is scary? Does it make them want to open and read the book?
- Does the title phrase “deadliest hunters” make them more or less interested in reading the book? Why do they think some people are fascinated with scary things? With animal behavior?

Post-Reading Class Discussion

- Can students name some of the ways that prey animals protect themselves? What are some common predator “weapons”?
- Which do students think is the scariest apex predator, past or present?
- What is the best “tactical advantage” for an apex predator: size, speed, teeth, manner of attack?
- Ask students to name some of the apex predators that fly, that swim, that run. Which are the largest apex predators? Who had the most varied “diet” of prey animals?
- Ask the class, choosing from the predators of the past, to vote for which animal they would like to see be cloned and brought back to life. Can they support their choice with some reasons why this would be a good or bad thing?
- Who does the author call “the deadliest predator” of all? Do students agree? What are the very unique “weapons” of mankind? Ask students to share their thoughts about how humans have killed off many of these apex predators.

APEX PREDATORS

by Steve Jenkins

Individual Activities

Have students complete one or more of these creative writing, research, and art activities:

- Invent a new apex predator! Following the model of the pages in the book, give your animal a scientific name and a descriptive name. Write a descriptive paragraph about it, draw a picture, and include a size diagram comparing it to a human.
- Choose one of the prey animals mentioned in the book. Research and write a report about this animal using a "Top 10 Facts" format.
- Using the small diagrams on every page as a guide, list the apex predators in the book by size in descending order (from big to small) and create a poster to display.
- This book describes only one facet of the animals it depicts. Choose several of the animals and write a more extensive report about them. You could include information about the time period they were alive, the ecosystem they lived in, how they raise their young, and more.
- Write the opening scene for a horror movie "starring" one of the apex predators in the book.
- Create a timeline of the apex predators featured in the book.
- Choose three of the animals from the book and design a warning sign that might be posted outside their habitat.
- Make your own "Apex Predator Face-Off," choosing two predators from the book. Describe the fight, and write about which would be the winner, and why.

English Language Arts Standards (2–3) with which this guide aligns:

Reading:

RI.2.1, RI.2.6, RI.2.7, RI.3.1, RI.3.6, RI.3.7

Writing:

W.2.2, W.2.5, W.3.2, W.3.3, W.3.4, W.3.5, W.3.7

Speaking and Listening:

SL.2.1, SL.2.2, SL.2.3, SL.3.1, SL.3.2, SL.3.3, SL.3.4

Language:

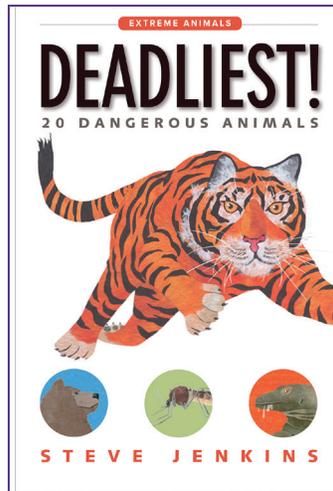
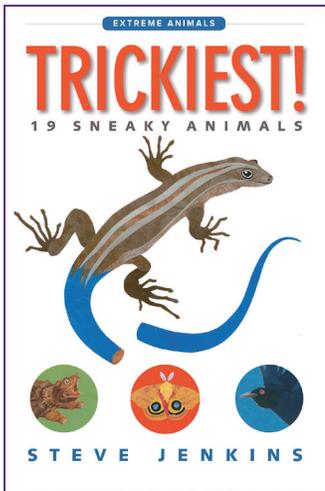
L.2.1, L.2.2, L.2.3, L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.3

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This guide was written by Bobbie Combs.

TRICKIEST! AND DEADLIEST!

by Steve Jenkins



Trickiest!: 19 Sneaky Animals

Deadliest!: 20 Dangerous Animals

by Steve Jenkins

The activities for this book are aligned with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts for grades 2–3, but standards for other grades may also apply and the book can be used effectively with grades 1–4.

The Extreme Animals early reader series, by award-winning author/illustrator Steve Jenkins, explores nature's truly superlative animals with the help of illustrations, infographics, facts, and figures, while detailing the astounding abilities of critters as small as a frog or as big as a whale. Each installment focuses on truly amazing and unusual animals, making these nonfiction readers accessible, informative, and fascinating.

Trickiest! introduces readers to some of the slyest animals on the planet, and *Deadliest!* focuses on the most lethal members of the animal kingdom.

Objective:

Students will read both books independently, extend vocabulary, participate in a class discussion, and complete individual writing, research, and creative activities to explore and interpret the books.

Pre-Reading

- Show the covers of both books to the class and create lists of all the “tricky” and “deadly” animals that the class can come up with. Put the lists aside until after students finish reading the books.
- Which book are students more interested in reading? Would they rather read about tricky animals or deadly ones? Can they give some reasons for their choice?
- Ask if anyone in the class has read any of Steve Jenkins' previous books. Which ones? Did they like them? Why?
- Explain that there may be unfamiliar words in the books. As students come across these words, have them consult the glossaries in the back of the books. If the unfamiliar word is not in the glossaries, have students look up the definition in the dictionary and keep a list of all their “new” words and definitions.

Post-Reading Class Discussion

- Were any of the animals shown in the books on your “tricky” and “deadly” class lists? If the class lists have animals not in the books, ask students to talk about why those should have been included.
- Ask students to name three animals from each book that they had never heard of, and to share some of the pertinent characteristics of those animals.
- Does everyone in the class know the meaning of the word “extreme”? Do they think the animals in these two books fit the bill? On the back covers, it says that the next two books will be *Stinkiest!* and *Speediest!*. Can students give some suggestions for future titles in the series?
- What are some of the reasons that animals use tricks? Can students name some of the tricks animals use to survive? To catch food? What was the most interesting trick? Could humans use any of these animal tricks (disguise, imitation)?
- Can students name which animals are the most deadly? Ask them to name some of the reasons these animals are dangerous.

TRICKIEST! AND DEADLIEST!

by Steve Jenkins

- Are there more deadly birds, fish, insects, or mammals? How about tricky animals? Can they name a deadly and tricky animal from each category?
- According to the chart at the back of *Deadliest!* that shows how many human deaths are caused by the animals, which causes the most? Did this surprise students? Can they say why the top three killers are dangerous to humans? Why are the bottom three killers not as much of a threat to humans?
- Can students name some of the things eaten by deadly animals? By tricky animals? Does it seem like there are common foods within classes of animals? How many of the foods are things that humans eat?
- Choose an animal from one of the books and write an essay about what you could do if you had that animal's unique ability. For example, "If I could disguise myself as a flower, I could . . ."
- Choose an animal from one of the books and imagine that you are making a film documentary about it. Write the first draft of your shooting script.

English Language Arts Standards (2–3) with which this guide aligns:

Reading:

RI.2.1, RI.2.4, RI.2.5, RI.2.6, RI.2.7, RI.2.9, RI.3.1, RI.3.7, RI.3.9, RF.2.3, RF.2.4, RF.3.3, RF.3.4

Writing:

W.2.2, W.2.5, W.3.2, W.3.3, W.3.4, W.3.5, W.3.7

Speaking and Listening:

SL.2.1, SL.2.2, SL.3.1, SL.3.2, SL.3.4

Language:

L.2.1, L.2.2, L.2.3, L.2.4, L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.3, L.3.4

Individual Activities

Have students complete one or more of these creative writing, research, and art activities:

- Choose one of the books and use the glossary to write a complete sentence using each word correctly, or draw a sketch that exhibits the meaning of each word.
- Read one of the books from the bibliography of *Trickiest!* or *Deadliest!* and write an essay comparing that book with the one by Steve Jenkins. Describe the way they present information, how well the illustrations enhance the information, and how interesting the information is.
- Choose one of the books and use the small maps on each page to create a large world map that shows where each tricky (or deadly) animal lives. For bonus points, include the animals from both books. Identify the animals on the map with drawings, photos, or other unique identifiers.
- Choose one animal from each book and write a report comparing them, using these books, along with additional research.
- Tricksters are very popular in folktales. Choose an animal from *Trickiest!* and write an original folktale. It can be an "origin" tale explaining how something came to be, or a "lesson" tale where the trickster is outsmarted by another animal.

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This guide was written by [Bobbie Combs](#).