



Questioning

Level 4

A Collection of Readings

**Reading
Wings** 4th
Edition

The **Savvy
Reader**

This project was developed at the Success for All Foundation under the direction of Robert E. Slavin and Nancy A. Madden to utilize the power of cooperative learning, frequent assessment and feedback, and schoolwide collaboration proven in decades of research to increase student learning.

The Savvy Reader—Questioning, A Collection of Readings

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Sir Robert's Treasure



Elisabeth Bennet



Map of Garren



Castle

Village



Cremaine

Estate



Chapter One

Sir Robert Tremaine of the kingdom of Garren walked briskly into his stables.

"Ah, young Jackson," said Sir Robert to his stableboy.

"Is my horse, Lightning, ready?"

"Ready and waiting for a hard, two-week trip, sir.

Just as you asked, sir," Jackson answered.

"Very well," said Sir Robert. "Young Jackson, may I confide in you?"

"Of course, sir!"

"I am on a quest for a most precious treasure. I expect my journey to be very dangerous. I've not told this to my wife and children. I don't want to worry them. They think I am going to visit my brother. But someone should know the truth in case I fail."

At first, Jackson was troubled by this news. There were so many questions he wanted to ask: Where are you going? Why? What treasure do you seek? How can I help you? He knew Sir Robert would not answer these questions now, but perhaps he would when he came back. In the meantime, Jackson couldn't help feeling somewhat proud and just a little smug. Sir Robert had shared a secret with him!

Jackson loved Sir Robert as a father. He wanted to do well in Sir Robert's eyes and make him proud. Orphaned when he was four, Jackson had spent the last ten years living in Sir Robert's stables. He spent his mornings caring for the horses. In the afternoons, he read books, worked math problems, and practiced sword fighting. Sir Robert wanted Jackson to have an education. He also paid Jackson well to be his stableboy.

Sir Robert's two-week journey stretched into four. Journeys often took longer than expected, so no one in the family really worried. Keeping in mind what Sir Robert had told him, however, made Jackson begin to feel uneasy the longer Sir Robert was away.

Five weeks and three days after Sir Robert left, Charlotte walked purposefully into the stables. She was Sir Robert's youngest daughter, about Jackson's age, and Jackson did not particularly like her. She always thought she knew more about everything than anyone else. Today she carried several bulging saddlebags and a heavy cloak wrapped around some odd-shaped things. Looking around, she spied Jackson.

"Jackson!" she exclaimed. "I need my horse. Can you please saddle her up for me? Someone around here has got to do something."

Does she mean what I think she does? Jackson wondered. "Do something?" he repeated.

"Jackson, I know you can't be a total idiot. Father must have gotten into some trouble. I intend to find him and bring him home."



This did not sound like a good idea to Jackson.
“What about your brothers?” he asked her.

“I know where my brothers are. I don't need to find them,” Charlotte snapped.

Jackson sighed. “I mean, it seems to me that they should be the ones to go after him.”

Charlotte rolled her eyes. She liked Jackson as little as he liked her. “My brothers have no sense. Look, it's not your job to stop me from doing what I need to do. Either you saddle up my horse, or I will.”

Jackson knew when he was beaten. He saddled up her horse, Elvira, and watched the two gallop away. Then he quickly threw a saddle on his horse, Pepper, and went after her. Soon he caught up with her. “Hey, miss,” he said. “Do you even know where you're going?”

If Charlotte was surprised that he had followed her, she didn't show it. “Where do you think?” she asked.

Jackson rolled his eyes and shook his head. “You want to ride unarmed into the Doomed Forest? Are you crazy?”

Charlotte gave Jackson a smug little smile. “Who said anything about being unarmed? I've got a bow, arrows, and a sword wrapped up in my cloak. We'll be fine.”

Jackson had to admire her courage. Still, she hadn't thought of everything, and he was determined to let her know it. "You know, if we ride into the Doomed Forest with the weapons wrapped in your cloak, they won't do us any good." Charlotte was angry, but mostly because she knew Jackson was right.

Ten minutes later, with Jackson wearing the sword and Charlotte carrying the bow and quiver of arrows, the pair entered the Doomed Forest.

The trees there were large and dense, allowing little sunlight to filter through. The forest had a stale, musty smell, and it was full of strange rustling and slithering sounds, deadly plants, wild beasts, and dangerous thieves in hiding. It was home to dark and dangerous things.

As they rode deeper and deeper into the forest, the light grew dimmer, and it became harder to look for Sir Robert. Suddenly Elvira whinnied in fear and began to buck and rear. Charlotte tried to control the frightened horse, but she slipped off Elvira's back, and the horse galloped away. Jackson looked around and heard a piercing scream as he saw a giant black panther drop from a tree, just missing Charlotte. She tried to run, but she tripped over her long skirts. The panther crouched, ready to spring.

Jackson jumped off his horse and drew his sword. He was terrified, but he knew he had to try to save Charlotte. He ran to the panther and hit it over the head with the flat of his sword. Jackson and the panther lunged at each other, each just managing to fend off the other.

Jackson heard a whistle in his ear and felt something graze by. Too busy to worry about it, he kept fighting. Without warning, the panther gave a great scream and fell, shaking, to the ground. Then it lay still with an arrow in its side. Jackson looked up. Charlotte stood tall and pale, her eyes large and round, her bow at the ready. Jackson realized what had happened. Relief spilled over into shaky laughter.

"You know," he said, wearily dropping to the ground, "you almost hit me."

Charlotte plopped down next to him. "Yeah," she said. "Sorry about that. I never said I was a good shot."

"Good thing or you'd have been lying." He looked over at the dead panther.

"Hey, let's get away from here."

Charlotte smiled. "At last we agree on something."

As they walked away from the panther, Jackson put his sword back in its sheath and led Pepper by the bridle. Before they got very far, Elvira came trotting back.

Charlotte stroked Elvira's nose and spoke softly to her. Then, patting one of the bulging saddlebags, she turned to Jackson and said, "Hungry?"

Jackson grinned. "I thought you'd never ask!"

Chapter Two

After they cared for their horses, Jackson cleared away loose sticks and dead leaves and built a small campfire. Charlotte took bread and cold meat from one of her saddlebags and handed some to Jackson as the two sat down by the fire.

"Thanks," he said to her. "Actually, I really wanted to thank you for saving my life. You were incredible back there."

Charlotte smiled shyly and looked at the ground. "Thank you," she said. "You were pretty good with the sword too, you know." She looked up at Jackson. "I guess those lessons Father gives you paid off."

Now it was Jackson's turn to smile shyly. He and Charlotte talked well into the night. Jackson thought about telling her about Sir Robert's quest for his treasure, but he decided against it.

They set out early the next day. When they came to a particularly dense part of the forest, they had to work their way through the trees, vines, and brush. Suddenly, Charlotte gave a startled gasp.

She had brushed up against some Deadly Ivy, one of the most dangerous plants of the Doomed Forest. Deadly Ivy looks like ordinary ivy growing on ordinary trees. But when a person touches Deadly Ivy, the plant snakes itself around its victim, pulling tighter and tighter. It kills within seconds.

"Jackson, quick, cut it off!" Charlotte screamed. "I have a dagger in one of the saddlebags. Quick!"

Jackson ran to the saddlebags and frantically searched through them. Grabbing a small leather pouch, he turned to Charlotte. She started to protest when she saw he didn't have the knife, but the ever-tightening Deadly Ivy silenced her. Jackson opened the pouch and began to pour salt on the Deadly Ivy. Immediately it loosed its grip, and Charlotte fell to the ground.



“Thanks Jackson,” she said gratefully as he helped her up. “How did you know to use salt to stop Deadly Ivy?”

“It was in one of the books I read. I never thought knowing that stuff would be helpful.”

Jackson and Charlotte continued their search. As dusk began to fall, Jackson thought he heard a familiar whinny in the distance. He and Charlotte tied their horses to a tree and checked for all of their weapons. Quickly and silently they crept toward the sound, and, sure enough, there was Lightning, tied to a tree.

Jackson and Charlotte continued on. They came to the edge of a clearing and spied three people around a campfire. Two were dirty, wild-looking men, surely two of the dangerous thieves who lived in the Doomed Forest. The other, who was tied to a tree, was Sir Robert!

Silently, Jackson and Charlotte waited until the three men fell asleep. Then Jackson motioned for Charlotte to give him the dagger. As she did so, she leaned forward and kissed Jackson on the cheek, startling him. "For luck," she whispered. Jackson ran to Sir Robert and, putting his hand over Sir Robert's mouth, gently shook him awake. Jackson quickly cut through the ropes, and then he and Sir Robert ran back to where Charlotte was waiting.

Chapter Three

Charlotte threw her arms around Sir Robert. In a whisper, Jackson told Charlotte to take her father back to their horses. He meant to go get Lightning. For once she didn't argue with him.

Getting Lightning took longer than he had expected, but finally he returned to Charlotte and her father, who had made camp. Charlotte ran over to Jackson and grabbed his arm. "I was getting worried about you," she said. "Come over to the fire. You must be starved."

As the three began to eat, Charlotte asked, "So, Father, why are you here in the Doomed Forest?"

"As I told young Jackson, I'm on a quest to find my precious treasure."

Charlotte turned to Jackson. "You knew about this? Why didn't you tell me?" she demanded.

Jackson was sorry that he had angered her. "It was your father's secret," he said.

Still angry, Charlotte turned back to her father.
"Is your quest over? Can we go home now?"

Sir Robert shook his head. "But it will be soon. I've learned that the leader of the thieves, Fearsome Joe Walsh, keeps my treasure in a leather pouch in a chest he keeps with him at all times. I've also learned where Fearsome Joe Walsh and his thieves live in the Doomed Forest." He looked at Jackson. "Tomorrow young Jackson and I will go to their camp, take my treasure, and return home. You, young lady, will go home as soon as morning comes."

Sir Robert raised his hand as Charlotte opened her mouth to argue. "No," he said before she could say a word. "A den of dangerous thieves is no place for a girl."



“Please, sir,” Jackson heard himself say. “It may not be my place to say this, but I think Charlotte should come. She’s the reason why we’re here. It was her idea to come after you. She thought to bring food, weapons, and warm clothes. She saved my life from a panther attack. She’s the bravest person I know.”

Sir Robert looked at his daughter for a long moment. “Very well,” he said at last. “You may come with us. But no fighting for you. Young Jackson and I will surprise the thieves with an early attack. While we fight them, Charlotte, you will sneak into the camp and take back my treasure. Give us a signal when you have it and we’ll follow. Now, let’s get some sleep.”

Jackson had trouble falling asleep. He was glad that Charlotte was coming with them, but he worried about her. She had no sword. What if one of the thieves attacked her? She can take care of herself, Jackson reminded himself. But what if she got hurt? What if she couldn't find the treasure? Finally, as the questions swirled in his head, Jackson drifted off to sleep.

Early the next morning, Jackson and Sir Robert ran into Fearsome Joe's camp, startling the sleepy thieves as they ate breakfast. Jackson raised his sword and began fighting three thieves at once, while Sir Robert began dueling with Fearsome Joe himself.

In the confusion, Charlotte sneaked in and hunted for the treasure chest.

Jackson, finished with his first three thieves, began fighting two more. Out of the corner of his eye, he saw a thief run up to Sir Robert and Fearsome Joe, who were still battling.

"Behind you!" Jackson shouted. Suddenly, he heard the owl's hoot that was Charlotte's signal. He and Sir Robert nodded at each other. With a last, fierce jab at their opponents, Jackson and Sir Robert fled the camp to their waiting horses.

Chapter Four

After riding for what seemed like hours, the light finally grew brighter and the trees less dense. At last Sir Robert, Charlotte, and Jackson came out into the open sunlight.

"Whoa," said Sir Robert, reining in his horse. Jackson and Charlotte reined in theirs. "Fearsome Joe and his thieves never leave the forest," said Sir Robert. "We're safe now. Let's give the horses a rest."

Charlotte handed the leather pouch to her father.

"What treasure was worth all this trouble?" she asked him.

Sir Robert opened the pouch, and a single silver coin fell out into his hand. "That's it?" Charlotte said in surprise. "You went missing for that? I don't understand."

"This single coin means everything to me," Sir Robert answered. "The only thing that means more is my family."

"But why, Father? Why is this coin so important?"



"My grandfather was not a wealthy man, my dear Charlotte," began Sir Robert. "He was like young Jackson, here, a stableboy. He wanted his sons to be their own masters, instead of working for someone else. He divided the little money he had between his sons. He told them to go into the world and make what they would of it. He gave each of them a single silver coin. My father took his coin and came to Garren. He worked hard and saved his money. In time he became a wealthy man with a manor house of his own, our house. This," he said, holding it up, "was his single silver coin."

"He never spent it?" Charlotte asked. "Why?"

"It's a reminder. This coin reminds us of where our family came from and gives us hope for the future. It is our most precious treasure."

They were silent for several minutes, thinking about the coin. "Please sir," said Jackson. "How did Fearsome Joe Walsh get the coin?"

"When I was a boy, the manor house was robbed. We didn't know then who had robbed us, but I have tried to find out over the years. Some weeks ago, I heard something that made me think Fearsome Joe had the coin."

"What did you hear, Father?"

"I heard that Fearsome Joe kept a silver coin with him at all times, thinking it brought him luck. My father had kept the coin in a special wooden box, so it would not be confused with any other coins. Fearsome Joe must have realized that this one coin was special, so he always kept it with him."

Now, Jackson thought, Sir Robert's quest is over and things will go back as they were before. He glanced over at Charlotte. Well, he thought, maybe not everything. Sir Robert was grateful for Jackson's help in restoring his precious treasure and gave Jackson a large sum of money. Jackson saved the money and worked hard to earn more. In a few years, he had enough money to buy a large stable with many horses. He now had several stableboys working for him and was his own master.

Not long after that, Jackson married Charlotte in a large, happy ceremony. After all the guests had gone home, the couple opened Sir Robert's wedding gift. It was a small wooden box with a single silver coin. Sir Robert's treasure was now theirs.

The End

Camilla and Sienna

Sienna was a young maiden at the castle of Lord and Lady Hammerback. Her days were often filled with duties such as cleaning, sewing, and caring for the royal family. Sienna didn't mind her duties. However, the one person she did not wish to be around was Lady Camilla. Lady Camilla was Sienna's age, but she often strode around the castle with her nose in the air, barking orders at anyone who cared to pay attention.

One day Sienna was minding her own business and completing her chores when Camilla approached her.

"Stop what you're doing and fetch me a drink," she hissed at Sienna. Sienna held her breath and counted to five.

"I'm not a dog and I won't fetch anything for you," she said as calmly as she could and turned back to her work.

"How dare you speak to me that way!" cried Camilla. She stalked off to her chambers. "Father will hear about this!"

Sienna was not worried. She had worked at the castle for some time and knew that Lord Hammerback was a kind man and that even Lady Hammerback did not speak to anyone in such a horrible way. Sure enough as she rounded a corner she could hear Camilla's shrieking voice.

"But Mother! She should not be allowed to speak to me like that!" whined Camilla.

"Oh, Camilla, really. Listen to yourself. Think about the way in which you spoke to Sienna. It doesn't feel good to be treated unkindly, now does it," asked the queen. The queen did not get a response because Camilla ran out of the room sobbing as if a dam had just broken behind her eyes.

Later that evening Sienna encountered Camilla again. This time Sienna was ready for any snide comments Camilla might throw at her. She threw her shoulders back, took a deep breath and walked right up to Camilla.

“Look here, Camilla. You may be a grand lady, and perhaps everyone treats you as such, but I’m a person too. I deserve the same respect and kindness as anyone else—even a lady,” Sienna firmly stated. She braced herself for Camilla’s comeback, but, surprisingly, Camilla’s eyes filled with tears, and she ran away for a second time. A tinge of guilt pricked Sienna’s stomach. She hesitated for a moment and then followed behind Camilla. She stopped at Camilla’s door. She could hear her sobbing. She knocked softly. “May I come in?” Sienna asked. Camilla agreed.

“I’m sorry for that outburst,” Sienna began, but Camilla held up her hand.

“No, please don’t apologize. I was very unkind to you. I’m very unkind to everyone because people treat me like a great lady. Who wants to be friends with a lady?” Camilla started to cry again.

“I do,” whispered Sienna. Camilla’s face broke into a smile as the two girls embraced.

Camilla and Sienna's Adventure

Camilla was a lady, a member of the nobility, the daughter of Lord and Lady Hammerback. Her unlikely best friend was Sienna, a maiden for the noble family. A while back the two girls had become friends after a misunderstanding. The incident seemed like a million years ago because the girls were now the best of friends.

"Let's find some adventure," Camilla mischievously smiled.

"There's plenty of adventure right here in the castle," laughed Sienna. "We can have an adventure doing laundry, sewing clothing, or washing windows!" Sienna playfully suggested. So after Camilla helped Sienna finish the chores, the two girls headed into the forest. They picked flowers and sang songs, but after a while Camilla was bored.

"I wish we could find a real adventure," Camilla sighed. Just then the two girls heard the whinny of a distant horse. Caught up in their desire for adventure, the girls hid behind a tree as a group of knights approached.

"We need to gather information before attacking," warned the first knight. "I have a plan to get us closer to the grounds before anyone even suspects we're coming."

Camilla's eyes grew as round as saucers. Sienna started to shiver although it was a balmy summer day. Camilla motioned for Sienna to stay quiet.

"We'll gather here after the sun goes down," continued the knight. "From here, we'll cross the bridge and hide under the cover of night." The knights all nodded in agreement and galloped out of the forest.

"What should we do?" whispered Sienna.

Thinking quickly, Camilla said, "First we need to mark this spot." Camilla grabbed berries and rubbed them on the nearest tree.

As fast as gazelles the two girls fled back to the castle. They found Lord Hammerback and explained what had happened in the forest. At first, his lordship was furious that the girls had been in such a dangerous position. But then he realized the value of the information. Camilla and Sienna led the lord and his knights into the forest. They found the tree that Sienna had marked. The men came up with their own plan to stop the attack.

The next morning, the whole kingdom was abuzz about the foiled plan. Camilla and Sienna were so proud. The lord and lady even had a special ceremony to honor the girls. They feasted and danced. Everyone told them what an important part they had played in keeping the kingdom safe.

"I'm really glad we helped," said Sienna. "But the next time you want an adventure, let's stick to the laundry!" Both girls laughed.

Ditch Bronson Just Needs a Friend

Story by Sam R. McColl
Illustration by Bill Petersen



Chapter 1

“Julia Maria Arroyo, come down here this instant!” I heard my mother call from the kitchen. “You’ll be late for school!” I looked at the blinking neon clock on my bedside table. Holy moley, Mom was right! I was going to be late!

I gathered my last few books and crammed them into my backpack. Not just any backpack, my favorite backpack, the blue and red one that read “California Dreamin’” in big, bright yellow letters across the back. Plus, it had a picture of a palm tree on it.

Palm trees are one of my favorite things about living in California. My other favorite things are the sun, the ocean, the beach, the fresh fruit, and the movie stars. Not very many of them live in my neighborhood, but some used to live here. They say that the famous actor Russell Curtis lived in the apartment building just down the block from my house. This was long before he became famous and long before I was even born. But yes, the movie stars are some of my favorite things about living in California.

But I have one very least favorite thing, and that least favorite thing is a person. A person in my grade. A person in my class. A person who lives on my block. Ditch Bronson is his name, and bullying kids is his game. For sure, Ditch Bronson is my LEAST favorite thing about living in California.

Every morning, I have to walk past Ditch Bronson's house. I hate that. I always try to wait until the very last minute to leave, in the hope that he'll be gone by the time I walk past. Sometimes he is, sometimes he isn't.

On most days, my best friend Victor swings by my house on his way to school, and we walk past the Bronson house together. There's safety in numbers. Isn't that what they always say? But Vic had been gone the last couple of days. His family had been out of town. So I was flying solo. Not too fun.

Well, it was time. I couldn't wait any longer. I had to go to school. "Coming, Mama!" I yelled. Slinging my backpack over my shoulder, I trudged down the stairs.

Chapter 2

I stepped outside with caution. At least it was a lovely day. The sun was shining. The blue jays in the oak tree were chattering noisily. A few squirrels were bounding about on the lawn. It was a great day, and I certainly didn't want Ditch Bronson to ruin it. He probably would, though. He almost always did.

"Well, here goes nothing," I said to myself and started off down the sidewalk. I tried not to look concerned as I approached Ditch's house, but I sure wished Vic had been with me. Why had he gone out of town, and left me here all alone to deal with Ditch Bronson? It wasn't fair. It wasn't fair at all.

I reached the building Ditch lived in. I kept myself alert as I quickly walked past. I turned the corner past his building, onto the street that led to school. No Ditch! He must have left earlier than I did. He was probably already at school. Of course, that meant I was probably running pretty late. So I started walking faster.

About half a block away from school, I heard the morning bell ring. I was late! I sprinted into the building. I ran down the hall and into Room 121, my homeroom. I sat down in my seat as Mr. Filbert, my teacher, said, "Nice of you to join us today, Miss Arroyo."

"Sorry, Mr. F," I said sheepishly.

"Very well," he said. "Let's begin, shall we?" As he started our lesson, I looked around the class. And do you know who was absent? I mean, aside from Victor? That's right. You guessed it! There was no Ditch Bronson in class. Maybe he was sick. Maybe he was also out of town. Who knew? It didn't matter to me. The only thing I cared about was a day without Ditch Bronson. No name calling. No being teased. None of that! What a great day it would be! If only Vic were here to share it with me.

Chapter 3

After school that day, I walked home happy. When I got home, Dad was shooting hoops in the driveway. He smiled when he saw me. “*Hola, mi Encantadora,*” he called.

“Hey, Dad,” I called back. “Toss me the ball.” Dad and I played a good game of basketball. I love shooting hoops. I love basketball. In fact, I have a basketball signed by Shawn Carter, who’s my favorite professional player. Dad and I went to see his team play one day last year. That’s when I met him. The signed ball is one of my favorite things. But I don’t play basketball with it. It just sits on my shelf. We play with an older ball that Dad bought a long time ago.

As we played, Dad asked, “How was school today, Julia?” I like that Dad’s always home when I get home. He works an early morning shift at the factory, so he’s always home to hear about my day, whether it was a good one or a bad one. Today, of course, was a good one.

“It was excellent, Dad,” I said, shooting an excellent jump shot over Dad’s head and watching it SWISH into the net.

“Oh yes? And what made this day so excellent, aside from the beautiful weather?” Dad asked.

“Well, mean old Ditch Bronson wasn’t in school to pick on me for one thing,” I said as Dad retrieved the ball and took a shot.

Dad replied, “Ah, and what makes Ditch Bronson such a mean old guy?”

“He’s a big bully, Dad,” I said. “He calls me names. He picks on me and Victor. It isn’t nice.”

“I see,” said Dad. “And what do you do when he calls you names?”

“I try to ignore it, but it hurts my feelings,” I replied.

“Good girl,” Dad said. “But I wonder why he’s a bully.”

“I think he was just born that way,” I said, taking another shot.

Dad laughed. “Well, it’s been my experience that bullies act the way they do because they’re sad about something. Or afraid of something. Maybe this Ditch Bronson just needs a friend. Have you ever thought about that?”

“No way, José!” I said sternly. “I certainly don’t want to be his friend.”

Dad said, “Okay, you don’t have to be. It’s just something to think about.”

I tried to change the subject. I said, “What you should be thinking about is the fact that I’ve scored five more points than you, Papa. You’d better take your shot and make it.”

Dad laughed as I tossed him the ball.

Chapter 4

Later that afternoon, I sat in my room, thinking. I was thinking about what Dad had said. He'd said that maybe all Ditch Bronson needed was a friend. Could that be right? I mean, I couldn't grasp the idea of being his friend. But that wasn't all. I tried to think of people in school who were his friends. I couldn't think of anybody. Maybe he was lonely. I decided I'd talk to Dad more about it at dinner.

When we sat down to dinner, we talked about the usual stuff at first. Dad and I talked about basketball. Our favorite team, the Jumpers, were about to make the playoffs. Playoffs are when the great teams play after the season ends. Playoff teams all play to see who's going to win the championship. Of course, Dad and I thought the Jumpers were the best team. But only the playoffs could prove whether we were correct. We'd have to wait and see.

Dad said, "I think there's a playoff game in L.A. next week. Shall I see if I can get tickets?"

"You bet!" I exclaimed. "That'd be awesome! Totally awesome!" If we went to a playoff game, I might get to meet Shawn Carter again. He was my hero.

Dad said, "Well, then, it's settled. I'll look into what it might cost. Playoff tickets can be expensive. But we'll see."

"I don't know why you two enjoy watching grown men run around with a big, orange ball," my mom said. She never really got into basketball.

As I was clearing the table I said, "You just don't get it, Mom. It's basketball, the best game on Earth!"

“Well, your father gets it, I suppose. That’s all that matters.”

After I cleared the table and did the dishes, I turned to Dad. He was reading the sports page from the day’s paper. “Hey Dad, you want to go shoot some hoops?”

“Ooh, Night Ball! My favorite!” he said. “Let’s go.” I ran upstairs to get my sneakers. Then I ran outside to meet him. He was already dribbling the ball. In case you don’t know, dribbling is bouncing the ball up and down. It’s the only acceptable way to run with the ball on a basketball court. You can’t just carry it. You have to bounce it. Carrying it is called traveling, and it’s a foul.

Dad tossed me the ball. “Before we start,” I said, “can we talk about something important?”

Chapter 5

Dad looked at me. “Is everything okay?” he asked, tightening up the laces on his sneakers.

“Yeah, I think so,” I said. “But I’ve been thinking about what you said earlier this afternoon.”

Dad laughed. He said, “I don’t even remember what I said earlier this afternoon. Was it important?”

I said, “Gosh, Dad, it sure was.”

“Well then, fire away,” Dad said.

I reminded Dad about what he had said about Ditch Bronson maybe needing a friend. “I was trying to name people who might be friends with Ditch at school,” I said, “and I couldn’t think of anyone. He might be a really lonely kid.”

Dad looked at me. “You may be right. Now, if that’s true, what should be done about it?”

I thought for a while. I thought long and hard. “Well, I don’t know,” I said. “I mean, I can’t imagine what school would be like if Vic weren’t my friend. And my friends Suzie, Marco, and Daunte. It’s great to have friends.”

Dad said, “It sure is. I’ve got a few friends down at the factory. Tim and Nina especially. They’re great folks.”

“Yeah,” I said. “But the problem is, I don’t want to be Ditch’s friend. He’s always been so mean to me. But I also don’t want to let someone grow up being so lonely. I don’t know what to do.”

Dad looked at me. He said, “Well, Julia, it’s hard. Sometimes you never know the right decision. Sometimes you have to follow your heart. Sometimes you don’t. It’s all part of growing up. But I will tell you this,” Dad said. “The fact that you’re having trouble with all this tells me that you’re growing up. And for that, I’m proud of you.”

I tried to hold back tears, though I didn’t know why. Then I said to Dad, “Well, I think I have an idea, a plan, you might call it. I’ll let you know how it goes.”

“Sounds interesting,” Dad said.

Chapter 6

The next day was Saturday. That meant I had a lot of chores to do. I had to get them done in the morning. I had to help mow the lawn. I had to help Mom wash the car. I had to clean my room and sweep the first floor of the house. It was a lot of work, but I was used to it. Besides, the busy work helped take my mind off my plan. My plan was for later in the afternoon. To be honest with you, my plan was really scary. I didn't know if it would work. But I had to find out.

So Mom, Dad, and I spent all morning working on our chores. The kitchen was especially dirty, so sweeping took longer than usual. But that was okay, because, like I say, it kept my mind off what I was going to do later in the day. And then Mom and I took an extra long time washing the car. We made it look extra cool and clean.

But the chores didn't last all day. So after lunch it was time. Dad said, "Hey Julia, you want to shoot some hoops? I think I've perfected the jump shot. I'll be unstoppable on the court. Just you wait."

"Well, Dad," I said, "I can't right now. I've got something really important that I have to do. I hope you understand."

Dad looked surprised at first, because I rarely decline a chance to shoot hoops with him. Then a look of understanding crossed his face. "Does this have to do with what we talked about last night?" he asked.

I swallowed hard. "Yeah, it does," I murmured.

“Well, do what you have to do. I’ll be here if you need me.”

“Well, I wonder if I might borrow your old basketball?” I asked.

Dad said, “I think I understand. Sure, it’s in the garage.”

So I went out to the garage and grabbed Dad’s basketball. I laced my sneakers up tight. Then I headed out. I walked down the drive and turned left at the sidewalk. I tried to be as brave as I could. I walked down the street. I walked toward Ditch Bronson’s house. But I didn’t walk past it. My knees were shaking. I walked up to the door of his building. I found the name BRONSON over one of the doorbells. Though my hands were shaking, I pressed the doorbell.

Chapter 7

Overhead, I heard a window open. I stepped back and looked up. A woman about my parents' age stuck her head out from inside. She looked down at me.

“What do you want?” she asked, and I didn't like the sound of her voice.

I didn't know what to say. “Uh, um, I, uh....” was all I could get out.

“Well, spit it out,” the woman said, angrily. “I don't have all day. What do you want?”



“I, uh, um, uh, is Ditch home?” I asked.

“What? Speak up!” the woman called down. “I can’t hear you.”

I had almost had enough of this woman. I yelled, “I asked if Ditch was home. Is he?”

The woman said, “Oh, hold on a second.” Then her head disappeared inside the window. A few moments passed. Then a few moments more passed. I didn’t know what to do. Should I stay and wait? Should I leave? I was really confused. This wasn’t going well. I began to wish I hadn’t come. Then after quite a while, Ditch Bronson, the bully himself, stuck his head out the window. He looked down at me.

“What do *you* want,” he asked. He sounded just like the woman, who I figured was his mom. “Why are you here?”

I swallowed hard. Gathering all my courage, I yelled up to him. “Hey, uh, Ditch. I was wondering what you were doing today?”

“It’s none of your business, kid!” he hollered. “Why do you ask?”

I tried one more thing. “Well, I was wondering if you might want to come over and shoot some hoops?”

“Basketball?!” he shouted, “Basketball’s for weirdos. Besides, even if I did want to play ball, I sure wouldn’t want to play with you. So go home!”

I was angry and sad. Ditch was being really mean. Why did I even think he might not be this way? What was I thinking? “Fine, you big meanie!”

I shouted up. “I was just trying to be nice!”

“Whatever, weirdo!” Ditch shouted. Then he slammed the window shut.

I stood there, trying to hold back tears. But I couldn’t. I ran home crying.

Chapter 8

When I got home, Dad was working in the yard. He saw me crying and ran over to me. “What happened, *Chica*?” he asked, pulling a handkerchief out of his pocket and giving it to me. “Are you okay?”

I blew my nose on the rag. Between sobs, I told Dad all about what had happened. I told him about the mean old lady. I told him about how mean Ditch Bronson had been.

Dad wiped my tears with the sleeve of his work shirt. “Is there anything I can do?” he asked. “Do you want me to go over there and talk to him? Or talk to his mom?”

I thought about that for a short while. I wanted someone to yell at Ditch and his mean old mom for being so cruel. Dad could do that I knew. But then I also knew that people would think that I couldn’t take care of myself. So I said, “No, Dad, I’ll be all right. But right now, I might want to shoot some hoops, if that’s okay.”

Dad said, “Sure, just let me put my tools away, and I’ll join you.”

I interrupted him. “No, Dad,” I said. “I think I need to be alone for a bit.”

Dad brushed the hair out of my face and gave me an affectionate kiss on my forehead. “Okay, kiddo,” he said. “Go play some ball. I’ve got some paperwork to do in the house anyway.” He gathered up his tools, put them away, and went inside.

When he went inside, I grabbed the ball and walked over to the basketball hoop. I started taking some shots. As I played, I thought about what had happened. I wasn't sure why I'd thought I could be friendly with Ditch Bronson. What a bully. I decided I wouldn't try to be nice to anyone who wasn't nice to me. It just wasn't worth it at all. No sir, it wasn't worth it.

As I played, the sun continued its ascent in the sky. The afternoon grew a bit hot, but I was having a good time playing. I always felt comfortable playing basketball. Playing ball always made me feel like nothing could bother me.

But then, do you know what happened? You won't believe it! I wouldn't have believed it either if it hadn't happened to me. I took a shot and then ran to the basket to grab the ball. When I ran back, guess who was standing on the sidewalk near my driveway looking at me?

Ditch Bronson. What was he doing here? I couldn't believe it. And to be honest, I was a little scared.

Chapter 9

I stopped in my tracks. I didn't know what to say. I gathered my courage. "What are you doing here?" I asked. "Get out of here, Ditch Bronson!" I shouted. "You're not welcome here."

Ditch stared at me. I didn't know what was going to happen. Nor did I know what to do. I stared at Ditch, and he stared back at me. I waited for him to speak. If he didn't, I was going to go inside. I didn't really want to talk to him. I was still really mad and angry.



Ditch ran his hands through his sandy blond hair. He cleared his throat. He began to speak. “Uh, I, um, I want to say I’m sorry.”

Ditch Bronson was apologizing? To me?! I couldn’t believe this. He kept talking. “I am sorry. I was having an argument with my mom. I was just surprised to see you there, especially since I’m never very nice to you. I guess I’m not very nice to many people, am I?” he murmured.

“You certainly are not, Ditch Bronson.” I scolded him.

He continued, “So yeah, anyway, I was wondering. Could I maybe shoot some hoops with you?”

I thought about this for a second. I was still mad, but Ditch seemed to be really sorry. I wasn’t sure. So I said, “Are you going to stop bullying me?” I asked.

Ditch said, “I’ll do my best. I sure would love to play some basketball. I haven’t played in a long time. And I didn’t mean that stuff I said about basketball and weirdos. So how about you pass me the ball?”

I looked at him. He seemed serious. “Okay, Ditch,” I said and passed him the ball. He caught the ball and made a beautiful shot. The ball sunk right through the center of the net. “Wow,” I said. “Pretty nice shot. How about we play to ten? First person to score ten points wins.”

“Okay,” Ditch said. “You go first.” As I grabbed the ball, I got ready for my shot. I happened to look toward my front door. It was open, and Dad was standing there. He was smiling.

Ditch saw him. “Hello, Mr. Arroyo,” he said.

“Hello, Ditch,” Dad said.

Chapter 10

Ditch and I played basketball for a little bit. We got tired from playing. I was thirsty too. Luckily, my mom came out with a couple of glasses of lemonade. “Would you kids like something cold to drink?”

“I sure would,” I exclaimed, rolling the ball so that it came to a stop near the garage.

“Me too,” called Ditch. “Thanks, Mrs. Arroyo!”

Ditch and I sat down on the front step. The cold lemonade tasted really good on the hot day.

“Your mom seems pretty cool,” Ditch said.

“Yeah, she’s great,” I replied, “except when I’m late for school.”

“Why would you ever be late for school?” he asked. “I mean, you live only two blocks away from me, and I’m always on time.”

I stared at Ditch. I didn’t know how to bring this up. But we seemed to be getting along. So I decided I’d tell him. I said, “Well, Ditch, whenever I leave the house on time, I usually run into you on the way to school.”

“Yeah, and?” Ditch said. He didn’t seem to be getting it.

“Well, and I’ve sort of been afraid of you. You’ve always been kind of mean, you know? I mean, that’s why Vic’s often late for school too.”

“Vic?” said Ditch, “that short kid who hangs around with you?”

“Yeah,” I said. “We’re both sort of afraid of you.”

Ditch stirred his straw in his glass of lemonade. He looked at the ground. He seemed really sad. “Yeah, I guess I deserve that. I don’t get along with people really well. But I want to change that. I mean, I had a great time today. I hope maybe we can be friends. Do you think we can?”

I patted Ditch’s hand. “Yeah, Ditch, if we keep getting along like this, then maybe we can be friends,” I said.

“I’d like that,” said Ditch.

I smiled. “So would I, Ditch, so would I.” It was almost time for dinner, so I had to go inside, but Ditch and I made plans to shoot some more hoops the next day. Then I went inside, and Ditch took off for home.

Chapter 11

My family and I sat down to dinner. We were going to have lasagna. That's one of my favorites. It's also one of Dad's "specialties." That means he's really good at cooking it. It's full of flavor. But you know what's funny? When we have Dad's lasagna, we don't talk much. I think it's because we're eating too fast to talk. So we usually wait until we're all done. When we finished, Dad started.

"Looks like you had some fun this afternoon," Dad said. "You want to tell us all about it?"

I finished my last forkful of food. "Yeah, I guess I did have a good time. Ditch is an okay kid once you get to know him."

My mom smiled. She said, "Yes, dear. Sometimes, people seem meaner than they really are. I think everyone merits a second chance."

I said, "Well, one thing I don't understand. I mean, Ditch is really a nice guy. Why do you think he was so mean all the time before today? I don't get it."

Dad said, "Well, Julia. Sometimes people have problems that you might not know about. Ditch might have a hard time with certain things. You can never tell. I think if you and Ditch become closer friends, you might learn a little more about him. Then you might understand him more. You know what I mean?"

"I think I do, Dad," I said.

"Well, good," he said. "Let's clean up the dishes. Then maybe we can shoot some hoops when we're done."

I said, “If it’s all the same to you, Dad, I might be all done with basketball for the day. I’ve certainly played a lot.”

“Ah, I see,” said Dad. “Well, do you mind if I shoot some hoops by myself, then?”

“Sure thing. The ball’s near the garage,” I told him.

Dad raised his eyebrows. “Oh, so we’re leaving my basketball outside now, are we?” I’d forgotten that Dad always wanted me to put things away where I found them.

“Sorry, Dad,” I said.

“That’s okay, Sport,” said Dad, mussing up my hair.

“Thanks, Dad,” I said.

Chapter 12

The next day, after breakfast, I went outside to play ball. As I went outside, Dad called from the garage. He yelled, “Hey Julia, are you going to play some ball?”

I knew that Ditch was going to come over soon because I had plans to play with him. But then again, you can play basketball with three people. Besides, Dad was one of my best friends, so Ditch had better be able to get along with him. Otherwise, he couldn’t be my friend. I walked into the garage and said, “Well, Ditch is coming over to play, but the three of us can play, right?”

“Sure thing,” Dad said, “the more the merrier.”

“The more the merrier? What does that mean?”

Dad chuckled. He said, “It’s an idiom. That means it’s a clever saying people like to use. It means that you can have more fun with more people than with fewer people.”

“Oh, cool,” I said. So Dad and I started playing a game. Soon Ditch came over. The three of us decided to play “HORSE.” It’s a great game. One person takes a shot. The other people have to shoot the same shot. If they don’t make it, they get a letter. First, they get an H. Then, an O. Then, an R. Then, an S. And finally, an E. If you spell “HORSE,” you are out of the game. It’s fun.

Ditch was really winning. He made every shot that we had him take. He even made shots that we couldn't make. Before you knew it, I had spelled "H-O-R" and Dad had spelled "H-O-R-S."

And then something happened.

I was taking a jump shot that Ditch had made me take. I made the shot and ran to get the ball. I turned around and guess who was there? My friend Vic was standing by the driveway.

"Hey, Vic! Welcome back!" I exclaimed.

Vic wasn't looking at me. He was looking at Ditch Bronson. And Vic didn't look very happy.

Chapter 13

Vic turned to me. “What is *he* doing here?” Vic asked, pointing at Ditch.

“Hey, Vic,” I tried to say.

Dad said, “Now, Vic, that isn’t right.”

But then Ditch interfered. He said, “Hey, it’s all right, guys. I’m not surprised. But I’ve got to get home anyway. See you later!”



Before I could say anything, Ditch ran off toward his house. I turned to Vic. Dad said, “Well, it looks like you guys have a heap of things to talk about. I’m going to head inside.” And with that, Dad walked away.

That left me and Vic outside, alone. “*What* was that all about?” I asked.

Vic looked surprised. “What do you mean? I go away for a few days. Then I come home, and you’re playing with Ditch Bronson? I mean, he’s the meanest kid in town!”

“Ditch isn’t so bad once you get to know him,” I replied. “In fact, he’s pretty cool.”

“I find that hard to believe. How did all this come about? What did you do? I mean, what happened?”

Vic and I sat down on the step. I told him all about the last few days. I told him about what my parents had said. I told him about going to Ditch’s building. I told him about Ditch’s mean mom. Vic listened to everything.

“Wow,” he said. “I still can’t believe it. I mean, that kid’s never been nice to anyone, and you’re saying he’s a cool kid?”

“That’s what I’m saying, Vic,” I explained. “But you’ll learn about that tomorrow morning. Tomorrow we can walk to school at the right time. We don’t have to worry about anything. Trust me. You’ll see.” I could tell Vic didn’t believe me, so I changed the topic. I asked him about his trip. As the afternoon wore on, Vic told me all about his trip. We talked for a while. It was nice to have Vic back. When we left, I told him to come by my house on the way to school so we could walk together.

“Okay, if you say so,” said Vic.

“Trust me,” I said. Although I’m not sure he did.

Chapter 14

The next morning, I was sitting on my step waiting for Vic to come by. I was zipping up my “California Dreamin’” backpack as he came by, which was just the right time. I met him at the driveway. He said, “So this Ditch Bronson is actually a nice guy? I don’t believe it.”

“Believe it,” I said. “I think Ditch Bronson just needed a friend, you know? I mean, he didn’t have any friends. Now he’s got one. That’s me. If you count my father, that’s two. I’d like you to be the third. Do you think you can do that, Vic? It’d mean a lot to me.”

Vic thought for a minute. “Well, Julia. We’ve been pals a long time. I usually agree with what you say and do. So why should I stop now, you know?”

“That’s right,” I said, and punched him on the shoulder, “it’s all good.” Right then, we turned the corner to Ditch’s building. Ditch was leaning against a lamppost. His backpack was on the ground at his feet.

Before I could even call his name, Vic shouted out, “Yo, Ditch, what’s up?”

Ditch spun around to face us. “Hey, guys,” he called and trotted over to us. Vic and Ditch looked at each other.

Ditch started talking first. He said, “Hey, Vic. I guess I should apologize for being a jerk over the past few years, you know? Julia’s really turned me around. She’s really helped me out. I hope you can forgive me.”

We both looked at Vic. I waited to see what Vic would say. I must admit, I was still a little nervous. Vic cleared his throat. Finally, he said, “Well, Ditch, as they say, ‘*Su amigo es mi amigo.*’ In other words, any friend of Julia’s is a friend of mine. Consider your apology accepted. And I’m sorry for being such a jerk yesterday. I just got a little freaked out when I saw you.”

“So we’re cool, then?” Ditch asked.

“Yeah, we’re cool,” said Vic. And do you know what? The guys gave each other a high five! It was awesome.

Chapter 15

But the whole day wasn't awesome. Lunch wasn't awesome. Lunch wasn't awesome at all. Let me tell you what happened. It happened after we all had finished eating. We had about twenty-five minutes before class started up again. So Vic, Ditch, and I chose to play some basketball out in the schoolyard. Ditch went and got a ball from the gymnasium. He met us out by the court.

We wanted to play "HORSE," but since we didn't have quite enough time, we opted to play "PIG" instead. It's the same game, just with fewer letters, so the game doesn't last as long. Ditch, Vic, and I, the trio of new friends, were having a great time. It seemed like everything was fine.

Then I noticed something. I noticed my other friends, Suzie, Marco, and Daunte. They were in a group off to the side. They were whispering to each other. That would have been fine, but they were also pointing. What's worse, they were pointing at us. I ran over to them.

"Is there a problem, guys?" I asked.

They all looked at each other, and then they all looked at the ground. Daunte said, "We just think it's weird that you're playing with Ditch Bronson. I mean, he's the biggest bully in the whole school, you know? What are you doing playing with him?"

Ditch and Vic heard him and walked over. I said, "Ditch is my friend now. He's Vic's friend too. He's really a nice guy. None of us ever took the chance to get to know him. But I did, and I'm glad. I've been playing basketball with him all weekend. It's been fun."

Daunte laughed. Then he said something really severe. He said, “I would never trust somebody like that. Once a bully, always a bully. My older brother taught me to look out for people like that.”

I grew angry. “Daunte, you take that back!” I shouted. “You take that back this instant!” But it was too late. Ditch had heard what Daunte had said. I could tell that it really hurt his feelings. Ditch dropped the ball and ran inside the building. I’m not sure, but I thought I heard him burst into tears as he ran away.

“Way to go, Daunte,” I said. “Let’s finish our game, Vic,” I said. As I turned back to the basketball court, I saw Mr. Filbert, our teacher, looking at all of us.

Chapter 16

The bell rang to end the lunch period. We all walked back to Room 121, although Vic and I stopped to drop the ball off at the gym on the way. As we walked toward the classroom, I said to Vic, “Can you believe what Daunte said about Ditch?”

Vic looked at the ground. He said, “Well, I’m not sure it’s much different from what I did yesterday. Ditch really is a good guy. I think it’ll just take people a little while to get used to him. That’s all.”

“I hope you’re right,” I said. “But I also hope Daunte apologizes. I mean, Ditch has never been mean to him specifically. You know?”

Vic said, “I know, but Ditch was mean to you for a long time, so maybe Daunte was just sticking up for you.”

“I don’t know,” I said. We walked into the classroom and sat down. I looked over at Ditch. He was sitting in his seat in the back. His head was hanging low. His eyes were red and swollen. I could tell he was really sad.

Mr. Filbert stood up from his desk. He started talking. He said, “Before we start this afternoon’s lessons, I’d like to tell a story. It’s about when I was a boy, about your age. There was a boy in my class. His name was Wally Lomax. He didn’t get along with the other kids very well. Sometimes he wasn’t very nice to the other kids. Sometimes they weren’t very nice to him. He didn’t have many friends as a result. But then one day, my friend Pete Poindexter started talking to Wally Lomax. And do you know what? They became good friends. And because I was friends with Pete, I soon became friends with Wally Lomax. And soon, all of my other friends became friends with him. Soon enough, we learned that Wally was a great kid. He was just misunderstood. Once we all learned a little more about who he was, he became everybody’s best friend. The next year, Wally Lomax was elected class president! Can you believe that? Anyway, that’s just a story that I thought I’d share with you. Maybe it’ll give you something to think about.” I looked around at the other kids. Daunte, Suzie, and Marco all held their heads low. But, more important, when I looked over at Ditch, he was smiling.

Chapter 17

When the day ended, Ditch, Vic, and I all walked home together. “How are you feeling, Ditch?” I asked.

“Well,” he said, “I feel a little sad, although I liked Mr. Filbert’s story. But I wish the other kids would take a risk and give me a chance. I mean, I don’t think I’ve ever spoken to Daunte. Why would he say such mean things about me?”

I explained to Ditch what Vic had told me at the end of lunch. I explained that maybe Daunte was just telling me to be careful. But then I explained that I was really happy that I had gotten to know Ditch.

Vic said, “Me too. I mean, I was freaked out at first, but not anymore.”

Ditch sighed. “I guess I’ve hurt a lot of people’s feelings in this class. I never, ever meant to. I just want the chance to make it up to everybody, you know? I mean, I want to be friends with everyone. That’s all I’ve ever wanted, to be friends with other kids.”

“I know that now, Ditch.”

“Yeah, me too,” said Vic.

“Thanks, guys,” said Ditch. “Hey, want to shoot some hoops at your place, Julia? If your dad’s around, we could play two-on-two!” Two-on-two is the best way to play basketball. You have two teams of two players each. So not only do you get to run, dribble, and shoot, you also get to pass. It makes the game particularly fun.

“That sounds like a great idea, Ditch,” I said. “My dad should be back from work by now. I’ll run home and check. Meet you there in fifteen minutes?”

Vic said, “Yeah, I have to run home and tell my Aunt Elsa I’m home from school. She always wants me to tell her where I’ll be. But I can be there in fifteen minutes, no problem.”

“Okay, guys, see you there!” I yelled as I ran on ahead of them. This was going to be fun.

Chapter 18

Dad was home from work, so we all met on the basketball court. We decided on the best teams. I was on Dad’s team. So it was the home team versus the visiting team. It was fun! We decided to play to 21 points. A half hour into the game, the score was close. The home team had 10 points. The visiting team, Ditch and Vic, had 12 points. If you’ve never played two-on-two basketball, you should really try it. It’s a blast!

But then something happened—one of the best things in the whole world. Ditch had just scored, and I had the ball. I was about to dribble to the left and then pass to Dad. But before I could start, I heard the sounds of kids yelling and bicycle bells ringing. I turned around. Riding down the street were Suzie, Marco, and Daunte!

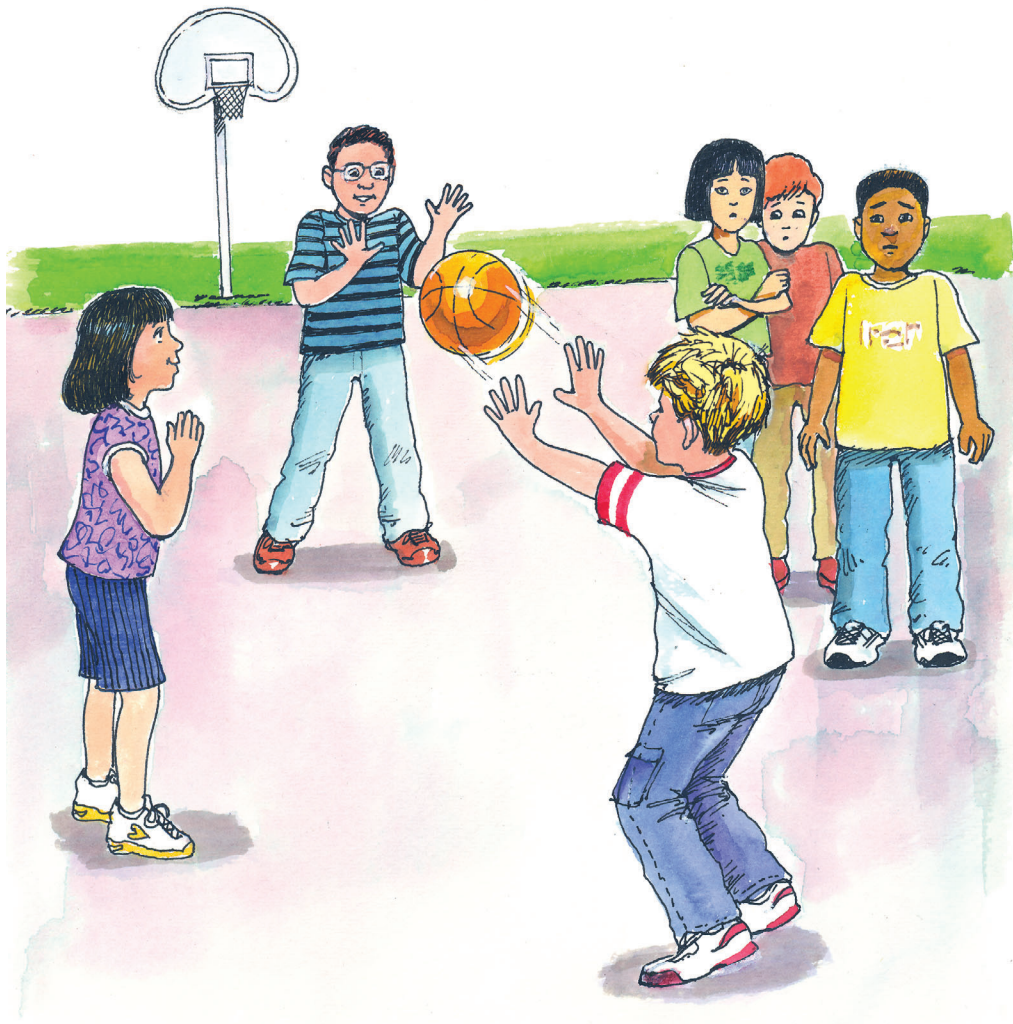
They all pulled to a stop in front of my house. “Hello, children,” Dad said. “Welcome to the Arroyo Basketball Arena!”

“Hello, Mr. Arroyo,” the three kids said.

Daunte got off his bike and laid it down. “Can we play?” he asked.

I turned to Ditch. I said, “Well, I think that should be up to Ditch. What do you say, Ditch?”

Ditch looked at Daunte. Daunte looked at Ditch. “Sure,” Ditch said. “But it’ll have to be four against three, because there are now seven of us. Hey Julia, pass me the ball.” I passed the ball to Ditch. Ditch held the ball. He said, “I want to pick my teammates. The first person I’ll pick is...” We all waited to hear his choice. Finally, he said, “Daunte.” Then, smiling, he passed the ball to Daunte. Daunte caught the ball and smiled back. Can you believe it? I couldn’t.



Neither Ditch nor Daunte ever said sorry to the other. It didn't seem to matter. What mattered was that we were all friends. We were all having a good time. As we played, I thought about what my parents had said. "Maybe Ditch Bronson just needs a friend." Well now he had six. And I'll tell you something else. I think we were all just as happy to have him as a friend as he was to have us.

The End

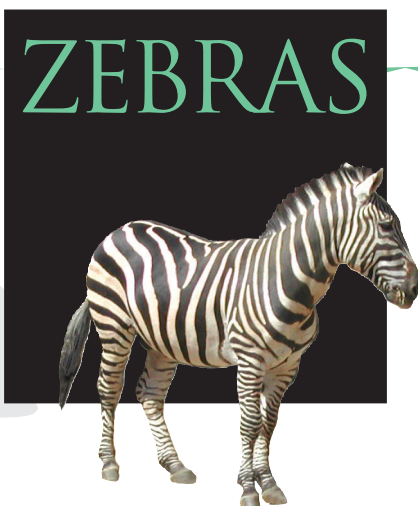
ZEBRAS

1. Looking for a zebra?

In the wild, zebras roam the length of eastern Africa—from the northern country of Ethiopia to the southernmost country of South Africa. They live on the grassy plains, in the woods, and even on mountainsides.

2. Yipes, stripes!

Zebras belong to the same family of hoofed animals as horses and donkeys, but unlike these animals, zebras are striped. Why? No one knows. It's a mystery. There are three different types of zebras, each with its own pattern of stripes. In fact, not only does each type of zebra have distinctive



stripes, but if you look closely, you'll see that each zebra has a different striping pattern.

3. Eat your greens.

Like sheep, cows, and horses, zebras are grazers. This means they eat grass, along with a few leaves and twigs.

4. A Zebra's Life

Zebras are very sociable animals that usually live in small family groups made up of a male (stallion), one or more females (mares), and their babies (foals).

The size of the family depends on how much food and water is available. If attacked, males

defend their families by kicking and biting. At night, one family member stays awake to watch for predators. Zebra families can come together to form a larger group called a herd, but within the herd, each family sticks together. Zebra herds often share their living area with other animals, such as gazelles and antelopes. If the food runs out in one area, zebras will migrate hundreds of miles to search for a new food source. When zebras



These are Burchell's zebras, which are also called plains zebras. They have broad stripes that range in color from black to dark brown on a white or light tan background.



travel, one of the older females leads the family to the new area, making sure that they don't wander too far from water.

5. Zebra Foals

Zebra babies can stand on their own within fifteen minutes of birth and run within a day. Their mothers feed them until they are about one year old and they begin grazing on their own. Although zebra mothers try to protect their babies, many zebra foals are killed by lions and hyenas.



6. Endangered?

The Burchell's zebra is the only type of zebra that is not endangered—although their numbers are decreasing in the wild. The zebra's greatest danger is from humans, who hunt them for sport and for their beautiful striped hides. Human settlements also reduce the zebras' habitats, or living areas.

RHINOCEROS

1. Where are the rhinos?

The rhinoceros lives in Africa and Asia. The rhinos at the zoo are white rhinos from Africa. You're probably thinking that these rhinos look gray not white, and you're right! But their name comes from the Afrikaans (an African language) word *weit*, which means wide and refers to the size of the rhino's mouth, rather than to its skin color.

Rhinos are huge—up to 6 feet tall, 15 feet long, and weighing as much as 8,000 pounds! They also have a large, curved horn, which they use to protect



themselves against lions, tigers, and hyenas and to fight with one another for land and females.

2. Ancestors

Rhinos have been on earth for about 34 million years! A relative of the modern rhino first appeared just after the age of the dinosaurs. Rhinolike animals once roamed Europe, Africa, and even North America. Many were covered with thick fur and can still be seen in the cave paintings left by early humans.

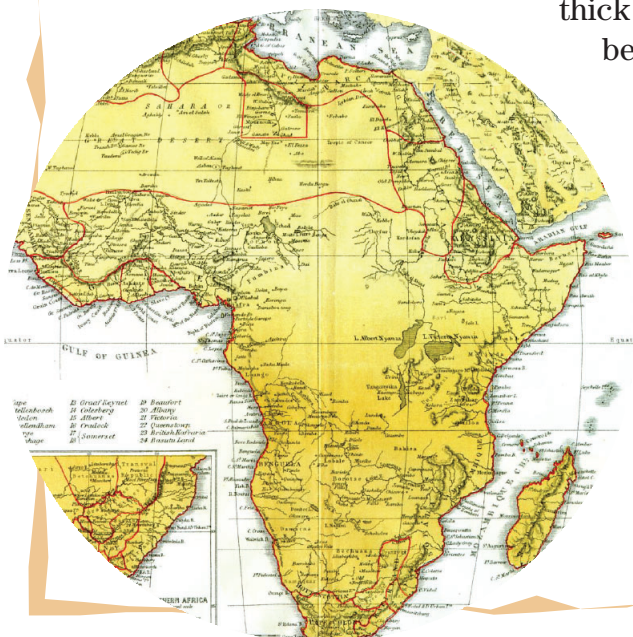
3. Don't bother me, I'm eating.

Even though they look scary, rhinos are herbivores, meaning that they only eat plants. White rhinos prefer grass. Other rhinos eat the leaves of trees or bushes.

4. In fact, don't bother me at all.

Rhinos like to live alone. Both male and female rhinos establish territories—land that they consider theirs alone. Males mark and defend their territories to keep other rhinos away. They will even attack cars and trucks that drive through their territory.

Even after male and female rhinos mate, they go their separate ways. Female rhinos give birth about once every two or three years. The babies, called calves, stay with their mother until the next baby is born.





5. Endangered?

All species, or kinds, of rhinos are endangered from loss of habitat and hunting. The rhino's horn, which is ground up and used as medicine, is especially prized. The horns are also used as handles for knives. Sometimes poachers will kill the animal and walk off with nothing but its horn. Unless they are protected, the rhinoceros, which has lived on Earth for millions of years, could die off and become extinct.

GIRAFFES

1. Standing Out in the Crowd

Giraffes are the world's tallest mammals. Adult males, called bulls, can be up to 19 feet tall and weigh up to 3,000 pounds. Adult females, or cows, can reach 16 feet and weigh up to 2,600 pounds.

It's easy to spot a giraffe because of its long neck and patchy coat. In fact, each giraffe has its own, uniquely shaped patches—no two giraffes look exactly alike!

2. Home Turf

Giraffes live on the grassy plains of central, eastern, and southern Africa.



3. Eat your leaves.

Giraffes eat leaves—up to 75 pounds of leaves every day. Their height, and their very long—18-inch—tongue enable them to reach the tops of small trees and pluck the best leaves. Females spend more than half their day eating, males slightly less. If they need to, giraffes can go for several days without water.

4. Please, share my turf.

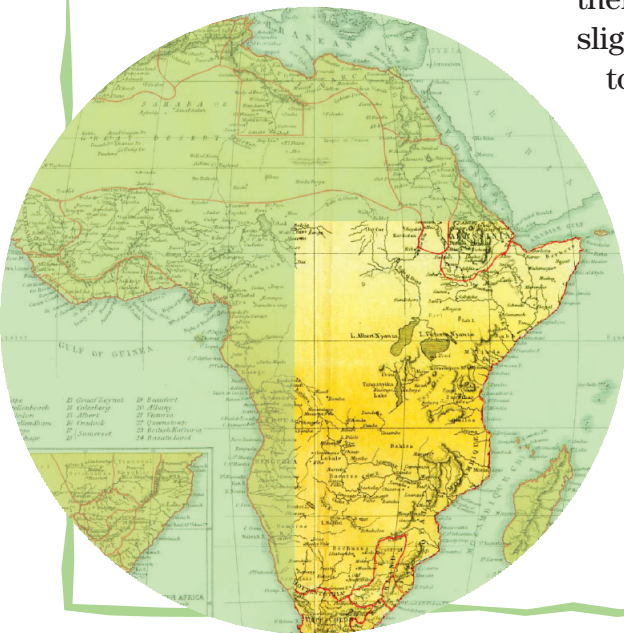
Giraffes are sociable. They live together peaceably with

other animals. Giraffes live in loose herds that can be made up of all males, all females, or a mix of males and females, old and young. Sometimes they travel alone. Even in a herd, giraffes scatter themselves around the grassy plains looking for food. They rarely cluster together unless they're attracted to the same tree or are nervous about nearby lions. Because they're so tall and have very good eyesight, giraffes can keep each other in sight, even over long distances.

5. Baby Giraffes

A giraffe mother carefully guards her baby for the first week of its life. If a calf gets lost, its mother bellows for it. When a mother goes off to look for food or water, she often leaves her baby in the care of another female.

Female giraffes spend over half their day eating, males slightly less.



It's common to see an adult female caring for several babies at a time in a sort of nursery. This care is necessary because baby giraffes cannot defend themselves, and as many as 75% of them are killed by lions or hyenas in the first months of life. Giraffes that survive to reach adulthood can live about twenty-five years in the wild and even longer in a zoo.



6. Endangered?

As adults, giraffes have no regular predators. They are threatened by hunters, who kill them for their meat or coat, and from loss of habitat due to increased human settlement. The population of giraffes in the wild is stable but at its lowest level ever.

WARTHOGS

1. Where Warthogs Live

Warthogs live in the warm, dry savannas (grasslands) of Africa. They do not live in the desert, the mountains, or in rainforests. They appear throughout Africa, south of the Sahara Desert, from the west to the east coasts.

2. Not a Pretty Picture

Warthogs are piglike animals. They can be brown or black. Like pigs, they have a snout and hooved feet. However, a warthog's snout is much longer than a pig's, and a warthog also has two curved tusks on the front of its face. The males are much larger than the females. A female



warthog weighs up to 150 pounds, while a male warthog weighs up to 220 pounds. Their name comes from the wartlike bumps on their faces.

3. Moo?

Like cows, warthogs are grazing animals. They eat short grasses, and they dig in the ground for roots and bulbs when grass isn't available.

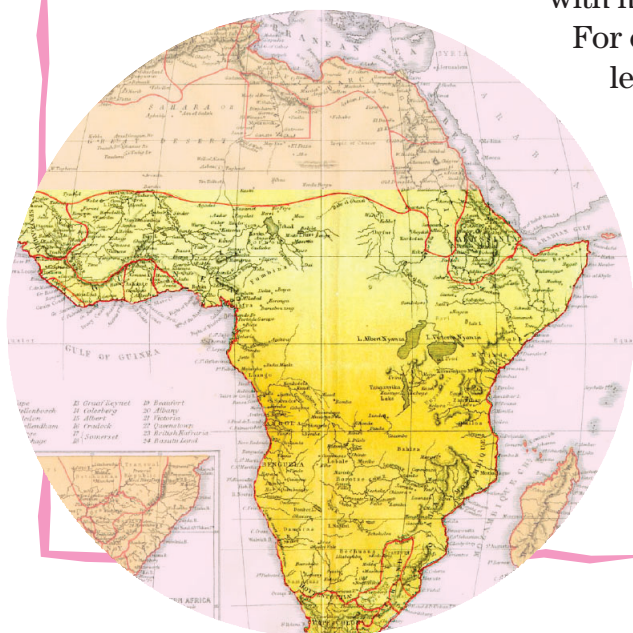
4. Working with Others

Warthogs get along well with many other animals. For example, warthogs let birds sit on their bodies and eat bugs off their skin.

This helps the warthog get rid of annoying bugs and provides the birds with food.

Warthogs also benefit from the work of burrowing animals, such as aardvarks, which dig tunnels and small dens in the ground. Though warthogs are also able to dig, they prefer to live in burrows dug by aardvarks. These burrows give them a safe place to sleep at night. However, lions sometimes stay outside the burrows and wait for the warthogs to come out. The warthogs are too clever for that trick though. They back into the burrow at night so their head is facing the outside. This allows them to use their tusks for protection. Then, in the mornings, they run out of the burrows at top speed, which is an amazing 34 miles per hour, before the lion can catch them!

In the wild, warthogs live about eighteen years.



5. Young Warthogs

Warthogs have two to five baby warthogs at a time. Since warthog females only raise one litter of babies at a time, she chases her last litter away when she is ready to give birth to the next. Warthogs become self-sufficient very early in life. They begin grazing at two months old and stop getting milk from their mother entirely at four months old.



6. Endangered?

Warthogs are not endangered at all. They are able to survive with very little water, and their preferred habitat, or living area, is plentiful. Because warthogs do not bother humans nor are they considered valuable, they are seldom hunted.

CHIMPANZEES



1. Habitat

Chimpanzees are native to the forests and grasslands of Central and West Africa. There are two types of chimpanzees: common chimpanzees, such as those at our zoo, and their smaller relatives called bonobos.

2. Great Apes

Chimpanzees, gorillas, and orangutans are all part of the great ape group. Fully grown chimpanzee males weigh 85 to 175 pounds, females from 65 to 130 pounds. They are covered with thick, dark fur except on their faces,

fingers, toes, palms of their hands, and soles of their feet.

3. The Wild Life

Chimpanzees live in groups, called troops, consisting of twenty to about 100 individuals, but they travel most of the time in small groups. They spend time both on the ground and in the trees, using their long arms to climb and swing from the branches. They usually sleep in nests that they make in the trees. On the ground, chimps usually walk bent over, using the soles of their feet and their knuckles to walk, but they can also walk upright, like humans, for short distances.

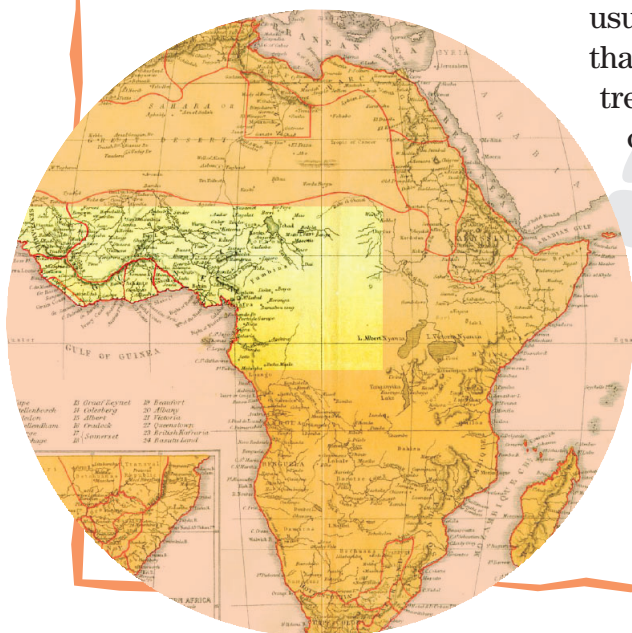
4. Eat your veggies.

In the wild, chimps mostly eat fruit, leaves, nuts, and seeds. They also eat insects, and they will hunt smaller animals, such as monkeys, for meat.

5. A Lot Like Us

Chimpanzees have many humanlike characteristics. Like us, they have opposable thumbs, which means that they can touch their thumbs to their other fingers, allowing them to get a good grip on things. Chimpanzees make and use tools. For example, they use twigs to pull termites out of their holes. They also use rocks to crack open nuts, and they squeeze drinking water from leaves.

Chimpanzees play, and they show care and affection for one another by grooming one another and hugging. But they can also be aggressive and mean—especially males who are trying



to be the boss of a group. Chimpanzees use different facial expressions to show their feelings. They also speak to one another, using more than thirty different vocal sounds. In captivity, chimps have been taught how to communicate with humans through sign language. As they age, chimps even turn gray and go bald!



6. Baby Chimps

A female chimpanzee has one baby at a time. A baby chimp stays with its mother until it is about three years old, but young chimpanzees often maintain close relationships with their mothers for years. In the wild, chimps can live up to fifty years. In captivity, they can live even longer.

Endangered?

Sadly, chimpanzees—like all great apes—are an endangered species. There are only about 15,000–23,000 chimps left in the wild, and their numbers decrease every year due to loss of habitat, as human populations grow and need more land for farming, and disease—including illnesses that chimps get from humans. Chimps are also killed for their meat and captured to sell as pets.

POLAR BEARS

1. Tracking the Polar Bear

Polar bears live in the far north at the Arctic Circle. They are at home on the ice, on land, and in the water. Strong swimmers, polar bears can stay in the water for hours at a time. They use their front paws to paddle and their hind legs and feet to steer.

Polar bears travel around in search of food and shelter within a home territory that can be up to 135,000 square miles in size.

2. How You'll Know When You Find One

Polar bears are the largest land carnivore, which means meat eater. Males (boars) are



8 to 9 feet long and can weigh over 650 pounds. Females (sows) are 6 to 8 feet long and weigh up to 250 pounds. The largest polar bear ever recorded weighed in at 2,200 pounds!

The bear's twelve-inch-wide paws act like snowshoes, evenly spreading its weight out so it doesn't fall through the ice.

To survive in the Arctic, where winter temperatures average 29 degrees below zero, the polar bear has a coat that's 1½ inches thick. It's made of a layer of wooly underhair and stiff, shiny, clear guard hair that reflects

sunlight. This makes the bear look white. The coat is oily and water repellent so the bear can easily shake off water and ice after swimming. The bears molt, or shed, their coats and grow new ones once a year.

3. Not a Picky Eater

In the wild, polar bears mainly eat seals, but they will also dine on walrus, some whales, sea birds, fish, ducks, eggs, reindeer, berries, vegetation, and human garbage. They will even eat humans if they are nearby and no other food is available.

Polar bears can smell a seal up to twenty miles away. They hunt in several ways. One is called still hunting. This is when the bear sits perfectly still beside a hole in the ice, sometimes for hours at a time. When a seal appears, the bear flips it onto the ice and kills it. On land, polar bears stalk their prey and then suddenly charge it at a speed of up to twenty-five miles per hour.



4. A Polar Bear's Day

When they're not hunting, polar bears mainly rest or sleep. In the summer, they dig a pit in the ground to lie in. In the winter, they dig dens out of the snow or use a natural shelter, such as a small cave, to keep warm.

They live mostly alone. Only mating pairs and mothers and cubs travel together.

5. Baby Bears

Females usually give birth to two cubs at a time. The cubs are born between November and January in a sheltered den where they stay with their mother until spring. At birth, polar bear cubs are hairless, helpless, weigh only 16 to 24 ounces and are just 12 inches long. But they grow quickly: they grow fur and begin walking at about two months. By the time they come out of the den, the cubs weigh 22 to 33 pounds and will playfully chase and tackle each other.

A mother bear nurses and protects her young, often touching and

grooming them. She also leads them to the ice—sometimes by carrying them on her back. Cubs learn how to hunt by watching their moms, but they don't become good at it until they are at least two years old.

Cubs stay with their mothers for thirty months. By then, the

mother bear is ready to give birth again, so she chases the cubs away to fend for themselves. Sadly, some cubs are eaten by wolves or other polar bears, or they die of starvation because they're not skilled enough at finding food.



6. Endangered?

In the wild, polar bears live for twenty to thirty years. They live even longer in zoos. Because the United States and Canada have passed laws to limit polar bear hunting, and Norway and Russia have stopped polar bear hunting altogether, polar bear numbers have increased. But there are still environmental dangers such as oil spills, which damage the bear's fur so it loses protection from the cold and poisons its food sources. Young bears and old, weak bears also sometimes die of starvation.

So, while they are not endangered, polar bears are considered vulnerable, or at risk.

THE RING-TAILED LEMUR

What is a lemur?

Is it a raccoon? Is it a strangely colored squirrel? No, it's a ring-tailed lemur. This unique animal is mostly gray with black and white markings. Its tail, which can be almost two feet long, has black and white rings. Lemurs are somewhat small and usually weigh around five pounds. They have white bellies and faces and black patches over their eyes. One thing that's special about all lemurs is how they communicate with their faces. They use different expressions, such as an open mouth, bared teeth, and pouting faces, to show how they feel.

Where do lemurs live?

Lemurs live on an island called Madagascar. This island is located off the coast of southeast Africa in the Indian Ocean. They live in thick forests all over the island. Many types of lemurs spend almost all of their time in trees. But the ring-tailed lemur spends half of its time on the ground, where it moves using all four limbs.

What do lemurs eat?

Lemurs eat leaves, flowers, and fruits. Occasionally they eat insects. They usually search for food during the day, although some lemurs are nocturnal and forage at night. When not foraging for food, the lemur has a peculiar pastime. It likes to sit with its belly facing the sun. Many people think it's funny to see these special creatures "sunbathing."

Are lemurs endangered?

Ring-tailed lemurs are endangered. This means they are in danger of becoming extinct, or dying off. Lemurs are in danger because their natural habitat is being destroyed by loggers and farmers. Hunting is another reason lemurs are endangered. Luckily, zoos around the world have had a lot of luck breeding lemurs. Hopefully, lemurs will one day get off the endangered-species list.

GAZELLES

What are gazelles?

Gazelles are a type of antelope. They have a medium build and are brown with a white belly and hind region. They have tall horns, which are sometimes used to defend themselves. They can run at very high speeds for long periods of time. They are graceful animals with long legs. There are many different species of gazelles, most of which are found in Africa.

Where do gazelles live?

Gazelles live on open plains and in desert lands in Africa. They avoid high grasses because this is where they would most likely be attacked by predators, such as lions or cheetahs. Gazelles rely on their amazing speed and leaping ability to protect themselves from predators.

What do gazelles eat?

Gazelles eat desert grasses and shrubs. A unique characteristic of gazelles is that they can survive long periods of time without water. They absorb water from the plants they eat and rarely need to drink water. This helps gazelles survive in the desert. They are accustomed to drinking water whenever it's available, much like a camel, although they do not store it the same way a camel does. Also, gazelles change their diets depending on what is available in their region. During dry seasons, the gazelle will eat differently from the way it would at other times. Gazelles are nomadic, which means they constantly travel. They will often move from one region to another searching for plant life.

Are gazelles endangered?

Gazelles are not on the endangered-species list. However, humans are a threat to gazelles. Ranchers and hunters are thinning the herds. Gazelles are often used for their meat and hides. They are also affected when humans destroy the gazelles' natural habitats to create farmland and ranches.

OKAPI

1. Where to find an Okapi (Good luck!)

In the wild, okapi live in only one place: the Ituri forest in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in central Africa. Okapi need to live in a thick rainforest, though they do sometimes go out into more open areas. Okapi can be very hard to find. Their coloring and size allow them to blend into the forest. And, since they like to be alone, they stay away from other animals, even other okapi.

In fact, okapi were one of the last large mammals to be discovered—in 1900.



2. Recognizing an Okapi (You'll know when you see one.)

Imagine an animal with the legs of a zebra, the body of a horse, the head of a giraffe, and a 14-inch-long tongue. Sounds like something you might find in a fairy tale or a fantasy book, doesn't it? Well, that's what an okapi looks like. Okapi are between 5 and 6 feet tall, and they weigh between 465 and 550 pounds. You can tell a male okapi from a female okapi by looking at their heads. The male okapi has small horns; the female has no horns at all.

An okapi's legs have black and white stripes,

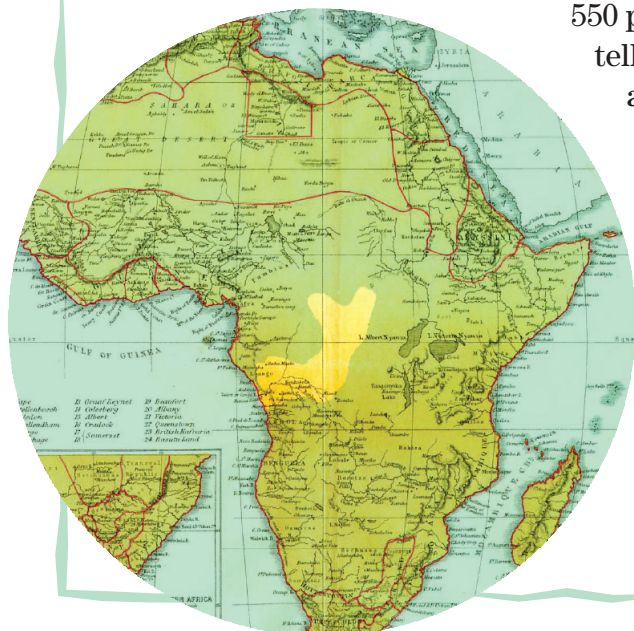
like a zebra, while its body is very dark brown or black. Their giraffelike necks and faces (though their necks are much shorter than a giraffe's) are lighter in color than their bodies, though the exact color varies greatly.

Okapi are hoofed mammals. Originally, scientists thought okapi were related to horses, but it is now known that the okapi's closest relative is the giraffe. In fact, okapi are the only relatives of giraffes.

Fun fact: Okapi are the only mammals that can clean their ears with their tongues.

3. Tree = Yum

Okapi are herbivores, meaning that they don't eat any meat at all. They use their long, long tongues to strip bark, twigs, leaves, and berries off the lower branches of trees in the forest. They also eat clay from riverbanks to get extra minerals.



4. What Okapi Do

Okapi lead fairly quiet lives. They are usually active in the daytime. However, they have to be alert at night, too, because leopards, which love to eat okapi, are nocturnal (night hunters). Okapi are solitary animals, tending to live either alone or, for young okapi, with a small family group. In the wild, okapi live for about thirty years.



5. Mini-Okapi

Okapi mothers have only one child per birth, and a baby okapi weighs about 35 pounds. Okapi give birth in the thickest parts of the forest to keep the babies safe. Unlike other mammals, okapi do not imprint to their mothers. In other words, okapi young don't seem to have any sort of special relationship with their mothers. In fact, young okapi have been seen nursing from more than one female.

6. Endangered?

The okapi is an endangered species. It is difficult to estimate how many okapi are living in the wild because of the thick forests in which they live. Okapi are not threatened by hunters. The biggest threat to okapi is a loss of forested land.

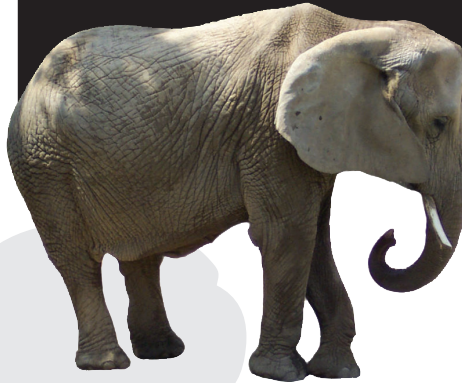
AFRICAN ELEPHANTS

1. Where does a 10,000-pound African elephant sleep? Anywhere it wants!

African elephants have many different habitats. They live in countries south of the Sahara Desert, in grasslands (savannah), forests, and scrub and semi-deserts. However, their habitat has been greatly reduced by humans, so many elephants are now limited to living in wildlife preserves.

2. World's Longest Nose

African elephants are the world's largest land animals. They are 10 to 13 feet tall and 19 to 24 feet long (not including a 4-foot-long tail). They



weigh between 7 and 14 thousand pounds!

Besides its size, you can tell an elephant by its ears, tusks, and trunk. Elephants use their large ears as a fan to keep them cool and keep insects away. Their ears are much more sensitive than those of a human, and they can hear sounds over much greater distances. They use this ability to communicate with one another.

An elephant's tusks are really teeth that have grown outside the mouth. The elephants use their tusks to uproot plants to eat and to dig holes to find

water. The tusks are made of ivory, which is very precious and rare. Because of this, African elephants were once hunted for their ivory tusks.

Elephants' trunks are long extensions of their noses and upper lips. They draw water into the trunk to then spray either in their mouths for a drink or on themselves for a shower. The tip of the trunk has two knobs that act like fingers to help the elephant bring food into its mouth.

3. Big Eaters

African elephants are herbivores, or plant eaters. They will eat almost any plant, fruit, or vegetable that they can find, and they do! Elephants need to eat 300 to 600 pounds of food per day. Wild African elephants sometimes uproot whole trees just to eat their leaves and inner pulp. African elephants drink between thirty and fifty gallons of water per day.



4. Families stick together.

African elephants live in family groups called herds. A herd consists of ten or so related mothers and their children under the leadership of one female, usually the oldest and largest one. Once they mature, the male children are sent away to live in separate bachelor herds, and males only join the females for mating. Related herds tend to stay close together, and, in times of danger, herds can come together to form clans of 200 or more elephants.

African elephants need to keep cool in the hot African climate and to protect their sensitive skin from the sun. To keep cool, they try to take a bath every day. This also washes off any annoying insects. Then, afterwards, they roll in the dirt to provide a layer of protection from the sun and insects.

Because elephants are so large, they have very few predators besides poachers—human hunters who kill

elephants for their ivory. Sometimes lions and tigers will try to attack baby elephants, which are smaller and less able to protect themselves. When predators are near, the herd will form a circle around the younger elephants to protect them. The older elephants will also trumpet to scare the

predators away. African elephants live for about seventy years in the wild.

5. Not-So-Little "Little" Elephants

Female elephants usually give birth to just one calf, or baby, at a time. Elephant calves weigh between 175 and 250 pounds at birth.



6. Endangered?

African elephants were once considered endangered because ivory poachers were killing so many of them. However, stricter ivory-control laws are now in effect, and African elephants are now only classified as threatened. Humans remain the biggest threat to African elephants by moving into their habitat. To protect wild African elephants, humans are going to have to find a way to peacefully co-exist with them.

AFRICAN PENGUINS



1. Where to Find an African Penguin

African penguins are found along the coastline and on the small, rocky islands of southern Africa. Even though southern Africa has the coldest temperatures on the continent (because of the closeness of the South Pole), the temperatures are still much higher than that of other penguin habitats. Because of this, African penguins spend a lot of

time in the cold water. When they do have to rest on land, they stay sheltered in the shade.

2. What African Penguins Look Like

African penguins have black backs and white chests, except for a black band that goes across their upper chests. Their faces are ringed with white, while the area around their eyes and beaks is black. The shape of their bodies is very streamlined, which makes them very good swimmers.

3. Go fish!

African penguins live almost entirely on small fish. They are very effective

predators in the water, able to swim at speeds of up to 12 miles per hour.

4. Everyone in the water!

When African penguins aren't sleeping or eating, they like to spend time in the water. They are very skilled divers. A usual dive is about 100 feet, but they have been seen diving as deep as 420 feet. African penguins walk very slowly on land, so they have to be very careful not to get eaten by their predators. For this reason, penguins try to only come on land to rest and to mate. When they do come on land, they generally stick to islands to avoid mainland predators like leopards. To escape the heat, African penguins sleep at night, are most active at dawn and at dusk, and stay in the water during the hottest parts of the day. African penguins only fear one predator in the water, the Cape fur seal.

Although they are birds, penguins can't fly. They walk on land, and they are very strong swimmers.



5. Valuable Nest Eggs

African penguin babies are called chicks. Young African penguins are extremely vulnerable to predators, especially sea birds that eat the eggs and the young chicks. For this reason, and also as a protection from the heat, African penguins lay their eggs in sheltered burrows, where the chicks stay when their parents hunt for food.

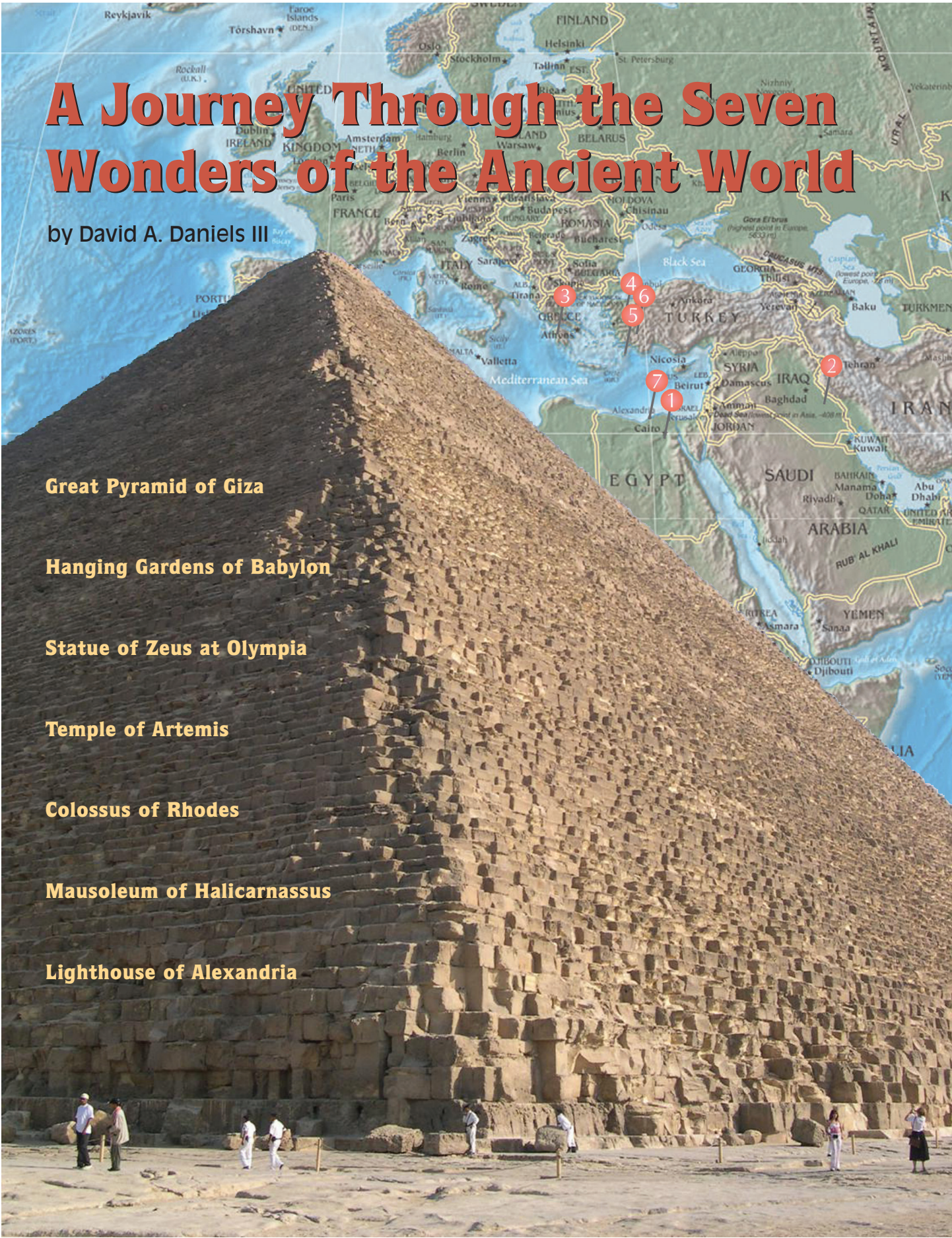


6. Endangered?

Since 1900, African penguins have declined in number greatly, about 90 percent. Though not yet considered endangered, the African penguin is listed as a vulnerable species.

A Journey Through the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World

by David A. Daniels III



Great Pyramid of Giza

Hanging Gardens of Babylon

Statue of Zeus at Olympia

Temple of Artemis

Colossus of Rhodes

Mausoleum of Halicarnassus

Lighthouse of Alexandria



Introduction

The seven wonders of the ancient world are legendary landmarks from history. All but one of these wonders have been lost or destroyed, but recognizing them as the seven wonders of the ancient world ensures that people will remember them. Each has puzzled mankind for centuries. How were they built? Who built them? Historians have searched for answers by studying artifacts, legends, documents, and written accounts from past civilizations. Would you like to become a historian or an **archaeologist** and study these seven ancient wonders?

archaeologist:
Someone who studies material remains of past human life and activities.





The Surviving Giant

The sun's extreme heat beats down on you. Sweat rolls down your body. You are one of thousands working in the Egyptian desert. Behind you stands a half-made pyramid that you and your coworkers are constructing for the pharaoh. You receive very little water and few breaks. Your job is to help move stone blocks into place within the great pyramid. The stones tower over you, and you cannot believe you and the other workers can move them. Very slowly, inch by inch, you drag the stone blocks across the sand toward the waiting structure. After hours of struggling through the sand and up inclines, the stone block is set in place in the pyramid. It is now time to start moving the next one.

The Great Pyramid of Giza is the oldest of the seven ancient wonders and is the only wonder still standing. This pyramid is located north of Egypt's capital, Cairo, on the west bank of the Nile River. Pharaoh Khufu built the Great Pyramid around 2550 BCE to use as his tomb. There are three pyramids at Giza, with Khufu's tomb being the oldest and largest. When the Great Pyramid was first built, it stood 480 feet tall, making it the tallest manmade structure in the world—for the next 4,000 years. More than two million stone blocks, each weighing between two and thirty tons, were used to build the pyramid. Most historians believe the limestone blocks were cut from a nearby quarry.

Experts can only offer theories as to how the pyramids were formed. Most think the Egyptians used **sledges** and ramps to build each layer of the pyramid. Some experts believe the workers constructed ramps that spiraled around the outside of the pyramid. Others think the Egyptians built one long ramp leading to the pyramid, which grew as they added layers of stone.

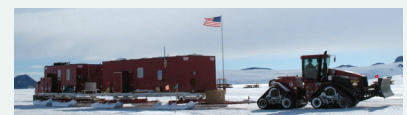


Heavy fact!

The largest African elephants rarely reach seven tons. Imagine having to move blocks as heavy as or heavier than an elephant to form a pyramid without modern machines!

sledges:

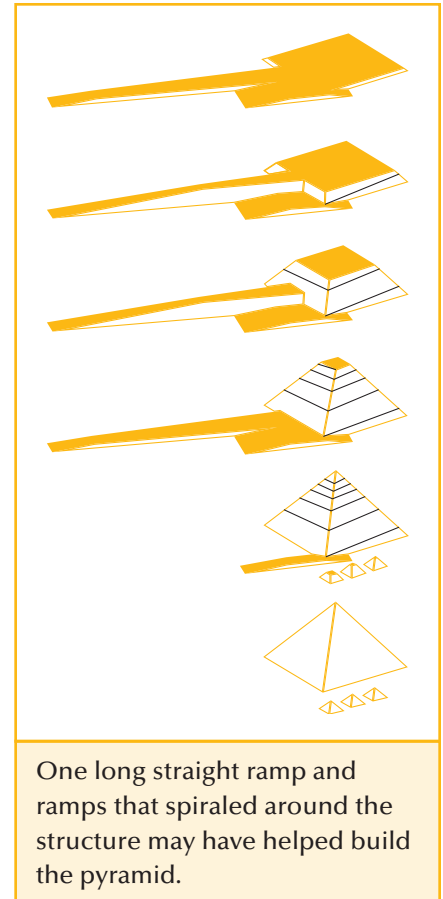
Strong heavy sleds with low runners.



Many think the workers used a combination of ramps, with a long ramp reaching a certain level and spiral ramps used for higher layers. Which idea do you think would work best and why?

Although we do not know exactly how the Great Pyramid was built, we do know why it and other pyramids exist. The pyramids were built as tombs, where pharaohs and their families were laid to rest with their treasured possessions. The pharaohs designed the pyramids with traps and tricky passageways to prevent grave robbers from stealing their treasures. However, grave robbers and private collectors have violated the tombs throughout history.

During the last few decades, however, **Egyptologists** have tried to preserve what remains of the Great Pyramid of Giza by protecting it from pollution, tourism, and vandalism. Dr. Zahi Hawass, who was the director of antiquities for the Pyramids of Giza from 1987–1997, had special cleaning crews renovate the pyramids and the surrounding area. Roads were built away from the pyramids to keep vehicle air pollution and trash from harming them. He also shut down the pyramids to tourists for a year to clean harmful substances and graffiti from the inside of the pyramids. Dr. Hawass also increased security to keep visitors and robbers from harming the integrity of the pyramids. Today only 300 people a day are allowed to purchase a ticket and tour the Great Pyramid. These steps will hopefully keep the last ancient wonder intact for many more centuries.



Egyptologist:
An archaeologist, historian, linguist, or art historian who specializes in the study of Egypt.



Mythical Gardens

You are walking into the city of Babylon shortly after the year 600 BCE. The city is dry and hot, but you stare in amazement as you walk into a strange and wonderful garden. Trees and colorful plants line the tops of great pillars connected by **terraces**. Many of the flowers and vines hang down from their elevated roots. They hang from pillar tops and from the roofs of each nearby building. The color and life of the gardens contrast with the dry climate of Babylon. Birds fly from tree to tree, creating nests for their future chicks. The perfumy fragrance of flowers, once unknown in the land, wafts through the air with every breeze. You stop and wonder, is this real, or am I viewing a beautiful mirage?

No manmade garden had ever been so magnificent in size or beauty. Soldiers and scholars who pass by spread tales of the hanging gardens across the Mediterranean. However, today, all that remains of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon are rumors, poems, and 2,000-year-old **manuscripts** that mention the gardens. Little proof is left to absolutely confirm or deny the great garden's existence. For centuries, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon have kept historians and the world wondering how truly beautiful the gardens were, how they were **constructed**, and if it were even possible for the gardens to exist in the harsh, dry conditions of Babylon.

Greek and Roman writers described the Hanging Gardens of Babylon in poems and folklore, but there is no physical evidence of their existence today. Historians think the gardens were located in Babylon near the Euphrates River in what is now Iraq. Most propose that King Nebuchadnezzar II built the hanging gardens around 600 BCE to ease his wife Amytis's homesickness for Media, where she had many beautiful gardens. Descriptions of the gardens differ, but most describe



terraces:

Flat roofs or raised levels used as platforms, often resembling stairs.

manuscripts:

Compositions or documents written by hand, especially before the development of printing.

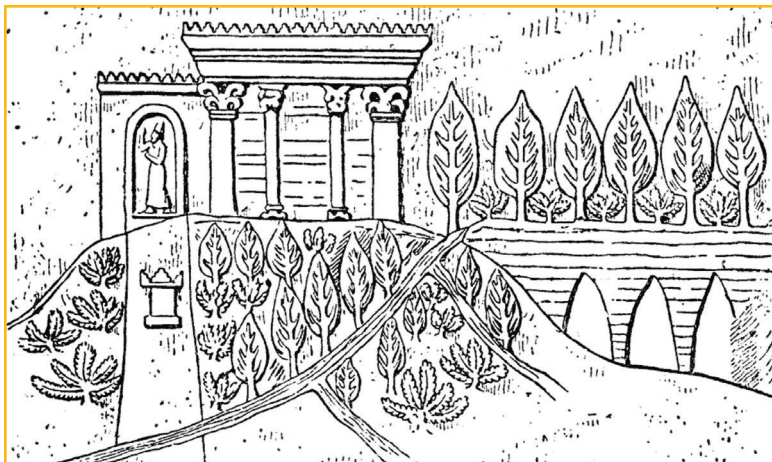
constructed:

Built or put together.

trees, flowers, and bushes planted on terraces and building roofs about seventy-five feet high, creating different tiers or levels of gardens. Most of the evidence of the garden's existence comes from secondhand stories and poems. Some archaeologists have found ruins similar to a few descriptions of the gardens, but official records of landmarks and construction projects of the time do not mention the gardens. All this uncertainty adds to the wonder of the hanging gardens.

Maintaining the plants is another mystery linked to the gardens. Because Babylon's climate is dry year-round, there had to have been some way to keep the many plants watered. Many historians believe an irrigation system, consisting of a chain pump and **cisterns**, carried water in buckets from the Euphrates River high up to a basin that fed the many elevated plants. Each bucket was attached to a chain. The chain was then rotated by a wheel or lever manned by workers. Each rotation moved the buckets into the water and lifted them to the basin that fed to the elevated plants. Other historians think there was a screw pump system that lifted the water to the plants. As the screw rotated, it carried water up with its threads. The Hanging Gardens of Babylon may be one wonder that will keep historians guessing for all eternity.

cisterns:
Artificial reservoirs or tanks for storing water.



This depiction of the Hanging Gardens is based on the Kuyunjik relief in the British Museum. An artificial slope provided irrigation.



A Tribute to Zeus

You are walking through the streets of the Greek city of Olympia, home of the Olympics, alongside many others to find your way to the games for the first time. You suddenly stop in your tracks to stare at the great temple towering over you. It draws your attention away from the games, and your curiosity gets the better of you. You enter the temple and find the largest statue you have ever seen. You instantly recognize the figure made of ivory and gold as Zeus. In one hand, he holds a scepter with a majestic bird perched on top, and in the other hand he holds Nike, goddess of victory. You came to see the mighty Olympic athletes, but have gazed upon something much more magnificent—the statue of Zeus.

The statue of Zeus resided at the temple in Olympia, the site of the ancient Olympics. Phidias, one of the greatest Greek sculptors, carved Zeus from ivory, **plated** him with gold, and adorned him with precious metals and stones. The statue was about twenty-one feet wide and forty feet tall. To compare this statue with one that exists today, think of the statue of Lincoln at the Lincoln Memorial. That statue is only nineteen feet high.

Phidias finished the statue of Zeus in 435 BCE, and it stayed at the temple of Zeus at Olympia until 394 CE. By then, Christianity was the official religion of the Roman Empire. Its priests were threatened by the temple and its statue because they represented a religion that worshiped many gods. According to some historians, the priests talked Roman leaders into moving the statue of Zeus to Constantinople, where it was destroyed by a fire in 462 CE.



plated:
Covered with a thin layer of metal.

Smaller copies of the statue existed at one time, but no accurate copies survived to modern times. Historians have found remains of the original statue of Zeus from the temple's ruins in Olympia, confirming the move from Olympia and its existence. They have also found the ruins of Phidias' workshop where his sculpting tools and remains of materials used to construct Zeus still lay. This was a great work of art and history lost to the world, leaving us to wonder how amazing it would be to bask in its towering beauty.





A Wonderful Temple

Imagine walking the streets of the Greek city of Ephesus, Turkey around the year 400 BCE. You wander the dirt roads, browsing the array of available market goods from food to jewelry. You soon come to a structure unlike any you have seen before. The Temple of Artemis stands before you, inviting you into its long halls divided by many large pillars. You hear religious leaders spreading their beliefs while their voices battle the calls from neighboring merchants announcing new shipments of goods for sale. This busy marketplace was the center of a great Greek city, but it is now a swampland. The marshy environment has swallowed the once glorious city of Ephesus, leaving behind little evidence to be found by the naked eye.

The Temple of Artemis at Ephesus was built to honor the Greek goddess of hunting and fertility. She was beloved by the ancient Greeks, and they showed this by constructing the great temple in her name. The Temple of Artemis was used for both religious practice and a marketplace. It was more than 400 feet long and more than 200 feet wide with 127 sixty-foot-tall pillars of marble inside. The temple had a **perimeter** of marble stairs leading up to it on all sides. Gold statues, sculpted by many of the best Greek artists of the time, were located along the borders of the roof.

The Temple of Artemis was first built in 550 BCE. It stood until 356 BCE when it was burned down by a man named Herostratus. This man burned the temple only so his name would be remembered in history books for all time. The people and rulers of Ephesus swore to never mention the name Herostratus so his quest for fame would fail, but Greek and Roman writers revealed his name in their works. According to legend, Alexander the Great was born on the same night that the Temple of Artemis burned down. Legend says that the



perimeter:
The whole outer boundary or length of a figure or area.

temple was burned because Artemis was so occupied with Alexander's birth that she was unaware of her temple's destruction. The temple was rebuilt in 350 BCE, but destroyed again in 262 CE by the Goths. Due to the decline of religious followers, the temple never returned to its former glory.



Alexander the Great

was a student of Aristotle and king of Macedonia who conquered the Mediterranean region, including the Greek and Persian Empires. Alexander is thought of as one of the most successful military leaders of all time.

In 1863, the British Museum sent an architect named John Turtle Wood to find the Temple of Artemis. In 1869, he unearthed the ruins of the temple, removing 132,000 cubic yards of swamp to find the foundation and other parts of the temple. Remains of many sculptures were returned to the British Museum and are now preserved and on display to the public. Another British Museum expedition, led by D. G. Hogarth in 1904, continued the **excavation** of the temple's ruins. The members of this expedition found evidence of five temples, each one built on top of the foundation of the previous one, providing proof of temple reconstruction. Now a single pillar has been erected on the foundation to remember the Temple of Artemis's past glory.



excavation:
Digging away a covering,
such as dirt.

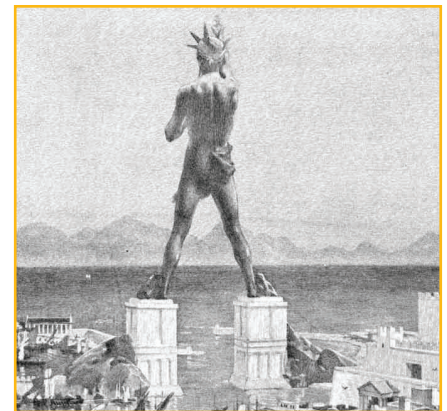
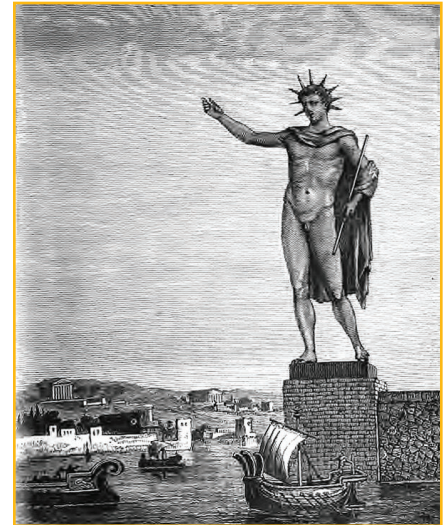


The Original Statue of Liberty

You are standing on the deck of a boat heading into the harbor of the great trade city of Rhodes. You look up to the cliff above, and there stands one of the greatest statues your eyes have ever seen. The statue is a man dressed like a Greek god standing guard over the city you are about to enter. As you pass, you cannot look away. You gaze in wonder at the statue's detail and size. The sunlight bounces off the bronze statue, and you see every muscle and feature of the Colossus. After you pass, a sense of safety drapes over you because you are now in the refuge of Rhodes's harbor.

The Colossus of Rhodes was once one of the largest standing sculptures of its time. It was completed around 280 BCE, nearly fifty years after Alexander the Great's death. When Alexander died, the Greek empire split apart, and five different generals—Antigonus, Ptolemy, Seleucus, Lysimachus, and Cassander—fought to control the remaining lands. One of these battles included the siege of Rhodes. Demetrius, a general under his father, Antigonus, led his armies and navy into battle for control of Rhodes, whose people supported Ptolemy. Demetrius was defeated by the strong outer defensive walls of Rhodes, leaving the people to rule themselves. After the victory, the Rhodian people sold all the materials left behind by Demetrius's army and built the Colossus with the money.

The Colossus was made in the likeness of Helios, the Greek god of the sun. The statue was about 110 feet tall and it stood on a fifty-foot **pedestal**. The Colossus had an iron skeleton, stone pillars built inside the legs for support, and molded pieces of bronze for skin. The Colossus was destroyed during an earthquake around 224 BCE. The Rhodians decided to leave the ruins of Colossus where they fell, fearing they would anger the gods if they rebuilt the statue. Its parts were looted and



pedestal:
A support or foot of an upright structure.



sold by Arabs when they conquered Rhodes hundreds of years later, around 600 CE.

As a result of the statue's destruction and looting, no proof of how the statue stood in the harbor remains. Historians and artists have debated the statue's pose for hundreds of years. There are two supported poses; the classical form where the Colossus stands with legs together on one pedestal and one where he stands with legs apart straddling the entrance to the harbor. Most historians support the theory that the Colossus was built standing in the classical stance with its feet together on a single podium. There are no credible sources or evidence to support the Colossus straddling the harbor, only imaginative pictures from modern-day artists. Most historians do not believe the statue stood across the harbor entrance because the weight of the statue would be difficult to balance if the legs were spread across a gap. Construction would have halted ship traffic into the harbor, which would have crippled the city's economy, and debris from the fallen statue could have destroyed passing ships or blocked the passageway.

Can you think of any other landmark, maybe one that exists today, that resembles the Colossus? When the French built the Statue of Liberty for the United States as a present, the Colossus was noted as its main inspiration. Both have represented liberty for their countries and instilled a sense of freedom to all who have passed them.



The New Colossus

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glow world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
"Keep ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

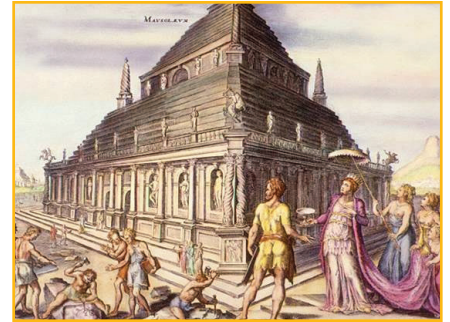
—Emma Lazarus, Statue of Liberty



The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus

Your family members were once loyal and loving subjects of King Mausolus and Queen Artemisia. You remember stories told by your grandparents of how King Mausolus was victorious in battle and made your home city of Halicarnassus the capital city. Now that you are older, you are taking a trip to King Mausolus's great tomb to pay your respects. You arrive at the courtyard entrance and are astonished by the lion statues that line the path and walls. You have now reached the marble stairs and climb into the tomb, passing between the largest pillars you have ever seen. You stop and think about how King Mausolus must have been a great man for such a grand building to be made in his honor.

The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus is another great ancient wonder whose ruins rest at the British Museum. A mausoleum is a free-standing above-ground tomb, built in many cases for someone of importance such as a king or other royalty. In this case, the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus was made for King Mausolus, a ruler within the Persian Empire who died in 353 BCE. Before his death, Mausolus and Queen Artemisia conquered most of the Asia Minor territory. Upon the king's death, Queen Artemisia, who was also King Mausolus's sister, had a magnificent tomb built in his honor. No expense was too great for her deceased husband. Greek architects and sculptors were brought in to work on this great wonder. Scopas, who also built the Temple of Artemis, was one of the many artists who worked on the mausoleum.



Root-Word Origin:

The word *mausoleum* comes from King Mausolus's name because his tomb was so spectacular.

King Mausolus's mausoleum had three major sections. The bottom, or first section, was made of marble stairs lined with statues of lions. The middle, or second section, was a floor filled with columns and the tomb itself. The top, or third section, was a pyramid topped with a statue of the king and queen in a **chariot** together.

Queen Artemisia died two years after King Mausolus, and the artisans who had been building the structure completed it after her death. As the result of many earthquakes, the mausoleum lay in ruins by 1404. Most of the ruins were looted, and the marble was used to fortify the walls of the castles and homes of those living in the area. While this wonder no longer stands, many statues and carvings from the tomb reside in the British Museum, where people can still see the glory of King Mausolus.



chariot:

A two-wheeled vehicle that was pulled by horses and used in wars, races, and parades in ancient times.

Other Famous Mausoleums:

The Taj Mahal and tomb of Qin Shi Huang, the first emperor of the Qin Dynasty, are examples of other magnificent mausoleums built long ago.



The Taj Mahal



Qin's Terracotta Army



The Beacon of Light in Alexandria

Imagine that you are sitting in the crow's nest at the very top of a ship. Sharp rocks lay waiting in the shallow waters to pierce your boat's hull, and it's your job to point them out. It is midnight. You cannot see far ahead, and the shore of Alexandria is not visible. The moon is covered by clouds, so it is a very dark night. Then you see a towering light. It is a beacon provided by the Lighthouse of Alexandria in Egypt. Your path is now lit, and you can navigate the ship safely to the harbor.

The Lighthouse of Alexandria provided a warning and sight at night for all ships traveling through its nearby waters. Not only was it extremely helpful, the Lighthouse of Alexandria was a magnificent structure. Ptolemy Soter, the ruler of Egypt after Alexander the Great's death, began construction on the lighthouse around 290 BCE. His son Ptolemy Philadelphus continued construction on the lighthouse after his father's death, completing it in 270 BCE. Sostratus was the head architect for this wonder and created its plans at the famous library at Alexandria. After its completion, the Lighthouse of Alexandria stood about 384 feet tall, which is about the size of a forty-story building, and had three main sections. The lighthouse had a large square base tower, with an **octagonal**-shaped tower on the next level. On top, a cylinder housing mirrors and a large torch, signaled to the world. During the day, lighthouse keepers reflected sunlight from the mirrors, and the keepers lit the torch with fire at night.



octagonal:
Having eight sides.

The lighthouse was a great beacon to the incoming and outgoing ships of the harbor until 1323 CE, when a series of earthquakes toppled it. As it was with almost every ancient wonder, it was recycled and used by others after its destruction. The stone base was used by the Arab Sultan Qaitbay when building a fort in the same location. Remnants of this once great landmark have been found in the surrounding harbor, and images of it survive on old coins minted in ancient Egypt. The Lighthouse of Alexandria was the only truly practical wonder of the world, since it helped others and showed the glory of an ancient civilization.

A modern replica of the Lighthouse of Alexandria appears in the Window of the World park in Changsha, China.

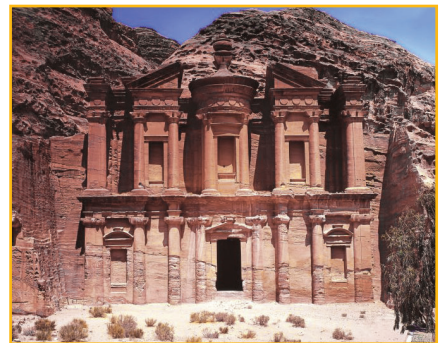
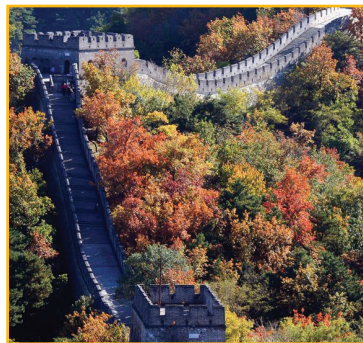


Conclusion

Each of the seven wonders of the ancient world has made a significant impact on present and past civilizations. Legends of these great wonders have inspired past and modern architects. They allowed ancient civilizations to show pride in their leaders and their victories, and they allow us to dream of what was and what could have been. Many organizations have proposed new lists of wonders, which include the Christ the Redeemer statue at Rio de Janeiro, the Great Wall of China, the Colosseum at Rome, the temple at Petra in Jordan, the Machu Picchu ruins in Peru, the Chichén Itzá temple in Mexico, and the Taj Mahal in India. Other lists name the most amazing natural wonders, such as the Grand Canyon in Arizona and the Great Barrier Reef in Australia. Which monuments, buildings, bridges, or other landmarks of today do you think should be recognized as our wonders of the world? As we continue to search for and study the seven ancient wonders, we will uncover more about past civilizations. Will you become one of the historians who finds a treasure of the past, or will you build or discover the next one?

Find out more!

Visit www.new7wonders.com/en to learn more about other wonders of the world.



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Foreign Languages and Their Words

By Tanya Jackson



Introduction

MANY LANGUAGES

Do you speak any languages other than English? Does anyone you know speak Spanish or French? How about Arabic? Or Hindi? There are almost 7,000 different languages in the world. English is not even the most widely spoken. The Chinese language takes that honor.

In the United States, we call languages other than English foreign languages or second languages. For many people, however, English is actually their second language. They speak something other than English at home with their families.

Many words have come into English from other languages. Some of these words might not be a surprise. But some of them, words like *shampoo* or *rodeo*, might shock you. In this book, you'll learn about eight of the more widely spoken languages in the world. You'll learn where they're spoken and how many people speak them. You'll also learn about certain words in English that have come from these languages. So let's get started on our language journey, shall we?

Words to Know:

linguistics
(ling wis'tiks):
n. The study
of written or
spoken language.



I

FRENCH



Common English Words from French:

Blonde
Brunette
Infant
Cuisine
Volunteer

Millions of people in the world speak French. Do you know anyone who speaks French? French is spoken in more than 100 countries. It is the official language of France, of course, where many millions of people speak it. It's also one of the two languages of Canada. French is the official language of the Canadian province of Quebec. French is also the language of a few African nations.

Many countries call French the “international language.” Imagine the leaders of two countries. One speaks English. The other speaks Italian. They can't decide which language to speak to each other. Often, as a result, they speak to each other in French.

Do you know what a passport is? A passport is a document you need to travel to other countries. Governments print them for their citizens. United States passports have both English and French on them. French really is the international language.

The French language has had a big effect on English. As many as forty percent of English words have French roots! This happened when a French king took over as the king of England in the Middle Ages. He brought his language with him, and the English borrowed many French words!

infant
infant



Let's move on to France's neighbor, Germany. More than 100 million people speak German. It is the official language of Germany and Austria, and one of the official languages of Switzerland. It is also spoken in the tiny countries of Lichtenstein and Luxembourg.

German and English have a special relationship. English is a Germanic language. That means that the English language grew out of German. The first English speakers came from countries that spoke an old type of German. The German and English languages have changed a lot since then, but you can still see how they are similar.

Maybe you can figure out some words with German roots. Can you guess what colors *blau*, *grün*, and *braun* are in English? It is not hard to see how the words *blue*, *green*, and *brown* come from German.

You have probably spoken German without knowing it! Have you ever seen a dachshund? These dogs were originally bred in Germany. You have probably eaten one or two hamburgers or frankfurters in your life. These famous foods are named after the towns of Hamburg and Frankfurt in Germany. Have you ever said "Gesundheit!" when someone sneezed?

The word *gesundheit* means health in German!

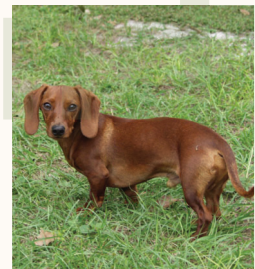
II

GERMAN

Did you know?

The German language has compound words just like English. For example, the English word *iceberg* comes from the German word *eisberg*, which means ice mountain!

dachshund



hamburger

III

ITALIAN

Did you know?

Some cities in America have many people living in them who come from Italy and speak Italian. Some of these cities have a neighborhood called “Little Italy.”



Let’s investigate another European language. This time, it’s Italian. About 60 million people speak Italian.

The great majority of them live in Italy, but Italian people live everywhere.

Italian, like French, is a romance language. A romance language is a language that has its beginnings in Latin. There are five romance languages: Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Romanian.

Italian cuisine, or style of cooking, is popular all over the world. So many Italian words about cooking and food have made their way into languages like English. You’ve probably heard the word *spaghetti*. You may have even had spaghetti. That’s an Italian word. *Lasagna*, *pasta*, and *oregano* are also Italian words.

Not only food words have come to English from Italian. Other words have too. *Opera* is an Italian word. So is *buffoon*, which means a silly person. Have you ever seen paintings on the sides of buildings? That’s called *graffiti*. It’s an Italian word too!



graffiti

V

ARABIC

That's different!

As you know, when you read English, you read from left to right across the page. But when you read Arabic, you read from right to left!



Arabic is one of the world's oldest languages. It is the official language of many Middle Eastern, Asian, and African countries. Most people in Saudi Arabia speak it. People in Afghanistan and Iraq speak it. The people of Egypt, Kuwait, and Jordan also speak it. It is also the language of the Koran (koo-AHN), the most important book to Muslim people. Arabic is a widely spoken language; more than 200 million people in the world consider Arabic their native language.

Many English words come from Arabic. The word *admiral*, which means sea commander, comes from the Arabic *amir-al-bahr*, which means ruler of the seas. The color word *amber* is an Arabic word. Even the word *sofa* comes from the word *s-uffah*, which means a raised seat with cushions. That makes sense because that's what *sofa* means in English too!

A lot of the names of stars come from Arabic. That is because Arabs were some of the first astronomers. They studied the night sky. Have you heard of the bright star *Betelgeuse* (beetle-juice) in the constellation Orion? That name comes from Arabic. Like the other languages in this book, Arabic has brought much to the English language.

sofa



sofa

Hebrew is also one of the oldest languages on Earth. Texts from more than 3,000 years ago were written in Hebrew. Like Arabic, Hebrew was spoken in the area known as the Middle East. Also like Arabic, Hebrew is read from the right side of the page to left. Spoken Hebrew was a dead language for centuries. This happens when people stop speaking a certain language. When it is no longer used, people stop teaching it to young people. But Hebrew stayed alive as a written language. Then in the 19th century, people started speaking it again. Now it is spoken by about five million people worldwide.

In Israel, Hebrew is the official language. There is a Hebrew Language Academy located there. The academy is a school devoted to keeping the language alive. In the Jewish religion, many ceremonies are in Hebrew.

There may not be any actual Hebrew words in English. But many English words have Hebrew roots, or beginnings. For example, there is a Hebrew word that is pronounced *buz*. It means plunder or steal. That is the root of the English word *buzzard*. In English, a buzzard is a bird that steals meat from dead animals. Also, the Hebrew word *bash* means shame. That's where the English word *bashful* comes from!



So Hebrew has also played a role in the English language.

buzzard

VI HEBREW



Common English Words from Hebrew

Abacus
Behemoth
Camel

VII

CHINESE

A Popular Language!

One out of every five people on Earth speaks some version of Chinese as his or her native language!

bok choy



chow



chow

Let's leave Europe now. We'll visit the most populous nation in the world, the People's Republic of China. There are more than one billion people who speak Chinese in the world! That's a lot of people speaking one language.

There are actually two versions of Chinese. One is called Mandarin. The other is Cantonese. More people speak Mandarin than speak Cantonese. Mandarin is the official language of China.

There are a few Chinese words in English, though perhaps not as many as from the other languages in this book. One very common word is *silk*, which comes from Chinese. Silk is a delicate and beautiful cloth that was first made in China. Specialty food words, like *soy* and *bok choy* (a leafy, white vegetable) are from Chinese. The same goes for the word *chow chow*, which is Chinese for dog. In English, a chow chow is a breed of dog. Also, the word *ketchup* comes from the Chinese *ke jap*, which means tomato sauce! That makes sense.

Let's investigate one more language before we complete our journey. That language is Hindi (HIN-dee). It is a very widely spoken language. The people of Nepal and India speak Hindi. Along with English, it is the official language of India. Nearly 180 million Indians speak Hindi. Millions more across the globe speak it.

The Hindi language came mostly from a language called Sanskrit (SAN-skrit). Sanskrit is mostly a dead language now. Do you remember how a language becomes a dead language? But Sanskrit's follower, Hindi, is still very much alive.

Have you ever tied a *bandana* around your head? Do you wash your hair with *shampoo*? Have you ever slept on a *cot*? Have you ever read about how fast a *cheetah* can run? All of these are Hindi words! Where could you go to learn more Hindi words?

shampoo



shampoo

VIII

HINDI

Language on Screen!

The Indian film business is called Bollywood. It is a play on the American word *Hollywood*. Bollywood films are becoming popular all over the world. People speak Hindi in these films. As they become more popular, more people will learn about the Hindi language!

CONCLUSION

As we learned earlier, there are thousands of languages in the world. Look at the chart on this page. These are the top ten most popular languages. We didn't explore all of them. No matter where you go in the world, you can find someone speaking a language that you might not know. It could be at a friend's house! It could be downtown. It could be in another country. Everywhere, people are speaking interesting and beautiful languages. They are writing books and other texts in these languages. Many of these languages have brought their own words into English. So, in a way, learning other languages helps us learn about our own languages. Seek out opportunities to hear people speak different languages. You just might hear words you know! When you do, you're taking the first step into the wide, wonderful world of language.

