



Questioning

Level 3

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

© 2011 Success for All Foundation. All rights reserved.

Produced by the Reading Wings 4th Edition Team

Director of Development: Nancy A. Madden

Assistant Director of Development: Kate Conway

Project Manager: Wendy Fitchett

Rollout Coordinator: Kate Conway

Developers: Kathleen Collins, Allison Dower, Richard Gifford, Angie Hale, Allison Hoge, Susan Magri, Brian Sevier

Interactive Whiteboard Developers: Austin Jones, Chris Jones, Tyler Keen, Adrian Mathenia, Becca Slavin

Editors: Marti Gastineau, Mary Jane Sackett, Janet Wisner

Project Coordinator: Kristal Mallonee-Klier

Designers and Production Artists: Dan Birzak, Debra Branner, Michael Hummel, Susan Perkins

Media: Tonia Hawkins, Peter Lance, Jane Strausbaugh

Proofreaders: Meghan Fay, Samantha Gussow, Betty Wagner

Online Tools: Michael Knauer, Victor Matusak, Terri Morrison, Christian Strama, Mary Conway Vaughan

Illustrators: James Bravo, Jason Lego

Photo Credits: Photos used in the student readings are from the following sources:

- Burning Well
- Library of Congress American Memory
- Morguefile.com
- NationalAtlas.gov
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- National Park Service
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- PDPhoto.org
- University of Texas Libraries
- U.S. Army
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Geological Survey
- Wikimedia Foundation



A Nonprofit Education Reform Organization

200 W. Towsontown Blvd., Baltimore, MD 21204
PHONE: (800) 548-4998; FAX: (410) 324-4444
E-MAIL: sfainfo@successforall.org
WEBSITE: www.successforall.org



Table of Contents

◆ Sir Robert's Treasure.....	1
◆ The Forgotten Password.....	21
◆ Colin and the Maidens.....	23
◆ The Yo-Yo New Kid.....	25
◆ Zebras.....	49
◆ Rhinoceros.....	51
◆ Giraffes.....	53
◆ Warthogs.....	55
◆ Chimpanzees.....	57
◆ Polar Bears.....	59
◆ Lions.....	61
◆ Mountain Gorillas.....	62
◆ Okapi.....	63

◆ African Elephants.....	65
◆ African Penguins.....	67
◆ Cocoa.....	69
◆ South America: Food for Thought.....	83

Sir Robert's Treasure



Elisabeth Bennet

Map of Garren

Village Castle

Crema
Estat



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

The Forgotten Password

Colin was a young prince in the kingdom of Gibson. He was a handsome young boy and full of mischief.

“Colin! Are you paying attention?” shouted King Michael. Colin jumped at the sound of his father’s booming voice.

“Yes, father, of course,” Colin said. He looked out the window where the horses galloped in the meadow. He couldn’t wait to get back to his horse and run through the fields. He could almost feel the wind on his face.

“Good. This is important!” The king left the room and slammed the door. Colin chuckled to himself. His father was always making a big deal out of little things.

“I’m sure whatever he said wasn’t that important,” Colin whispered. He ran outside to his horse. He had already forgotten about speaking with his father. Colin spent the rest of the day outside. He and his horse galloped through fields and streams. They explored the kingdom. By the end of the day, Colin was sweaty and dirty from his travels. He couldn’t wait to return to the castle and have a nice feast and a warm bath.

As Colin started home, the wind began to blow. The sky darkened. Colin dreamed of becoming a knight, but he wasn’t one yet. He had no sword and was scared. He heard a wolf howl. Colin raced home quickly.

Just as he reached the drawbridge, he came to a sudden stop. The knights guarding the building lowered their swords.

“What’s the password young man?” grumbled the first knight.

“I...I...don’t remember!” shouted Colin.

“Then you need to leave immediately!” shouted the second knight.

“Don’t you know me?” cried Colin. “I’m the prince! Let me in at once!”

The knights laughed at Colin. “Look at yourself. You certainly do not look like the prince with your torn, dirty clothes. Leave at once!” The first knight started toward Colin with his sword drawn.

Colin looked back at the dark forest. Then he looked at the castle where his dinner and bath waited for him. He began to cry. Just then the king saw Colin from the window. “Let him in!” he shouted to the knights. “This is why you’re not ready to be a knight, Colin! You don’t listen, and you get yourself into trouble!” yelled the king. Colin heard him yelling, but he didn’t pay attention. He was too busy running to the dining room for dinner.

Colin and the Maidens

Colin, the young prince from the kingdom of Gibson, was outside with his horse. He walked by several maidens. They were milking cows and hanging clothes out to dry.

“Look at the maidens! So busy with work and no time to play!” laughed Colin. The maidens gritted their teeth. They knew they could not say anything to the prince for fear of losing their jobs.

Luckily for the maidens, the queen happened to be walking around the grounds. She heard Colin teasing the maidens.

“Colin! How dare you speak to those ladies like that!” scolded the queen. “For the rest of the day, you will finish their chores!”

Colin’s face turned as red as a freshly picked apple. “I will not!” he shouted. The queen’s eyes turned icy cold. Colin felt the hairs prickle on the back of his neck.

“You will not speak to your mother that way, Colin. You will do as I say, or you will have your horse taken away for a month,” hissed the queen. Colin dropped his head and shuffled over to the maiden who was milking a cow. The maiden hid a smirk as she moved aside. The cow was not used to Colin and started to bellow. It angrily moved away from Colin. Colin kicked over the pail of milk that the maiden had started collecting. His cheeks burned even redder.

“Why don’t you start with hanging the clothes,” suggested the queen. Colin sulked over to the clothesline. He could not lift the heavy basket. He struggled, and the basket tipped. Wet clothes spilled out onto the ground. The maidens could not hold back their laughter.

“Run along, ladies. Colin will manage for the rest of the day,” the queen winked at them. Colin was angry, but not foolish enough to disobey his mother. So for the rest of the day, he learned to milk the cows and hang the clothes. He stripped the sheets from twenty beds and dusted five rooms. He carried trash and planned dinner. By the end of the day, he was exhausted. Never again did Colin tease the maidens.

The Yo-Yo New Kid

Story by Andy Wolinsky
Illustration by James Bravo





CHAPTER 1

I met Terrell a few years ago. He moved to my town. I remember the day really well. It was a sunny day. It was a Saturday. Dad and I were painting the house. We were painting it blue. I had just spilled some paint on the front steps.

“Don’t cry over spilled paint, son,” Dad said. Then he helped me clean it up. We used the hose. We used some rags. Then Dad said, “Let’s take a break.” We sat down with some lemonade.

A strange car turned into the street. It drove down toward our house. Then it turned into the house next door. It parked there. I had never seen such a car. It was really big. It was red and white. It was shaped like a giant box, with wheels.

“What kind of car is that, Dad?” I asked.

Dad put down his lemonade. “That’s called a moving van, Nate,” Dad said. “People use them to move. Looks like we’ll have new neighbors.”

Our old neighbors, the Mortons, had moved away a month ago. Molly Morton was my age. She was my friend. I missed her. I watched a man climb out of the moving van. He was by himself. So it seemed there wouldn't be anybody my age. Not living next door, anyway.

Then another car pulled into the driveway. It parked behind the moving van. A woman climbed out of the car. From the other side, a kid climbed out. He had a baseball hat on. He looked to be about my age. But I couldn't tell for sure. I took a sip of my lemonade. Dad and I sat and watched the new neighbors.

CHAPTER 2

Dad said, “I’m going to go over there. Looks like they’ve got some heavy things. I’ll help them carry them. Do you want to come?”

I was shy. I said, “Can’t I stay and finish painting the door?”

“Sure thing,” Dad replied. “There’s some more paint in the garage. Run and get it and get to work.”

I ran into the garage for the paint. When I got back, Dad was already over at the neighbor’s house. He was helping the man carry a bed. They carried it from the van to the house. Then they disappeared inside the house. The woman was carrying boxes.

The boy was sitting on the front step. He was playing with a yo-yo. I watched him as he played. He flicked the yo-yo out and then quickly pulled it back in. Back and forth, up and down went the spinning red toy. I had a yo-yo myself, but I couldn’t ever make it work right. This boy was certainly good at it. I enjoyed watching him.

I watched him for a few minutes. Then I got ready to paint. I stirred the blue paint in the bucket. I dipped my brush into the paint. I don’t know if most kids like painting. I sure do. And I’m pretty good at it too. That’s why Dad lets me help when something needs a fresh coat. So I started painting. After a few strokes, I heard a voice right behind me. “You play with yo-yos?” The voice startled me, and I jumped. I turned around, and the boy was standing right there.

CHAPTER 3

I carefully put my paintbrush down. “Hey there,” I said. I put out my hand. I said, “My name’s Nate.”

The boy shook my hand. “I’m Terrell,” he said. “Some folks think my name is TARE-ell, but it’s not. It’s pronounced tuh-RELL.”

“Terrell,” I said. “I got it. No problem.”

“So, do you play with yo-yos, or what?” Terrell asked.

I said, “Well, I’m not too good at it. I have one, though.”

Terrell said, “Well, run and get it. I’ll give you a few tips.”

“Okay,” I replied, “but first let me make sure these painting supplies are cleaned up.” I carefully closed the lid of the paint bucket. Then I laid the brush across the top. I made sure the brush wasn’t dripping onto the ground. “I’ll be right back,” I said, and then ran inside.

I rummaged through my closet, looking for my yo-yo. I hadn’t played with it for a while, so it was hard to find. I finally found it near the bottom of the closet. It was in a shoebox along with some of my action figures. It looked like it was in pretty good shape. It was a little dusty. So I brushed it off and took it outside. Terrell was still out there, waiting for me. He was flicking his yo-yo up and down, back and forth.

CHAPTER 4

When I came outside, I showed my yo-yo to Terrell. He looked it over. “Hey, a Franklin. Nice.”

“What’s a Franklin?” I asked. I didn’t know what Terrell was talking about.

“Franklin is the company that made your yo-yo, so it’s a Franklin. Mine’s a Bronson. They’re both good.” Terrell handed my yo-yo back to me. “Let’s see what you can do,” he said.

I slipped the string around my finger. I held the yo-yo tight in my hand. Then I flung the yo-yo toward the ground. The yo-yo whirled away from me. It reached the end of the string. I tried to pull it back. But I couldn’t. The yo-yo stopped spinning. It just hung on the end of the string.

“I just can’t seem to get it right,” I said.

Terrell said, “Man, it’s all in the wrist. Watch me. Watch my wrist.” He flung his yo-yo toward the ground. It reached the end of the string. Then he flicked his wrist backward. The yo-yo came right back up to his hand.

“I think I can do that,” I said.

“Sure you can,” he replied. So I did as Terrell had showed me. It took me a few tries. But I finally got it! He was right! It was all in the wrist! There we were, playing with our yo-yos.

“You’ve got it,” Terrell said, “so now I think you’re ready for some tricks, like rock-the-cradle and walk-the-dog.” That sounded good to me.



CHAPTER 5

Terrell taught me a few tricks over the next hour or so. I learned walk-the-dog. That's like making the yo-yo look like a dog on a leash. It rolls along the ground. Then you pull it back up. Then Terrell taught me rock-the-cradle. That's a trick for two hands. You can hold the yo-yo string and make the yo-yo look like a rocking cradle. They're pretty cool tricks. We did them over and over again.

Then Aunt Tina, Dad's sister, poked her head out of the kitchen window. "You boys want some lunch?" she asked.

"Sure, Aunt Tina," I said. Aunt Tina makes great lunches.

Terrell said, "I'd better ask my folks." He called over to his house. "Hey Mom!" he hollered. "Can I have lunch over here with Nate?"

Terrell's mom yelled back, "If it's okay with Nate's mom, it's okay with me!"

I said, "Aunt Tina's my aunt, not my mom. My mom doesn't live with us anymore. But Aunt Tina makes great lunches! Let's go inside!"

"Cool," said Terrell. We put our yo-yos in our pockets and went inside. Aunt Tina had made us her special peanut butter sandwiches. Her secret? She puts a dash of pepper in the peanut butter. That makes them extra tasty. Aunt Tina poured us some lemonade. Terrell and I sat down to eat.

CHAPTER 6

I wanted to learn a little bit more about my new friend. As we ate, I asked him a few questions. Of course, I was careful not to talk with my mouth full. That’s one of Aunt Tina’s pet peeves. She hates it when I do that. “Where are you from?” I asked him.

“We just moved from Nashville,” he replied.

“Nashville? Where’s that?” I asked. I’d never heard of it.

“It’s south of here, in Tennessee,” he replied.

“Why’d you move?” I asked. Aunt Tina scolded me and told me to stop being so nosy.

“It’s okay, ma’am,” Terrell said. “My mom got a new job up here in Ohio,” he answered. “This fall, she’ll be the principal of Trading Elementary.”

“Wow!” I exclaimed. “That’s our school! I’ve never been friends with a principal’s son before! I’ve never lived next to a principal either!” I thought that was pretty neat. Maybe I’d get special treatment at school this year. Maybe so, maybe not.

“Yeah, well, you really have to watch yourself when you’re the principal’s son,” said Terrell. “If I get in trouble at school, my mom always knows about it.” He laughed, and I laughed too. Aunt Tina poured us some more lemonade, and we finished our sandwiches. We were having a good time.

CHAPTER 7

After lunch, we went outside to play with our yo-yos some more. Terrell taught me a few more tricks. We played for a while. Then Terrell said, “You mind if I ask you a question?”

“Sure thing,” I said.

“I don’t want to be nosy. But how come your mom doesn’t live with you?” I get this question a lot, whenever I meet somebody new. It’s really not a big deal. I explained it to Terrell.

“My mom has a great job over in London. That’s in England. It’s across the ocean. She works for a big bank. But my dad’s job is here. He runs a machine shop. Mom gets to take off a lot of time in the winter. She usually spends a few months here in Cincinnati, and then spends the rest of the year in London,” I explained.

“Wow,” said Terrell. “Do you miss her?”

“Of course I do,” I said, “but I’ve gotten used to it now. She’s lived over there for about three years. Besides, it’s nice having Aunt Tina around. My mom says that someday maybe I can visit her over in England. But I’ve never been out of the country. I’ve never even been out of Ohio. But someday I will. Maybe next year or the year after,” I said.

Terrell listened and played with his yo-yo as I spoke. “I guess I understand,” he said. “That’s cool.”

CHAPTER 8

“**Hey,** you know what?” Terrell said. “We should check out my new house.”

“Good idea,” I said. “A friend of mine used to live there. But I’ve never been in an empty house. Let’s go check it out.”

Terrell said, “Well, it might not be so empty. My parents and your dad have probably moved a lot of stuff in already.”

“Right,” I said, “but let’s check it out anyway.” So we ambled over to Terrell’s house.

“Hey, boys,” said Terrell’s dad. He was sitting on the porch with Terrell’s mom and my dad. They were having lemonade.

My dad said, “Tony, this is my son Nate. Nate, meet Mr. and Mrs. Johnson.”

“It’s a pleasure to meet you,” I said. “Terrell, meet my dad.”

After everyone had met, Terrell and I went inside. We climbed the stairs. I’d climbed those stairs many, many times before with Molly. Terrell and I walked to the last room down the hall. It was Molly’s old room. Now it would be Terrell’s. The room looked the same, yet different. The walls were the same. The carpet was the same. But all of Molly’s stuff was gone. It had been replaced by Terrell’s bed, desk, and boxes.

“How do you like my new room?” Terrell asked.

CHAPTER 9

Terrell and I sat on the floor. We played with our yo-yos. Terrell looked around. “This is a pretty cool room.”

I agreed. “Yeah, it was cool when Molly lived in it too.”

“Who’s Molly?” asked Terrell.

“She lived here before you. Her family moved away last month. She was pretty cool for a girl,” I joked. Terrell smiled.

“It’s hard when friends move away,” Terrell said. “And it’s hard when you have to move yourself. I miss the friends I had in Nashville.” For the first time, Terrell seemed sad.

I said, “Yeah, well you’ll meet great people here. My friends, Lisa, Li, Juan, and Philippe. They’re all okay. My friends are your friends. Does that help?” I asked.

Terrell thought for a minute. “Yeah, I guess it does,” he said. “But I hope they’re better at yo-yos than you are.” He laughed at his own joke.

And do you know what? I laughed too.

CHAPTER 10

That night, Dad, Aunt Tina, and I sat down to dinner. “Looks like you’ve got a new friend,” said Aunt Tina. I saw Dad smile.

“Yeah, he’s okay, I guess.” I said. “He’s pretty cool.”

Then Aunt Tina said, “Well, you’re going over to Philippe’s house tomorrow for his party. You should have Terrell go with you.”

“But Aunt Tina,” I complained, “what if the other kids don’t like him?” I was almost certain that they would, but I couldn’t be absolutely sure. Sometimes people have a hard time meeting new people. I remembered what I had said to Terrell earlier that day. I had told him that my friends were his friends. Was that true? I certainly liked Terrell. But would my friends?

Aunt Tina put on a very stern face. “If your friends don’t treat your other friends well, then you have some important choices to make, Nate,” she said. “People who are mean to others just because they are new aren’t usually good people, and you’ll have to think about that.”

I understood what she was saying. But I had one more concern. “I’m not sure Terrell’s been invited to Philippe’s party.”

Aunt Tina said, “I’ve already spoken to Philippe’s father. Philippe and his father are expecting you and Terrell tomorrow. Okay? Now, help your father clean the dishes, and then get ready for bed.”

“Yes, Aunt Tina,” I said, getting up from the table.

CHAPTER 11

The next morning, I got up and had breakfast. After I finished, I went over to Terrell's house. He was playing with his yo-yo. He was sitting on the front porch.

"Hey, what's going on?" Terrell asked.

"Not much," I said. "Hey, I'm going to a party later. It's at Philippe's house. You want to come?"

Terrell stopped playing with his yo-yo. "I'm not sure. Who's Philippe?"

"Philippe's a friend of mine. He's cool. I told you about him yesterday." I wondered if Terrell had the same concerns I did. "Besides," I continued, "my Aunt Tina has already made sure it's okay if you go."

Terrell looked down at the ground. He started playing with his yo-yo again. I could tell that he was thinking. He was thinking hard. "Well," he finally said, "I guess I don't have anything better to do. Sure, I'll go." Finally, he grinned.

I was relieved, for the time being. "Okay, sounds like a plan. Philippe lives just a few blocks away. It doesn't take long to walk there. I'll come over around two o'clock, and then we'll go."

Terrell said, "That's cool. I'll do some unpacking before then."

I said, "I'll, uh, um, practice my yo-yo tricks."

Terrell laughed. "Good. You need all the practice you can get."

"Ha, ha, funny guy," I said. But I was laughing too.

CHAPTER 12

Two o'clock rolled around. It was time to go to the party. I'd spent most of the day working on my yo-yo tricks. I was getting really good at walk-the-dog. I still couldn't quite master rock-the-cradle, though. That trick still needed a little work.

I pocketed my yo-yo and walked over to Terrell's house. He wasn't outside, so I knocked on the door. Terrell answered. "Hey, what's up?" I asked. "You ready to go?"

"Sure. Let's do it," Terrell said. He sounded more confident than he had earlier today.

"Wait a second," I said. "First, let me show you my trick." Terrell watched as I did walk-the-dog with my yo-yo. It was perfect. "What do you think?" I asked.

"Not bad, for a rookie," Terrell said. "Not bad at all. Now let's get going. We don't want to miss this party, do we?"

"Right on," I said, "follow me."

We walked the few blocks to Philippe's house. We both played with our yo-yos as we walked. Terrell was silent. I thought he might be a little nervous. I didn't know what to say. "These guys and girls are all pretty cool," I said as we reached Philippe's door.

"Okay," Terrell said as I knocked on the door.

CHAPTER 13

Philippe's older brother Marco answered the door. Marco was in college, so we seldom saw him. "Hey, Nate! What's the word, man!" he said. Looking at Terrell, he said, "You must be Terrell. I'm Marco. Pleased to meet you."

Terrell smiled. I thought maybe this wouldn't be so bad. "Hey, I'm Terrell," he said, "and I'm from Nashville."

Marco smiled. "Nashville?" he said, "I've got friends from down there. Hear it's a cool place. Well, c'mon in, partners. Your friends are all out back. I think they're playing volleyball or something. I'm helping Mom make some snacks."

Terrell said, "Thanks, Marco." We walked through the house. Terrell muttered to me, "If Philippe is half as cool as his brother, it will all be okay."

I knew Philippe was usually pretty cool. "He is. They all are," I said. I was feeling relieved. We reached the back door and walked out into the back yard. Everybody else was playing volleyball. Philippe and Juan were on one team. Lisa and Li were on the other. It was boys against girls. They all stopped playing as soon as we stepped outside. Everybody looked at me. Then everybody looked at Terrell. Terrell stopped smiling. I could tell he was really nervous. And you know what? So was I. I hoped my old friends and my new one would get along. But I couldn't be sure.

CHAPTER 14

Philippe tossed the volleyball to Juan and jogged over to us. “Hey, what’s up, Nate?” he said. Then he looked at Terrell. “You must be Terrell,” he said. “Welcome to my house.” Philippe stuck out his hand.

“What’s up, Philippe,” Terrell said, shaking Philippe’s hand. “Thanks for having me over. Pretty cool place. And your brother’s pretty cool too.”

Philippe smiled. “Who, Marco? Yeah, I guess he’s all right for a big brother. He’s all right as long as he’s not picking on me. Which isn’t too much, since he’s gone away to college. Where are you from?”

The other kids were standing in the yard, staring at Terrell. Terrell ignored them for the time being. “I’m from Nashville, in Tennessee.”

“Nashville.” said Philippe. “Oh yeah. My mom pointed it out to me on a map last night. Cool. Well, welcome to Cincinnati.”

“Thanks!” said Terrell.

“You play volleyball?” asked Philippe.

“Sure do,” said Terrell.

“Well, pick a team,” Philippe said. “You can play with the guys or the girls.” It looked like everything was going to be okay. Or so I thought.



CHAPTER 15

Terrell opted to play with Lisa and Li. He walked over to their side of the net. So I walked over to Juan’s side of the net. Juan turned to me. “Who’s the new kid?” he asked. “And why is he here?” I didn’t like the sound of Juan’s voice.

I grew a little red in the face. I said, “He’s Terrell. He’s my neighbor. And he’s here because he was invited.”

Juan and I stared right at each other. I heard Philippe call out, “Guys, is there a problem over there?”

Then I heard Terrell ask, “Yeah, is everything okay, Nate?”

Before I could say anything, I heard Juan yell across the net, “Everything’s fine, new kid.”

Terrell had the ball in his hands, and he dropped it. “My name’s not ‘new kid,’ ” he said, striding across the yard toward Juan, “it’s Terrell. So don’t call me ‘new kid,’ understand?” This was exactly what I was afraid of. I knew that sometimes, people didn’t like meeting new people. That seemed to be Juan’s problem. I didn’t know what to do. I didn’t want anyone to hurt Terrell’s feelings. But Juan was my friend too, though I didn’t like how he was acting. What was I to do? I remembered what Aunt Tina had said. I turned to Juan.

CHAPTER 16

Before I could say anything, Lisa spoke up from their side of the volleyball net. She said, “Would you boys stop being so silly? What’s the big idea? Why do you have to act so macho all the time?”

Then Li said, “That’s right. I agree. And Juan, you’re being especially silly. Just because Terrell’s new in town, doesn’t mean you should call him ‘new kid.’ It isn’t very nice. His name’s Terrell. And he’s a friend of Nate’s. That makes him a friend of mine too.”

“And mine,” said Lisa.

“Same goes for me,” said Philippe.

We were all looking at Juan. Terrell picked up the ball and tossed it up and down. I could tell he was thinking about what he’d do or say. I still didn’t know what to do or say. I didn’t think I had to say anything more. But there was still a lot of tension, or discomfort, in the air.

Philippe tried to make everyone feel better. He said, “Hey y’all. We have a volleyball game to play. Hey, Terrell, pass me the ball.” Terrell looked at Philippe, and a smile came across Terrell’s face.

“Sounds good,” Terrell said, and threw Philippe the ball. Then he turned to Juan.

CHAPTER 17

Terrell spoke to Juan. “Are we cool, then?”

We all waited for Juan’s answer. Juan looked down with unease. Then he looked up at Terrell. He cleared his throat.

“Hey, man,” he began. “I’m really sorry. I don’t know why I acted like that. It was silly of me. It’s my bad self. We’re totally cool, Terrell.”

Terrell smiled. So did I. We all did in fact. We all waited to see what Terrell would say. He offered his hand to Juan. He said, “Let’s start all over. I’m Terrell. I’m new in town. I’m from Tennessee. I’m a friend of Nate’s.”

Juan smiled and shook his hand. “Terrell, it’s nice to meet you. My name’s Juan. Nate’s a friend of mine too. And if you’re a friend of his, well then, you’re a friend of mine too. Do you want to play some volleyball? You can be on my team. We’re playing against the girls and Nate. What do you say?”

Terrell laughed. “Sounds good to me. Let’s hope Nate’s better at volleyball than he is at yo-yo.”

Even though the joke was on me, I laughed. All of us did. You have to admit, it was pretty funny. I was just happy to see my old friends and my new one getting along. All was well.

CHAPTER 18

Like I said at the beginning, this all happened a few years ago. In the months after that, we all became great friends. Sometimes we'd all play volleyball at Philippe's house. Sometimes we'd play other games at Lisa and Li's house. (Oh, did I mention they were sisters?) Sometimes we'd all have Aunt Tina's great sandwiches at my house.

But the best times were at Terrell's house. Before long, we all had our own yo-yos. Terrell taught us all walk-the-dog and rock-the-cradle. He taught us even harder tricks. He taught us the breakaway, the Eli Hop, and the dragster. The dragster is my personal favorite.

You should have seen all of us. Our bright yo-yos would flash and spin in the air. We'd take turns showing off our new tricks. Or we'd all do the same tricks at the same time. It was always pretty cool.

And the whole time, Terrell would smile. So would I. In fact, we all would. We all soon forgot that Terrell had, at one point, been the new kid.

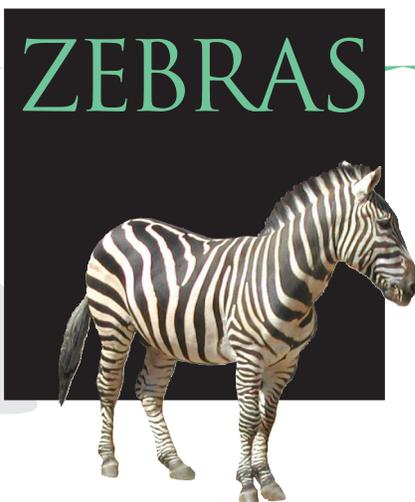
ZEBRAS

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

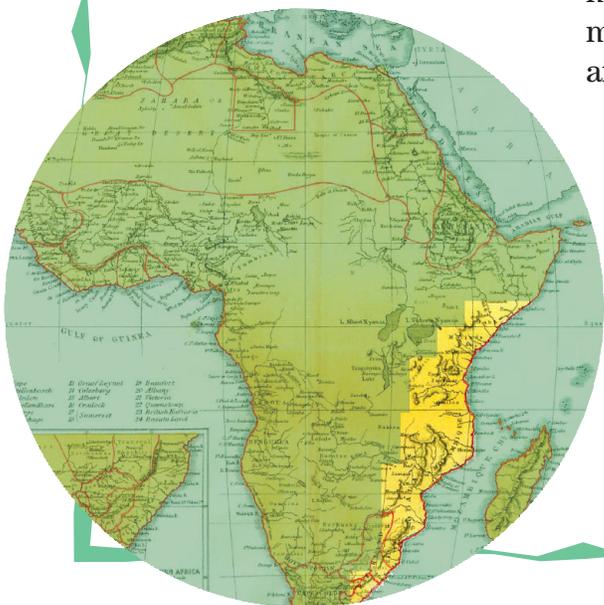
Zebras are very sociable animals that usually live in small family groups made up of a male (stallion), one or more females (mares), and their babies (foals).

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.

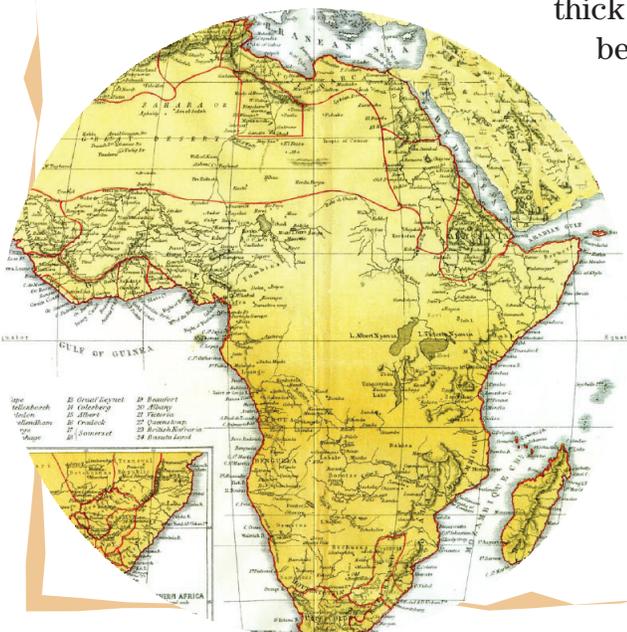
3. Don't bother me, I'm eating.

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.

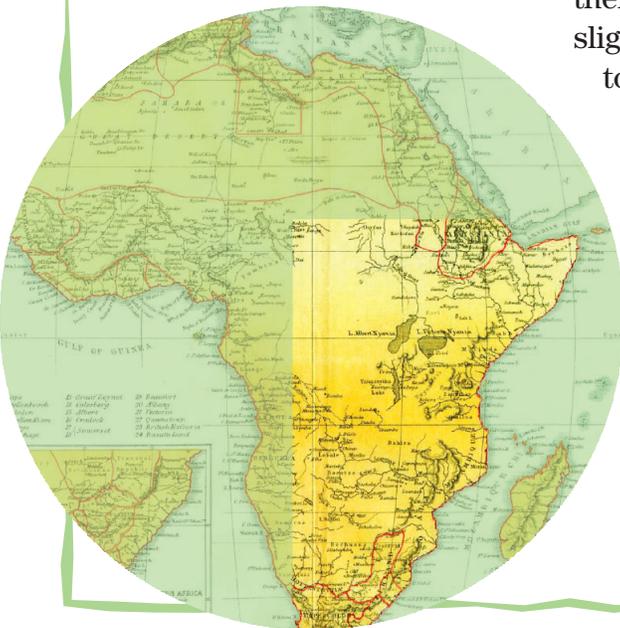
Giraffes are sociable. They live together peaceably with

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.

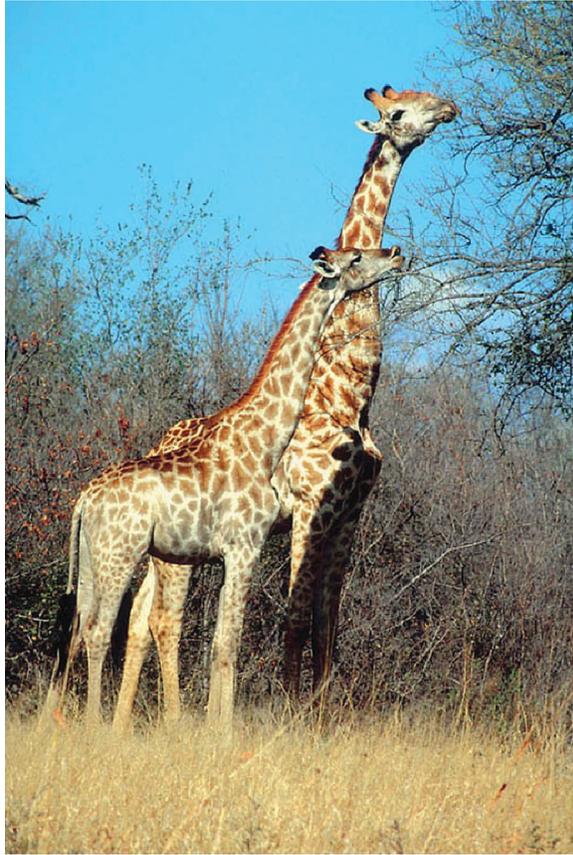
5. Baby Giraffes

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.

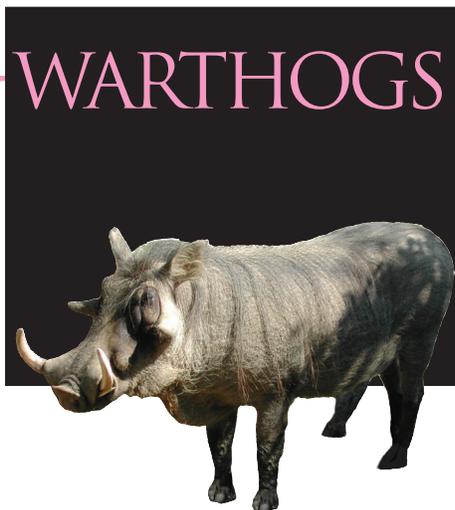
WARTHOGS

1. Where Warthogs Live

Warthogs live in the warm, dry savannahs (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?

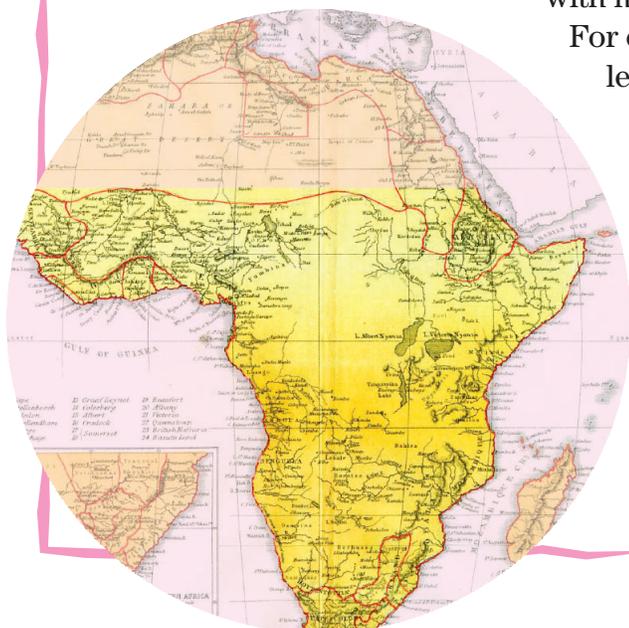
Like cows, warthogs are grazing animals. They eat short grasses, and they dig in the ground for roots and bulbs when grass isn't available.

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

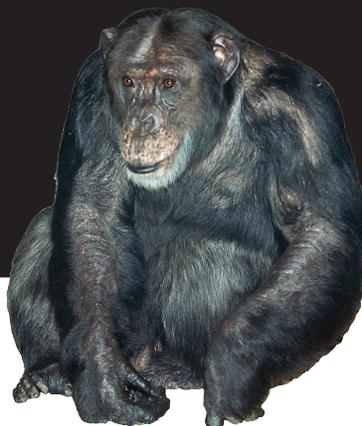
Warthogs have two to five baby warthogs at a time. Since warthog females only raise one litter of babies at a time, she chases her last litter away when she is ready to give birth to the next. Warthogs become self-sufficient very early in life. They begin grazing at two months old and stop getting milk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

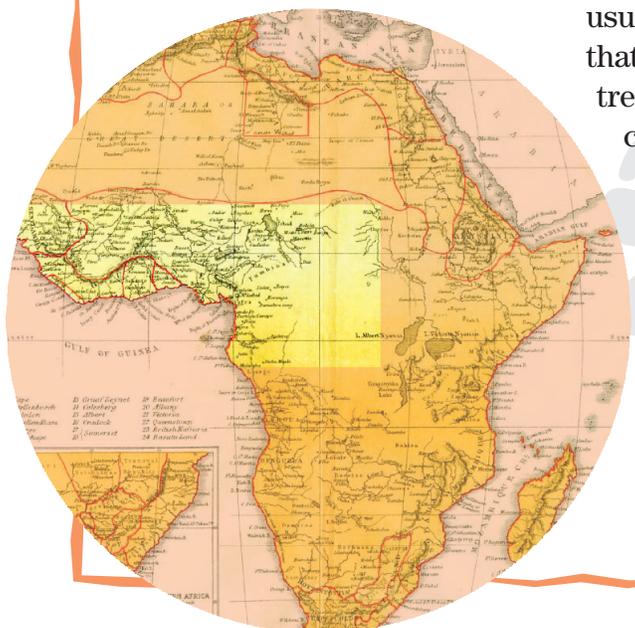
4. Eat your veggies.

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.

LIONS

Is that a lion?

How can you tell a lion apart from other types of big cats? Males are very easy to identify. They have big, shaggy manes around their faces. Lions are a yellowish color. Female lions really do look like huge cats; just like one you might have at home, but much bigger! One thing that makes lions very special is their unique roar. It can be heard from miles away!

Where do lions live?

Lions used to be found in many parts of Africa and Asia. But today, lions live only in a few parts of Africa. Lions live in many different types of land. Some prides live on open plains. Others live in forests. Some others even live in grasslands.

What do lions eat?

Are you afraid a lion could eat you? Don't worry. Humans are not a part of a lion's normal diet. But lions do eat large animals such as rhinos, hippos, giraffes, and zebras. Lions are terrific hunters, but they are even better thieves. More than half of their prey is taken from other animals that made the kill.

Are lions endangered?

Lions are not endangered, but they are threatened. This means that they could become endangered. Many lions are killed by hunters. Humans are the lions' greatest threat. Disease also kills many lions. The lions' natural habitat is destroyed as more people move into these areas. This can cause lions to starve if food sources leave or are destroyed.

MOUNTAIN GORILLAS

What is a mountain gorilla?

There are three types of gorillas. The mountain gorilla is the largest. Male gorillas can grow up to 6 feet tall and weigh as much as 500 pounds! Mountain gorillas have long, strong arms and wide chests. They are very hairy and are covered in coarse, black hair. Males sometimes grow a silver streak of hair down their backs. This gives them the nickname “silverbacks.”

Where do mountain gorillas live?

Mountain gorillas live in the mountains, of course! They live in thick forests in the mountains of east Africa. Three national parks are the only natural habitats left for the mountain gorillas.

What do mountain gorillas eat?

Some people are surprised that such big, strong animals as the mountain gorillas eat mostly plants. In fact, the mountain gorilla eats more than one hundred different kinds of plants. Some of these plants include roots, stems, bark, and bamboo. Since these plants have a lot of good vitamins and minerals, the gorillas don't even need to drink a lot of water. The mountain gorilla spends a large part of its day looking for food. This is called foraging.

Are mountain gorillas endangered?

Mountain gorillas are endangered. This means they are in danger of dying off. Like many endangered animals, the mountain gorillas' biggest threat is humans. Many humans are moving into the areas where mountain gorillas live. This destroys the gorillas' natural habitat. Only about 700 mountain gorillas are alive today. It is the most endangered gorilla.

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,

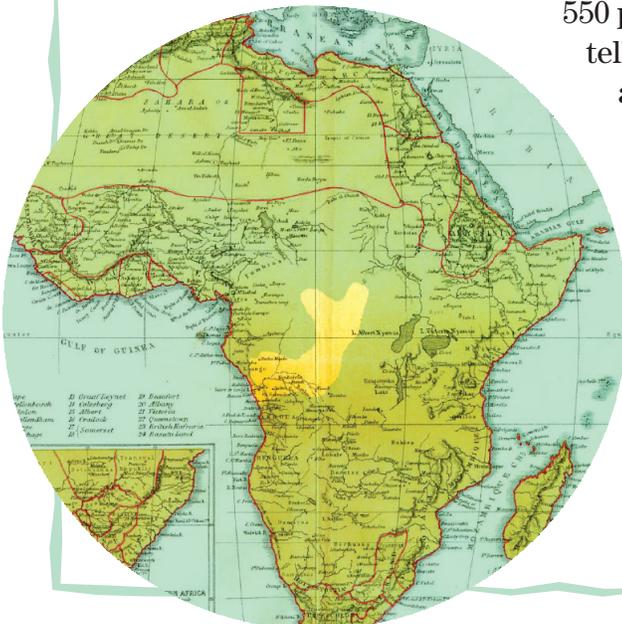
like a zebra, while its body is very dark brown or black. Their giraffelike necks and faces (though their necks are much shorter than a giraffe's) are lighter in color than their bodies, though the exact color varies greatly.

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.

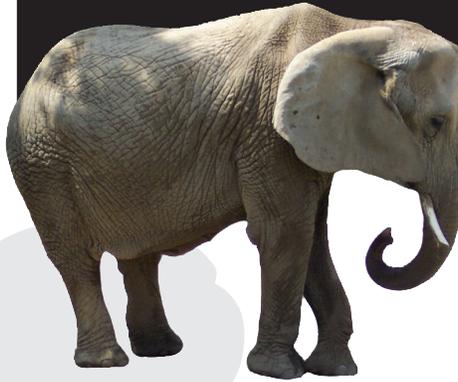
AFRICAN ELEPHANTS

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!

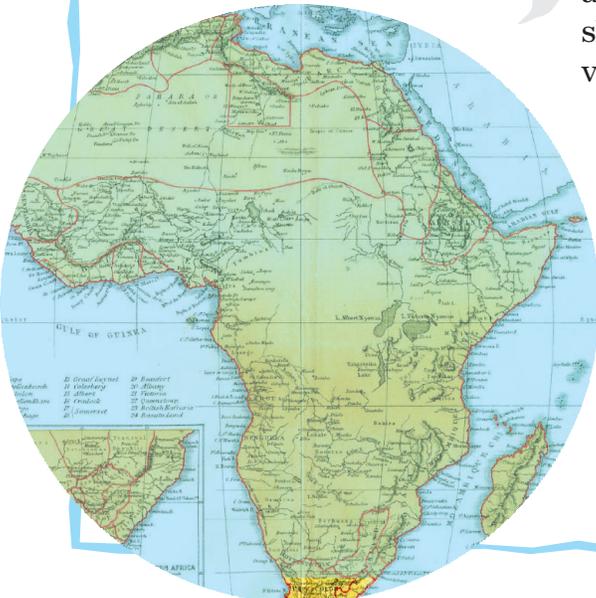
African penguins live almost entirely on small fish. They are very effective

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.



Cocoa

By Sam R. McColl
Illustration by James Bravo





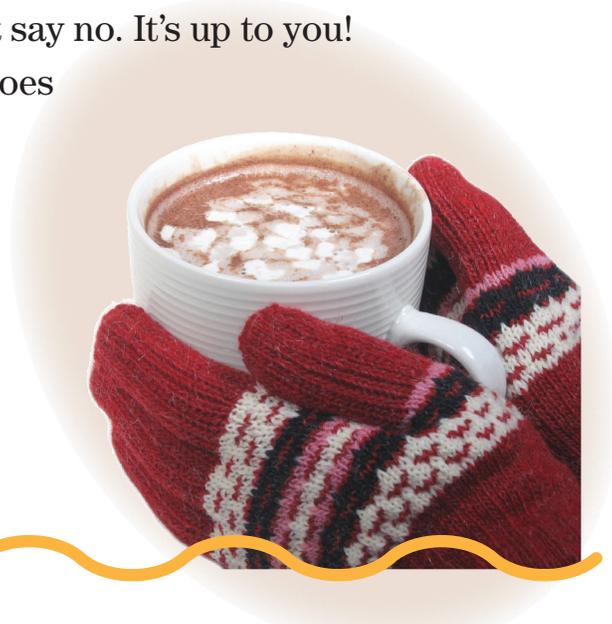
Introduction

The snow blows cold as you finish your snowman out in the front yard on a blustery winter day. Or, maybe the cold wind nips at your cheeks after playing football or raking the leaves on a chilly fall day. It's time to go inside and warm up.

What's a great way to do that? Have someone make you a nice hot cup of cocoa! As the hot water boils on the stove, you take off your cold jacket and sit down at the table. The hot water pours into the melted chocolate or into the soft powder in your mug. The smell of chocolate wafts through the air. You can't wait.

Finally, the cocoa cools down just enough so you can take your first sip.

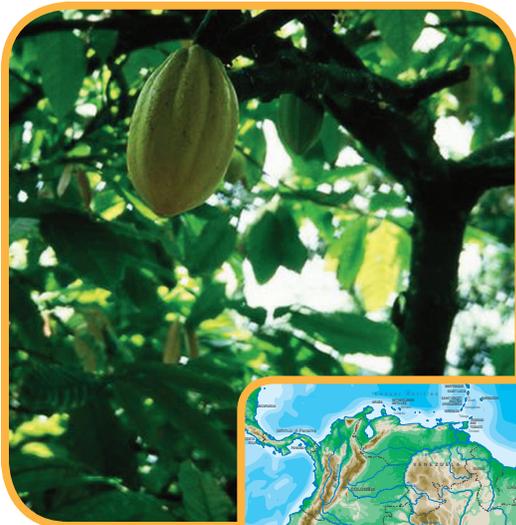
Immediately you feel the warmth seep through your cold fingers and toes. It tastes good, doesn't it? Not too sweet, but not too bitter, either. A grownup asks you if you want whipped cream. You might say yes, or you might say no. It's up to you! Let's learn more about the cocoa that goes into this wonderful drink.





Where does cocoa come from?

Cocoa comes from a tree—the cocoa tree. The cocoa tree is native to the Amazon rainforest in South America. The rainforest has some trees that grow more than one hundred feet tall. These



trees create a shady canopy, sort of like a beach umbrella, that protects some of the smaller trees from the hot sun. The cocoa tree is one of these smaller trees. But it's not that small. Some cocoa trees grow to more than fifty feet tall.

Amazon rainforest





As these cocoa trees grow, they create cocoa pods. Cocoa pods are usually the size and shape of a football. If you crack open a cocoa pod, guess what you'll find? Cocoa beans!

The cocoa bean is the most important part of the cocoa tree. Here's why. If you grind up the cocoa bean into powder, you have the first part of hot cocoa—the chocolate. You may know that sometimes hot cocoa is referred to as hot chocolate. So the hot cocoa you drink comes from beans, which come from pods, which come from trees!



Inside a cocoa pod—
cocoa beans!

To learn more, check out:
[www.cocoatree.org!](http://www.cocoatree.org)



How was cocoa first made?

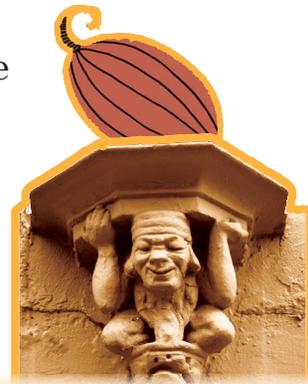
No one is really sure how the people of South America learned that cocoa beans could make a delicious treat. The Mayans were the first people to use cocoa beans to make hot chocolate. They learned to ferment, roast, and grind the beans into powder. Then they mixed the powder with water and other spices, such as chili powder, to make a warm, spicy chocolate drink.

Chocolate was popular and important to the Mayans and Aztecs. Cocoa beans were used as money and could be traded for other goods. In Mayan society, anyone with money could buy the cocoa to make hot chocolate. In Aztec society, hot chocolate was saved for kings, priests, and other important people. Chocolate was an important part of religious ceremonies in both cultures.

Europeans were first introduced to cocoa in the early 1500s, when Hernando Cortés conquered the Aztecs. Although the hot chocolate drunk by the Aztecs was too bitter tasting for the Spanish, they soon found ways to sweeten it with honey and sugar. When it was brought back for the royals in Spain, they could not get enough of it. The expensive import was only a treat for the rich.

conquered (v.)

Overcame by force.



Chocolaty Fact!

Spanish Catholic priests were allowed to drink chocolate when fasting, a time when they were not allowed to eat solid food. Chocolate provided energy and nutrients.

How did the rest of Europe learn about cocoa?

It took almost 100 years for the rest of Europe to learn about cocoa. The Spanish had kept the secret of the delicious treat for themselves! No one is sure how other European countries found out about it, but its popularity spread quickly.

Just like in Spain, chocolate was only a treat for those who could afford it in most European countries. Importing the beans, which only grow well in tropical climates, was expensive. Other ingredients used to make hot chocolate were also expensive. Sugar to sweeten it or cinnamon to spice it up also had to be imported. That didn't stop chocolate lovers across Europe.

England sold chocolate to anyone who could afford it. Chocolate houses opened up across London. People with enough money could go to a chocolate house to enjoy a cup of hot cocoa, just like people go to coffee houses to enjoy coffee today!



So, all hot cocoa comes from South America?

No, not really. Cortés made sure that on one of his trips back to Spain, he brought with him cocoa seeds from the cocoa tree. By doing this, he made it possible for other countries to start cocoa plantations in other parts of the world. France, England, and the Netherlands all had colonies around the world. England sent cocoa beans to Sri Lanka to be planted. The Dutch started plantations in Indonesia. France had plantations in the



Cortés brought cocoa seeds from South America to Spain and Europe.

West Indies. Africa also had several chocolate plantations. Today, Africa produces most of the world's cocoa beans.

Chocolate plantations had a lot of problems early on. It took a lot of people to make a successful plantation. Europeans used slave labor to harvest cocoa beans. Even after slavery ended in European countries, cocoa farmers were treated poorly.

Chocolaty Fact!

William Cadbury, a famous English chocolate maker, wanted other chocolate makers to join his protest. He stopped buying cocoa from plantations and farms that had harsh working conditions.

What's a modern cocoa farm like?



Life on a cocoa farm can still be tough for the farmers. Many cocoa farms are family farms. Many times, the cocoa bean is the family's only source of income. On a family cocoa



harvest (v.)
Collect what is needed from a crop.

farm, the entire family works together to grow the cocoa. Sometimes, even the kids help out. Fortunately, most of the big companies that buy cocoa know that the kids are helping, so these companies make sure that the kids are not mistreated. These companies even make sure the

kids have enough time to attend school. The companies know that cocoa is important, but so is education.

The cocoa beans are harvested, or collected from the crops, at certain times of the year. This happens with almost every crop in the world. As a result, the harvest is the most important time of the year for a cocoa farming family. Everyone works long days during the harvest. The farming families have to make sure they have plenty of cocoa to sell to their customers. It is, indeed, a busy time. The beans are sold to cocoa companies all over the world. Eventually, the cocoa winds up in your neighborhood store!

How did we go from hot chocolate to chocolate bars?

It took a few developments in the chocolate-making process to turn hot chocolate into chocolate bars. Grinding cocoa beans took a lot of time. At first, people had to do it by hand. Soon, people started using water mills and wind mills to grind the beans. When steam power was invented, machines were made to grind cocoa beans.

In 1828, a special machine called a cocoa press was invented. This machine squeezed the cocoa butter out of the cocoa solids, leaving a fine powder. This made chocolate drinks smoother and less gritty. By 1847, a man named Joseph Fry added cocoa butter back into cocoa powder to make the world's first solid chocolate bar.

Another important development was made in 1875, when Henri Nestlé and Daniel Peter introduced milk to chocolate, making milk chocolate candy bars. Milk chocolate is one of the most popular ways people enjoy chocolate today.



Chocolaty Fact!

By 1900, Milton Hershey had created machines that mass produced chocolate bars. This brought the cost of chocolate down. Now everyone could afford chocolate!

So how do you make a chocolate bar?

Many of the same processes used by the ancient Mayans and Aztecs to make chocolate are still used today, although machines do a lot of the work! We still have to take the beans out of the pods and shells. We still have to roast and grind the beans to make all our favorite chocolate treats.

When the cocoa beans arrive at the factory, they are sorted by type and country of origin, cleaned off, and weighed. Weighing the beans is important to making sure the chocolate recipe comes out correctly.

Next, the beans are roasted in large ovens to bring out their flavor and dry out the beans. After roasting, the beans are put in a machine that removes the shell and breaks the seeds into pieces, called nibs.

The nibs are then crushed and melted into a thick paste called chocolate liquor. A chocolate press then squeezes out the cocoa butter, leaving solid cocoa. This is what is used to make your hot cocoa!

Chocolaty Fact!

Cocoa butter is the main ingredient in white chocolate, which isn't really chocolate at all! Cocoa butter is also used in hand lotions and other beauty products.



The next step in making a chocolate bar is taking some chocolate liquor (remember, that is what you get when you crush cocoa beans) and adding condensed milk, sugar, and extra cocoa butter from the chocolate press to it. This is mixed into a brown powder called *crumb*.

condensed milk (n.)

Sweetened milk that has had the water removed from it.

The crumb needs to be smoothed out. It goes through a series of rollers that crush and grind it into a finer paste. This gives chocolate its smooth texture. Then it is put in a conching machine. This machine mixes, kneads, and grinds the paste until it is silky. Chocolate may stay in the conching machine for six days!

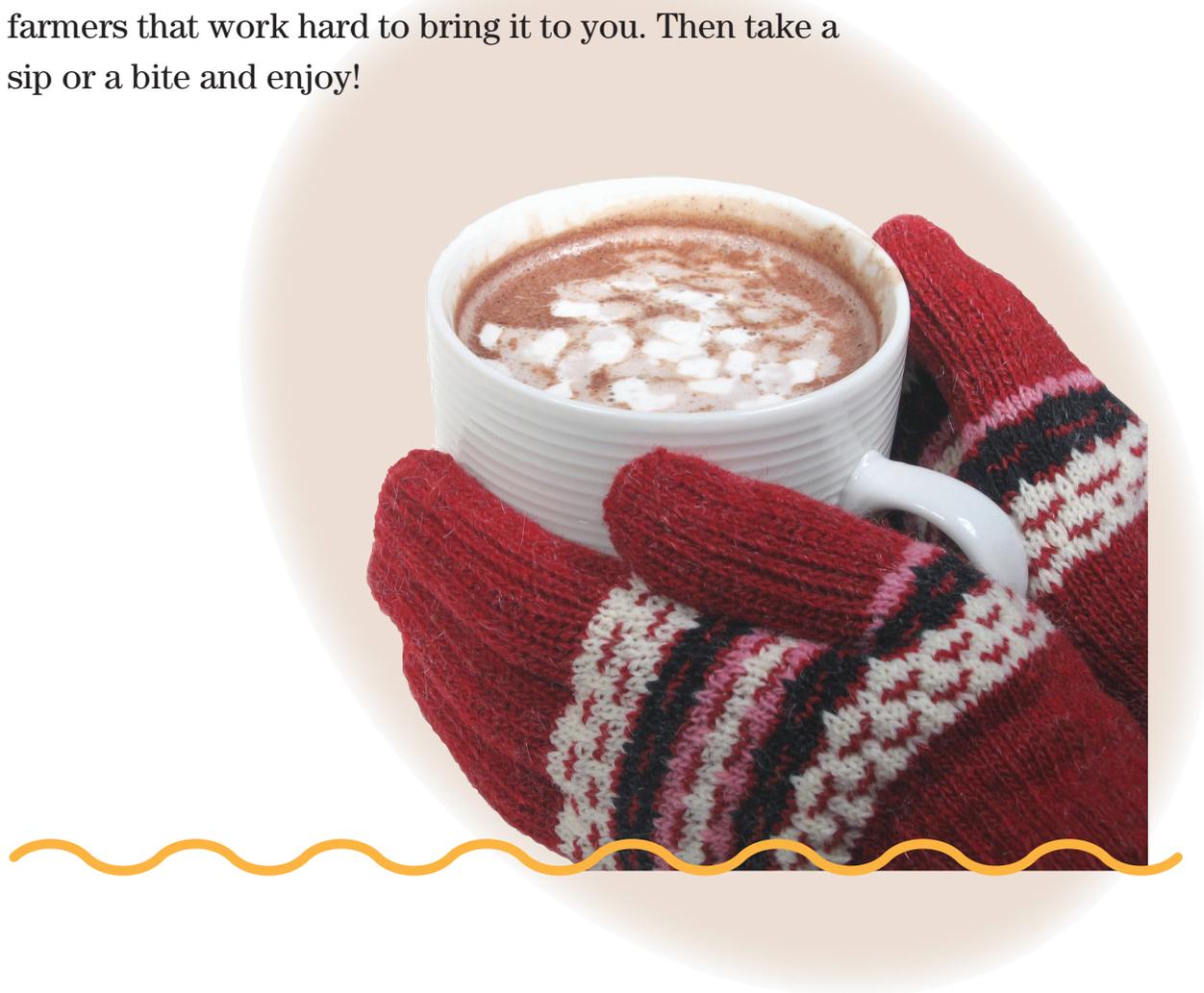
Next, the chocolate mixture is tempered. This means it is heated and cooled over and over again. This makes chocolate shiny and helps it melt well when making chocolate candies and bars, which brings us to the last step! The tempered chocolate is put in special machines that squirt it out into molds, or containers that give chocolate bars and candies their shape. You can buy chocolate in almost any shape possible, from bars, to eggs, to trains! Would you like to work in a chocolate factory?



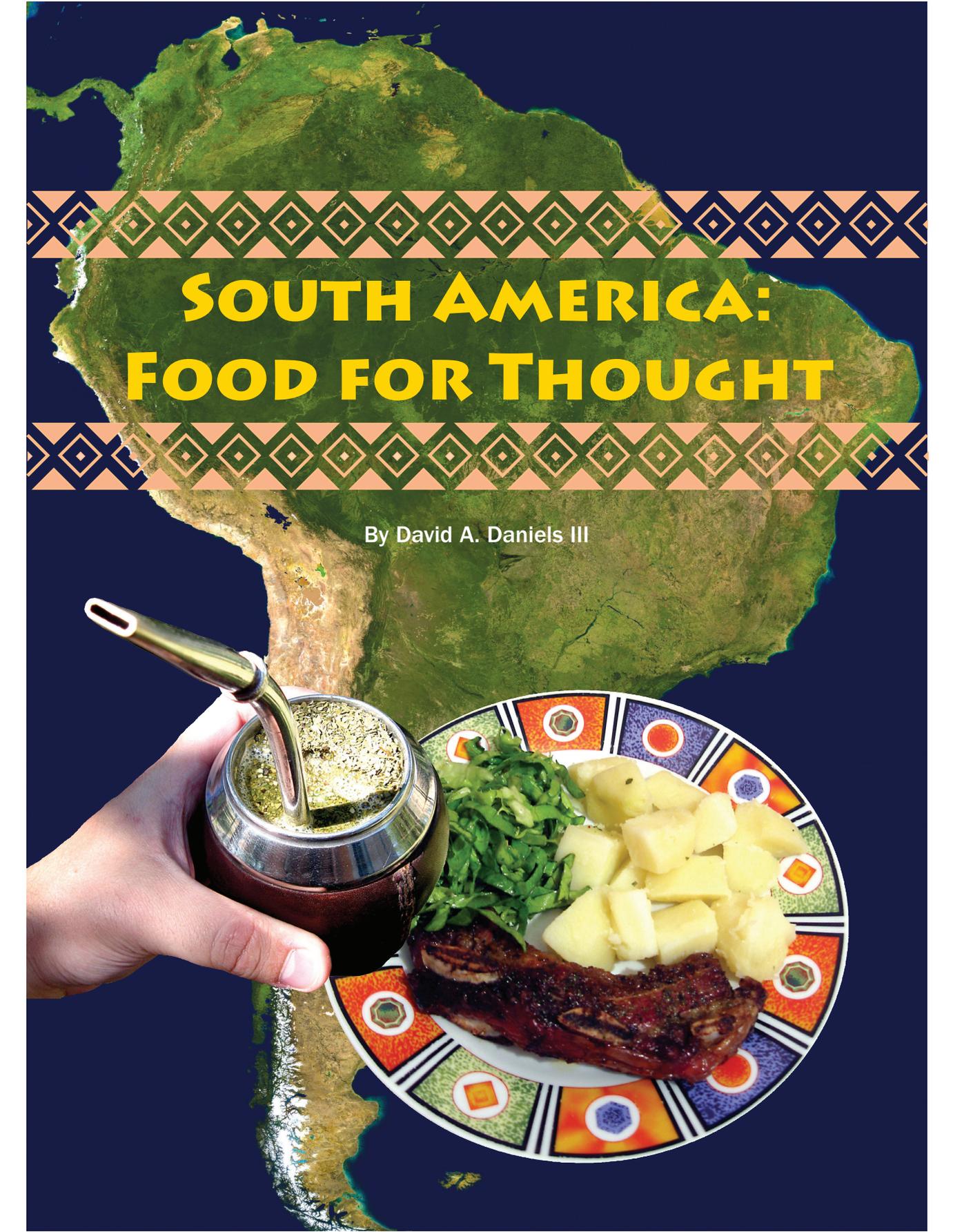
Cocoa can be found in a lot of things. It is used to make chocolate cakes, brownies, fudge, ice cream, milk, and even certain kinds of dinner foods! Chocolate can add delicious flavor to more than just desserts!

Still, hot cocoa is one of the most popular ways for people to use cocoa. It warms people up on cold days and makes people happy because of its wonderful taste. Some people even think that a cup of hot cocoa before bedtime helps them relax and fall asleep faster.

So next time you have a cup of hot cocoa or a chocolate bar, think of the interesting history of the cocoa bean. Think of its long trip from South America to other countries in the world. Also, think of all the farmers that work hard to bring it to you. Then take a sip or a bite and enjoy!







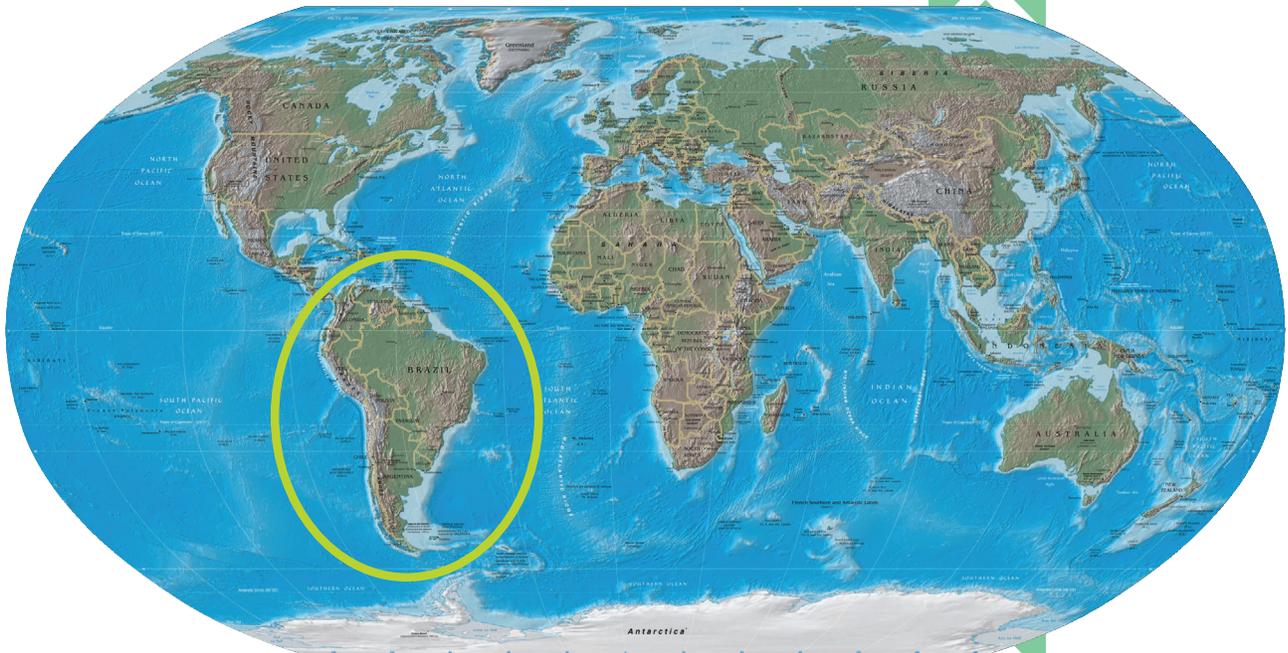
SOUTH AMERICA: FOOD FOR THOUGHT

By David A. Daniels III



INTRODUCTION

Can you name a continent that has exotic jungles filled with fruits, such as papaya and guava, and beautiful beaches whose waters contain a variety of tropical fish, oysters, scallops, and shrimp? What continent also borders both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans? If you guessed South America, you are correct! In addition to these natural beauties, South American countries have many delicious foods. From juicy, colorful fruits and fresh fish to beef, chicken, and pork, there are many delicious dishes to taste. Each country has traditional dishes influenced by local resources and heritage.



The **coastal** countries and cities of South America rely on the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and the Caribbean Sea for food. Shrimp, tuna, king crab, eel, and regional tropical fish are featured in the dishes of Colombia, Venezuela, Chile, Brazil, Peru, and Argentina. A few such dishes include Peruvian



Why do you think people living by coastal areas rely on the sea and ocean as sources of food? They rely on the sea and ocean because the neighboring waters are very accessible. Seafood is affordable near the coast and can usually be purchased fresh every day.

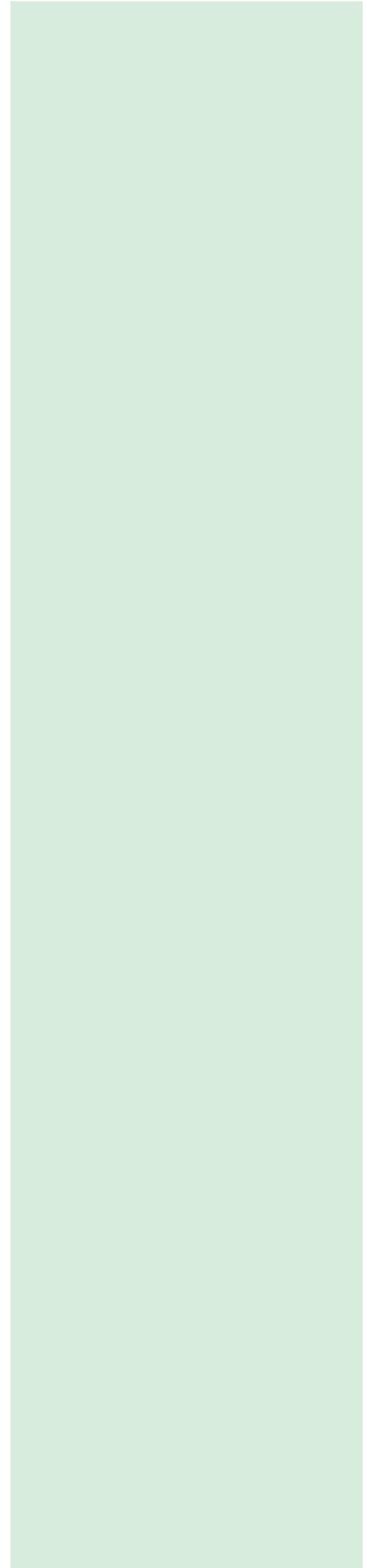
escabeche de pescado made from **pickled** fish and onions, an eel soup called *caldillo de congrio* and *machas a la parmesana*, an Italian-influenced clam **au gratin** featuring parmesan cheese, both from Chile, and spicy coconut shrimp from Brazil.

South America's landlocked countries, such as Bolivia, Paraguay, and the large inland sections of Brazil and Argentina, rely on farming and livestock for food. The differences in **geographic** location and food sources are why pork, chicken, beef, and root vegetables, such as potatoes, are more common in Bolivian and Paraguayan foods. Bolivia is inland from the coast. Its most famous geographical feature is the Andes mountain chain that runs through the country. Because of the high elevation, the rocky land conditions are well suited for farming potatoes and a grain called quinoa and for raising chickens and llamas. Llamas' woolly coats help them to survive in the harsh mountainous conditions. These animals provide the people with a sturdy work animal and a food source, but Bolivians also keep chickens in coops for a steady supply of eggs and meat. Paraguay, Bolivia's neighbor to the southeast, is full of grassy plains and hills instead of mountains. The plains and hills allow Paraguayans to grow a lot of corn and potatoes, and to raise large herds of cattle and pigs. This is why local cooks use a lot of beef and pork in foods and why corn and potatoes are the basis of almost every meal in Paraguay.

Heritage also influences the food South Americans eat. In the past, South American countries were **colonies** controlled by different European countries such as France, Spain, Italy, Portugal, and the Netherlands. Before Europeans arrived, the Incas and other native groups lived in most of the continent. You can taste this **diverse** influence in South American food. For example, *pachamanca* is a traditional Peruvian meal made

only for major celebrations. The Incas created this special meal and passed the recipe and its preparation down through the generations.

To prepare pachamanca, Peruvians dig a hole in the earth and then fill it with heated stones. Once that is ready, they fill a sack, cloth, or covered pot with a mixture of meats that usually includes lamb, pork, chicken, and cuy. The meats are mixed with potatoes, corn, beans, and different herbs. Next, they cover the food and heated stones with dirt. The heat from the rocks slowly cooks the food in its juices underground for about an hour and a half. The cooks dig up the food and serve it to everyone on wooden platters and bowls. As the meal is served, the celebration begins; there is drinking, eating, and dancing. This celebration is often held in honor of the harvests in February and March. The unique preparation of this meal showcases the special traditions of South American culture. These traditions keep modern Peruvians connected to their Incan heritage. How does your heritage affect the food you eat and how you cook it?



LET'S TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT SOUTH AMERICAN CUISINE!

Imagine waking up to the sound of the ocean's waves crashing on the beach. You get up and walk out onto your hotel balcony overlooking Brazil's beautiful coastal beaches. You are in Rio de Janeiro. You walk back inside, and breakfast awaits you. There is some fresh papaya and mango sliced on a plate. The aroma of a small loaf of freshly baked bread fills the air. Slices of cheese and ham and a cup of coffee also catch your eye as your mouth begins to water. Everything in your breakfast is simple and fresh from the local markets. The food is just enough to fill your belly and prepare you for a day of work or sightseeing.



Espresso

If you woke up in a different South American country, such as Argentina, your breakfast experience might be a bit different. Argentineans serve a diverse selection of breads and **croissants** for the morning meal, but they really focus on their drinks.

They drink strong Italian coffee called *espresso* most of the day, but they may drink it in a variety of ways. *Café con leche* is a very popular coffee drink that contains half warm milk and

half coffee. A *cortado* is a coffee drink with only a dash of milk. A *lagrima* is a warm milk drink with only a dash of coffee. If you do not like coffee, you can try a *submarino*, a cup of steamed milk with a bar of chocolate melted into it—a sweet and simple hot chocolate! Another popular alternative is *yerba mate*.

This drink is made from dried yerba mate leaves and twigs brewed in hot water. It is traditionally sipped from a gourd using a screened metal straw to prevent the leaves from being consumed. Sharing this drink with others is a sign of great friendship and hospitality.



Yerba mate

Coffee is not only a huge part of South American meals, but also a large part of the economy. Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, and Venezuela are the leaders of coffee bean production in South America. Brazil is the world's largest coffee producer, supplying about 25% of coffee beans worldwide. Colombia is also a leader in coffee production; it produces about 12% of the world's coffee beans. With these coffee giants, it is no wonder that there is a steady coffee culture built into the daily lives of South Americans.

Argentina's and Brazil's breakfasts are simple and light, but in other countries, such as Bolivia, breakfast is a heavier meal. Meats, cheeses, and potatoes are often eaten along with breads and fruits. Bolivians might also eat traditional breakfast snacks called *salteñas*. A *salteña* is a breakfast pastry filled with meats, peas, potatoes, hard-boiled eggs, raisins, and olives and then baked until it is golden. When you break into one, the aroma pours out and fills your nose. With your first bite, you taste the sweetness of the raisins and savory juices from the meats and feel the softness of the egg and flakiness of the crust. As you swallow, you fall in love with this breakfast treat. These are all parts of experiencing a hearty and filling breakfast in South America.



Coffee beans
before roasting



Coffee beans
after roasting



Salteñas

LOUNGING WITH LUNCH

You just arrived home from school for your midday meal. Your Colombian family is gathered around the table where soup and bread is set out for all to enjoy. Everyone is more relaxed once the meal is under way. You anticipate the meal's next course as the smells of meats, breads, and fried foods waft from the kitchen and into your nostrils. It is time for the rest of the meal. South Americans eat much more food during lunch than any other meal. The menu is also more diverse during this meal. Lunch can include soups, **appetizers**, a main dish, and a small dessert. South Americans have large lunches during which families or groups of friends gather to eat and relax for an hour or more. Unlike the United States, it is common to see families meet midday for a large multicourse meal.

Fast Food No No

"To go" culture is not popular in South America. In many South American cultures, it is considered rude to eat and drink as you walk, drive, or ride public transportation. South Americans have a sit-eat-and-enjoy mentality.

Lunch in South America often begins with a soup. *Ajiaco* is a Colombian chicken soup made with potatoes, corn, and capers. Another popular soup is Venezuela's *sancocho*. Sancocho is a fish stew cooked with a variety of vegetables such as corn and potatoes. In other areas of northern South America, you can find sancocho made with chicken instead of fish and sliced **plantains** added to the mix. Next, several appetizers are served. They often include *hormiga culona*, *arepas*, and *chipas*. For those unfamiliar with Colombian delicacies, *hormiga culona* is a surprise. *Hormiga culona* is a dish of fried or roasted ants. These ants are **battered** or plain, fried or roasted, salted, and then served. They are a crunchy treat that some people describe as having a nutty flavor. *Arepas* are cornmeal cakes that can be stuffed or topped with fish, meats, and cheeses. They are commonly served as snacks in Colombia and Venezuela. *Chipas* are small balls of cheese bread popular in Argentina. They are

made with cornstarch or tapioca starch, and any cheeses that you wish to use. They are a delicious snack and easy to make. After starting the meal with these savory soups and appetizers, it is time for the entrees.

People in Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Argentina often eat a traditional Incan dish made from *cuy*. Cuy is guinea pigs. Guinea pigs are not seen as pets in South America because they have been a food source for centuries. Cuy is baked or grilled and served with potatoes, corn, rice, peppers, and spices depending on where you are in South America. Most people say this meat tastes like rabbit or chicken. If you are not interested in cuy, alternative options include chicken and beef platters. The most popular meat platter, and a favorite in Colombia, is called *bandeja paisa*. *Bandeja paisa* is a platter of thin grilled beef steak, **chorizo**, pork rind, a fried egg, white rice, red beans, fried plantains, and an arepa.

Other foods, such as stews and casseroles, are popular in Argentina and Chile. *Puchero* is a tasty stew made of beef, chicken, sausage, corn, peppers, tomatoes, onions, cabbage, sweet potatoes, squash, and sometimes beans. *Arroz con pollo* is a simple rice casserole made of chicken, rice, and vegetables. Both are filling meals and perfect for a relaxing lunch. Each spoonful or forkful gathers the various ingredients together for a hearty and delicious bite.

Chipas

Serves 8

Ingredients

- 1 egg
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup milk
- 6 ounces of shredded Italian cheese blend (parmesan or mozzarella) Use different cheeses to achieve the desired flavors.
- 3 tablespoons butter, melted
- $1\frac{3}{4}$ cups tapioca starch or cornstarch
- 1 cup self-rising flour

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350° Fahrenheit. Grease a baking sheet with cooking spray, and set it aside.
2. Stir together the egg, milk, cheese, and butter in a large bowl. Sprinkle in the tapioca starch/cornstarch and flour; stir to form a dough.
3. Knead the dough for 2 minutes on a lightly floured surface. Then roll the dough into golf ball-sized pieces, and place them onto the prepared baking sheet.
4. Bake in the oven for 10–15 minutes or until the chipas are golden brown.

Eat this!

The twenty-ninth day of each month is Ñoquis Day in Argentina. This tradition started because ñoquis are a cheap and filling meal. When bills were due and money was short at the end of the month, ñoquis kept everyone full.

If you are dining in Argentina, Spanish-influenced dishes could be substituted with an Italian meal. Because of a wave of immigration from Europe during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Argentina has a large Italian population. A dish called *ñoquis*, known as gnocchi in Italy, is very popular. Ñoquis are potato dumplings served with a seasoned tomato sauce, meat, and parmesan cheese. For the immigrant families from Italy, ñoquis bring a taste of home to Argentina.

After finishing your main lunch courses, it's time for dessert. A South American dessert may include fruit, flan, or light pastries. Platters of sweet and juicy mangos, pineapples, papayas, and passion fruits are popular since these tropical fruits are available all over South America. Flan is a light

vanilla-flavored **custard** with a caramel glaze. Other dessert options include teas, espressos, fruity milk drinks, and coffee. South American fruit-and-milk drinks are very similar to fruit milkshakes except that they are made without ice cream. What could be more refreshing than enjoying fresh fruit, flan, or coffee to end a long meal?



Typical Argentinian beef platter with short ribs, potatoes, and salad

Flan



WINDING DOWN WITH DINNER

Late in the evening, after a long day, dinner begins. Again you spend this meal with friends and family while you catch up on one another's days and make plans for the rest of the night. The sun set long ago, and it's getting close to 9:00 p.m. This is when South Americans enjoy their last meal of the day. People eat a medium to small dinner that is larger than breakfast, but not as big as lunch. Barbecuing is a fun way to enjoy a delicious meal in many South American countries. Families and friends hold *asados*, or barbecue parties, where many different types of meat are served late into the evening.

Churrasco is a barbecued steak found throughout South America. It is the national dish of both Uruguay and Argentina. It is a thinly sliced boneless steak that is cooked over hot coals. It is then laid between toasted bread and seasoned with *chimichirri*, a spicy green sauce made with many different spices, garlic, and peppers. The churrasco is often served with mashed and fried potatoes or a salad on the side. Other foods such as chicken, pork, fish, chorizo, and vegetables are also cooked on the barbecue.



Meat grilling for an asado

If you want something more laid back, sandwiches are very popular. They are often made with meats, such as pork, chicken, and beef, and cheeses. The sandwiches are toasted or enjoyed cold. Lighter lunchtime dishes, such as *cuy*, arepas, soups, and stews, are also eaten for dinner. Venezuelans enjoy eating *cachapa* and *cachito* at both dinner and lunch. *Cachapa* is a thin fresh corn pancake often served with cheese and ham. A *cachito* is hot bread rolled and stuffed with ham.

Even after a light dinner, South Americans enjoy a sweet treat. A variety of fruits are always available in addition to flan and

Ham and Cheese Cachito

Ingredients

- 1 package of premade pizza dough (not prebaked)
- Sliced ham, cut into strips or diced
- Cheese (your choice)

Directions

1. Preheat the oven according to the directions on the dough's package.
2. Roll the pizza dough into a large square to make one big *cachito*, or divide the dough into smaller squares to make individual-sized *cachitos*.
3. Spread the ham and cheese evenly across the dough.
4. Starting at one corner, roll the dough to make something that looks like a croissant.
5. Brush olive oil on the dough's outer surface.
6. Bake the *cachito(s)* until the crust is golden brown. Check on your *cachito(s)* often to make sure you do not overbake them.



pastries. *Alfajores* are a South American favorite. This dessert is a cookie sandwich with dulce de leche, a thick caramelized milk sauce, inside it. Powdered sugar is sprinkled over the cookie sandwiches, and they are sometimes rolled in coconut flakes. While dulce de leche is the traditional filling, some people enjoy *alfajores* with a chocolate or fruit sauce instead. These foods are light and tasty—perfect before a night on the town or a good sleep.

Alfajores

Makes about 30 cookies

Cookie ingredients

3 cups all-purpose flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

1 teaspoon salt

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature

1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups granulated sugar

2 large eggs, at room temperature

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup milk

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup freshly squeezed orange juice

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Store-bought dulce de leche (Dulce de leche can be found in Latin American food stores or easily made at home using the recipe below.)

Confectioners' sugar (optional)

Sweetened coconut flakes (optional)

Dulce de leche ingredients

1 can of sweetened condensed milk

1 teaspoon of pure vanilla extract

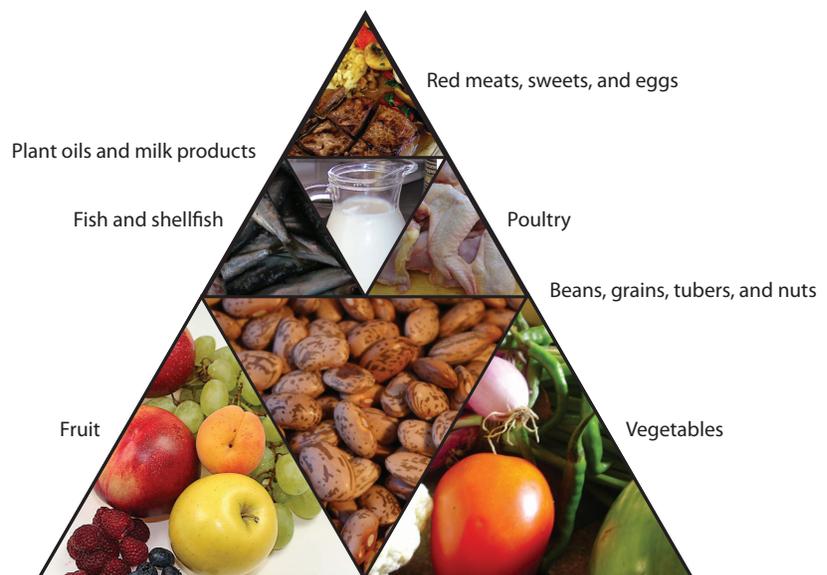
A pinch of cinnamon

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350° Fahrenheit. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In a bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, and salt.
3. In another bowl, use an electric mixer to beat together the butter and sugar on medium speed for about 1 to 2 minutes until the mixture is light and fluffy. Add the eggs one at a time, and continue mixing for about 1 minute until everything is well combined.
4. Add the flour mixture to the butter, sugar, and eggs a little at a time, and mix until all the ingredients are well combined.
5. Add the milk, orange juice, and vanilla, and continue mixing for 1 to 2 minutes until a dough forms.
6. Using a tablespoon or small ice cream scoop, drop portions of the dough about 2 inches apart onto the prepared baking sheets.
7. Put the cookies in the oven, and bake them for 10–14 minutes or until the tops of the cookies are golden brown. Rotate the tray in the oven about halfway through the baking time.
8. Remove the cookies from the baking sheet, and place them on a wire rack to cool.
9. While the cookies cool, make the dulce de leche by emptying the can of sweetened condensed milk, vanilla, and cinnamon into a saucepan. Place the saucepan over medium-low heat, and stir the milk continuously. Remove the dulce de leche from the stove when the mixture is thickened but still spreadable.
10. When the cookies are cool, spread dulce de leche on the flat side of each cookie. Then put the flat sides of two cookies together, as if you were making a sandwich.
11. If you like, roll the cookie sandwiches in sweetened coconut flakes so the flakes stick to the dulce de leche on the sides of the cookies. Sprinkle the cookies with confectioners' sugar.

SAYING GOODBYE TO A CONTINENT OF FOOD

Can you now imagine a table filled with all these South American foods? Do you think of the colorful, juicy fruit or the savory grilled cuys roasting over a fire? Would a cortado, submarino, or fruit smoothie quench your thirst? Will you dream of some chipas or savory salteñas? No matter which food you have on your mind, they all are part of South American culture, shaped by its land and people. From the abundant supply of corn and potatoes, the animals, and native and European influences, food is one of the most important parts of South American society. Not only does it feed South Americans, but these recipes and flavors are shared all over the world, creating new tastes and filling bellies everywhere. One last time, think of the smell of pastry coming out of the oven or the aroma from a pot of ajiaco just placed on the table. Think of the taste of sweet mango and melon and their bright red, orange, and green colors. Stay healthy and well fed with the delicious foods of South America!



GLOSSARY:

- appetizers:** Food or drinks usually served before a meal.
- au gratin:** Cooking or baking a food that is covered with bread crumbs in butter and cheese and browning it in an oven.
- battered:** Coated with a thin mixture of flour and liquid.
- chorizo:** A spicy pork sausage popular in Spain and South America.
- coastal:** Located on, near, or along an ocean shore.
- colonies:** Distant territories belonging to or under the control of other nations.
- croissant:** A buttery, flaky pastry named for its crescent shape.
- custard:** A sweetened mixture of milk and eggs that is baked, broiled, or frozen.
- diverse:** Different from one another.
- geographic:** Relating to the natural features of an area.
- heritage:** Something that comes from one's ancestors.
- pickled:** Soaked in a mixture of salt and water, or vinegar, to prevent spoilage.
- plantain:** A banana-like plant that has greenish fruit that is larger, less sweet, and starchier than an ordinary banana.

SOURCES

<http://gosouthamerica.about.com/od/cuisine/a/caribcountries.htm>

<http://southamericanfood.about.com/od/exploresouthamericanfood/a/history.htm>

<http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/Colombian-Arepas-239943>

<http://allrecipes.com/Recipe/Chipas-Argentinean-Cheese-Bread/Detail.aspx>

<http://gosouthamerica.about.com/od/cuisine/a/cuy.htm>

http://www.languagecrossing.com/Destinations/Bolivia/Food_of_Bolivia/

<http://media.hcpss.org/newcode/electronicresources/VieweKitImages.php?ItemID=1145>

<http://www.southamerica.cl/Peru/Food/Guide.htm>

<http://www.southamerica.cl/Chile/Food.htm>

<http://boliviaweb.com/recipes/english/saltenas.htm>

<http://southamericanfood.about.com/od/exploresouthamericanfood/tp/Top-5-South-American-Desserts.htm>

<http://www.coffeeresearch.org/coffee/southamerica.htm>

<http://www.unique-southamerica-travel-experience.com/pachamanca.html>

Merriam-Webster Children's Dictionary

