

PAKO Kids Magazine

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HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE IN GIRAFFES



How does climate change affect our oceans?



Mermaids' Purses

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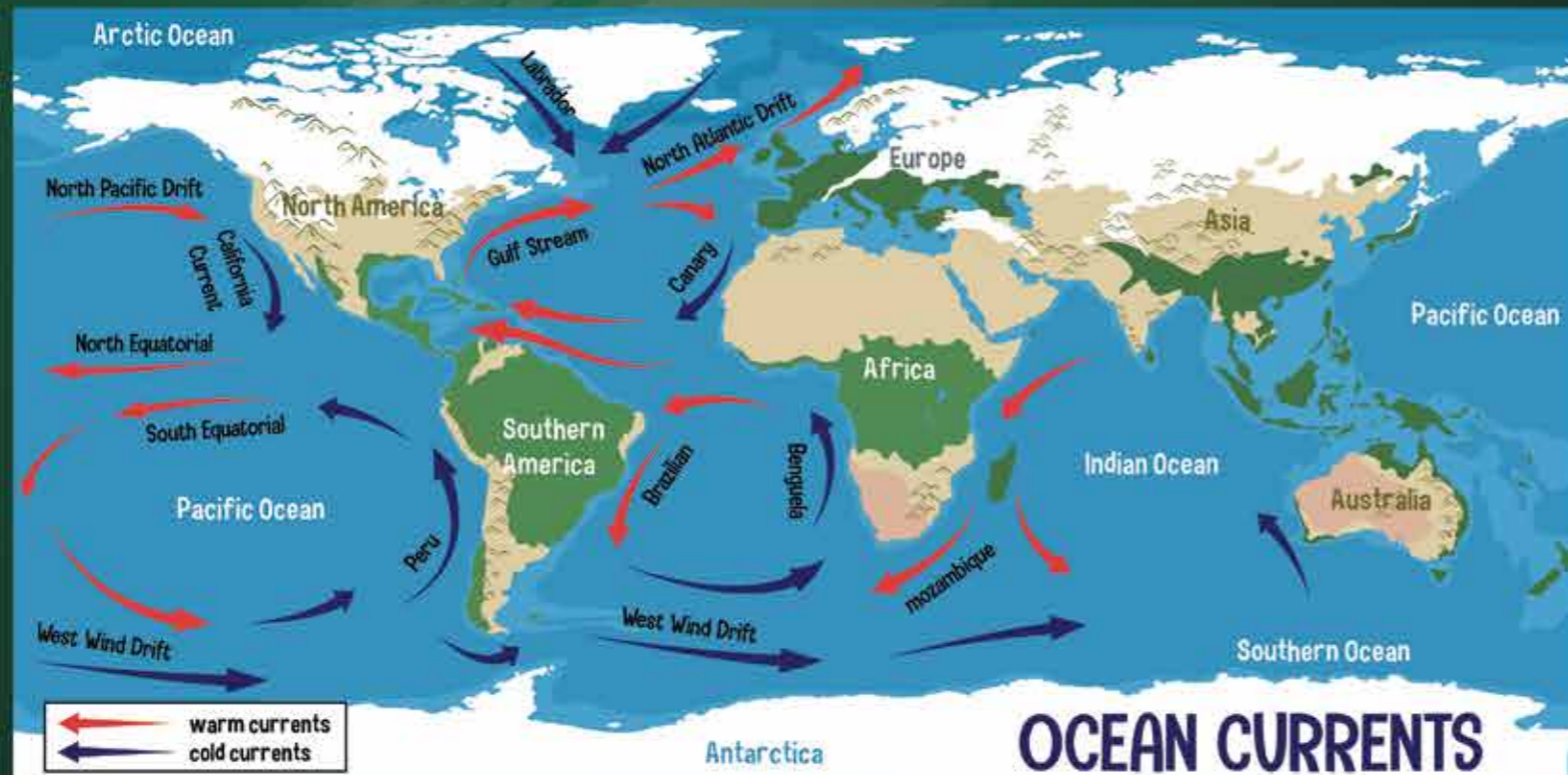
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How does climate change affect our oceans?



the ice can no longer hold on to the salt. Instead, the salt mixes with the water below making it saltier and heavier. Glaciers, land ice and icebergs are made of fresh water, so what happens when this ice melts? Good question!

The water in the North Atlantic sinks because it's cold, but also because it's salty. Being both cold and salty makes it really dense and heavy, so it can sink very far. But if too much ice melts in the North Atlantic, the water could become less salty and affect ocean currents.

As Earth's climate warms, the water also warms melting sea ice. This warming could make the water less cold and less likely to sink. Without sinking cold water, the ocean currents could slow down or stop in some places.

What happens if ocean currents change?

Currents regulate global climate.

Currents play a crucial role in the climate system, helping to regulate global weather patterns. Its collapse would have enormous implications, including much more extreme winters, draughts and sea level rises affecting all countries, and a shifting of the monsoon in the tropics.

Did you know the oceans cover 70% of the Earth's surface? So anything that affects the oceans affects all the wildlife and plants that live in it and usually affects the rest of the world too!

Why is the ocean important for life on Earth?

The ocean is important because it is a very large part of our planet. It is a home and food source for countless fish, mammals, plants, birds, and more.

The ocean plays an important role in whatever happens in our environment on Earth. Even if you live on land – like humans do – you wouldn't survive without the ocean!

One example: without the ocean,

Earth would be much hotter than it is right now. That's because the ocean absorbs heat from the Sun and spreads it more evenly around our planet.

How does the ocean soak up CO2?

Fish and other animals in the ocean breathe oxygen and give off carbon dioxide (CO₂), just like land animals. Ocean plants take in the carbon dioxide and produce oxygen, just like land plants. The ocean is great at absorbing CO₂ from the air. However, a lot of CO₂ comes from human activities, too. For example,

exhaust from cars, planes, and factories put extra carbon dioxide into our air. Too much carbon dioxide in the air is a problem, as it causes the Earth to trap more heat. The ocean absorbs about one-quarter of the CO₂ that humans create when we burn fossil fuels (oil, coal, and natural gas).

Does the salt in the ocean do anything?

The amount of salt in the ocean also affects currents. Saltier water is heavier than less salty water. When salty ocean water freezes,

Word Scramble

Use the letters to spell the word

E	A	O
C	S	N

--	--	--	--	--	--

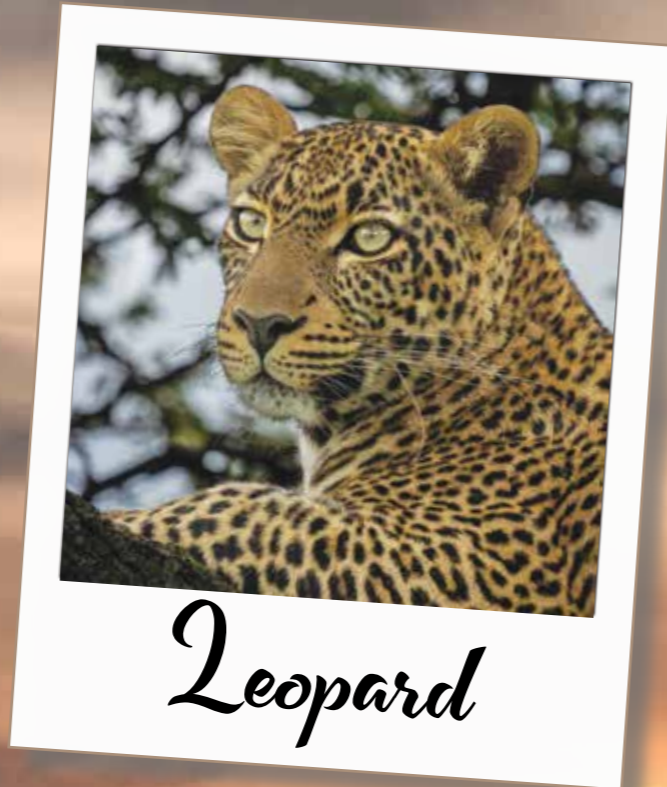
Can you help to sort these facts about cats?



It makes sounds like a high pitched chirp or bubble.

It can eat up to 40kg of meat in a single meal - around a quarter of its body weight.

They live in groups called prides.



A new-born has dark spots, which fade as the cub reaches adulthood.

It is often confused with a lynx.

It is a skilled climber, and likes to rest in the branches of trees during the day.

Unlike the other cats it only has 'semi-retractable' claws so can't pull them back.



Its spots are called rosettes.

It drags carcasses up trees to take them out of reach of scavengers.

It is the fastest land animal.

Their name is derived from a Turkish word 'karakulak' meaning 'black ear'.



It is the biggest cat of the four species.

It is the smallest of the four species.

It can also have a black coat, so the spots are hard to see because its fur is so dark.

At birth the coat resembles that of adults, but the abdomen is spotted.

Cubs have long hair that runs from their neck all the way down to the base of their tail.

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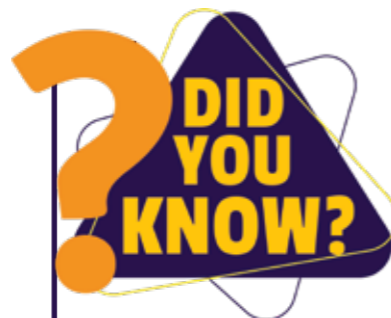
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Good News

Some coral reefs could survive warmer temperatures.

New research indicates coral reefs in Palau can likely tolerate and adapt to some rises in temperature, which could help to prevent future bleaching. This recent finding is a glimmer of hope for coral reefs, as global ocean temperatures rise due to human-caused climate change and natural weather patterns.

<https://vitalsigns.edf.org/story/good-climate-news>



More good news

Free food: Geneva's community pantries use the sharing economy to prevent food waste. In an effort to cut waste, a Geneva nonprofit is rolling out street-side, free-access refrigerators where people can give and take food that might otherwise perish.

The project launched a year ago with a single fridge outside a community centre. The first fridge helped save around three tonnes of food from going to waste last year.

...and more good news

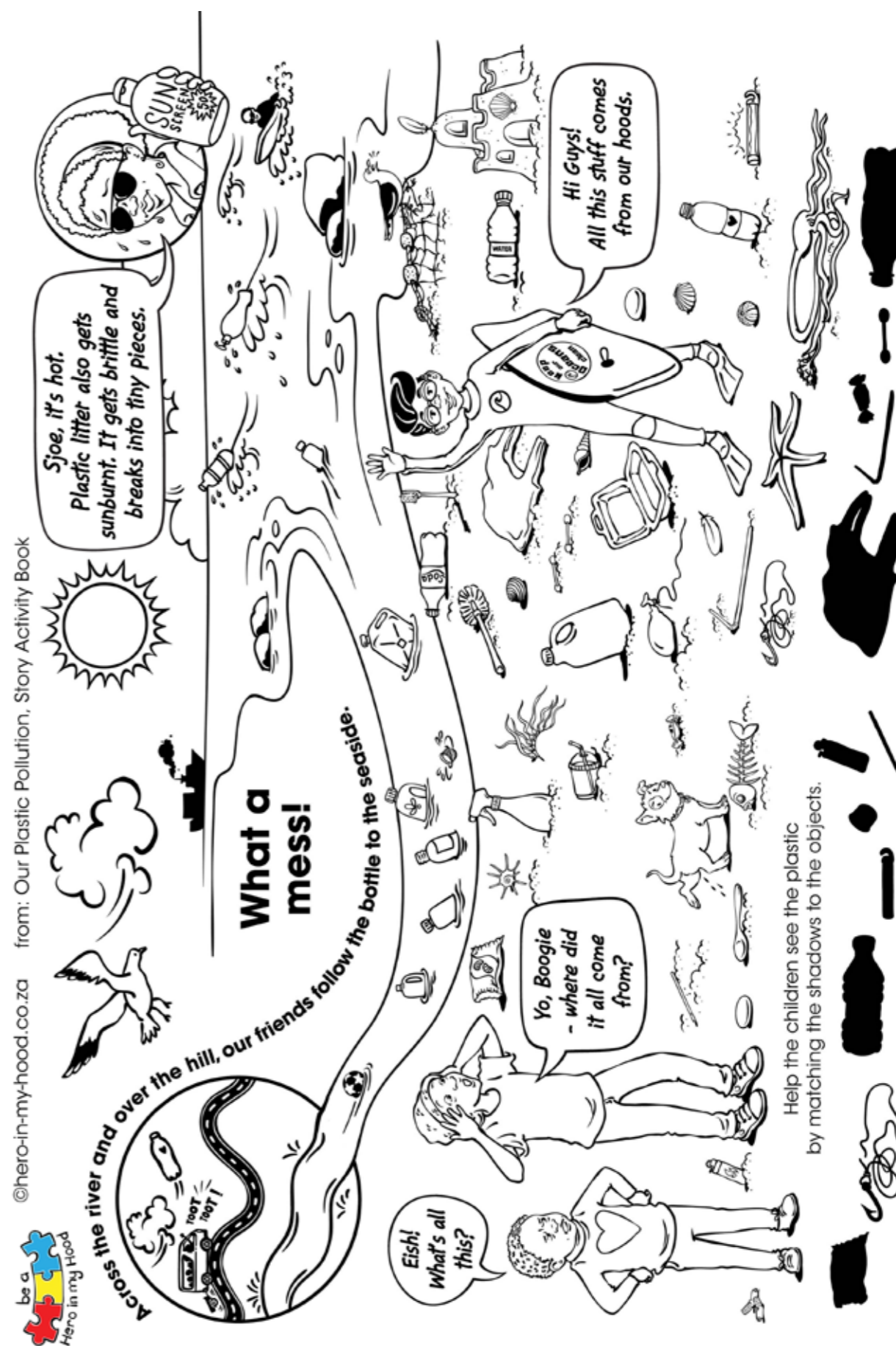
Meet the company using discarded oyster shells to cut energy costs and keep France's buildings cool. Cool Roof France (CRF) is on a mission to reduce the temperature inside buildings by painting roofs white.

The company utilises the more than 130,000 tonnes of oyster shells thrown away every year in France to make sustainable and cost effective paint.

<https://www.euronews.com/green/2023/08/07/here-are-all-the-positive-environmental-stories-from-2023-so-far>



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Mermaids' Purses



By Ruth H. Leeney

Have you ever found a mermaid's purse on the beach? These little capsules can be cast onto the beach where they blend in well with strands of seaweed, so you need to be looking carefully to find one. Perhaps, in the past, some people believed that they were indeed purses or bags belonging to mermaids, but we now know that they hold very different kinds of treasure. Mermaids' purses, also called eggcases, are in fact the protective cases inside which eggs develop into baby sharks and skates!

Unlike most fish – which release their eggs and sperm into the open ocean and leave the rest to chance – sharks and their relatives (rays, skates and chimaeras) practice 'internal fertilisation', which gives their pups a much better chance at survival. The young (called pups) of all rays and some sharks develop in eggs that are within the mother's body. Those eggs hatch inside the mother and are then born as miniature adults. But other shark species, and all skate species, use a different approach – the females produce eggcases and attach them to something underwater or leave them on the seafloor. One or more pups develop inside each eggcase, then hatch and swim away.

WHAT IS AN EGGCASE?

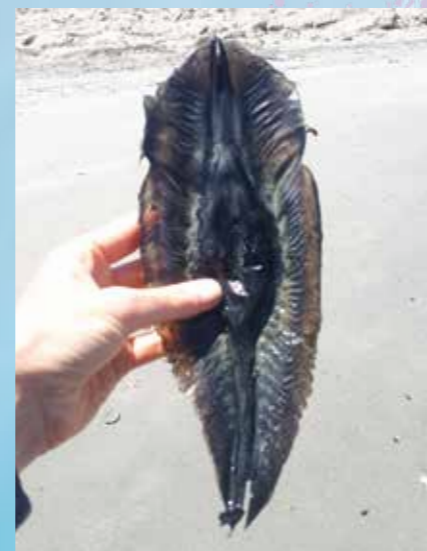
Eggcases can be simple or elaborate in design. They are made mostly of keratin (the same substance that your hair and fingernails are made of), making them strong but also flexible. Eggcases are usually pillow-shaped, with horns or long curly strands (called tendrils) at each corner. They come in a range of different shapes, sizes and designs – some sharks produce corkscrew shaped eggcases which the female sharks twist into crevices in rocky sea floors, so they don't get washed away.

The time it takes for a baby skate or shark to hatch from its eggcase depends on the species. Skates that live in the deepest parts of the ocean have some of the longest egg incubation times known for the animal kingdom – the eggcases of some species take several years to hatch! But other species, like catsharks and shysharks, hatch from their eggcases after just a few months.

Let's take a look at some of the different eggcases you might find in Namibia.



A spearnose skate eggcase found on a beach near Luderitz. Photo © Ruth H. Leeney



The spindle-shaped eggcase of a St. Joseph shark. Photo © Ruth H. Leeney

DARK SHYSHARKS

These little sharks only reach 60 cm in length as adults, making them the smallest of the shark species in Namibia's kelp forests. Dark shysharks have very small eggcases which are amber to dark brown in colour, and when you find them dried out on the beach, they are dark red, brown or black. Rehydrated eggcases are around 5.5 cm long and have long, curly tendrils at each corner, which are used to attach the eggcase to seaweed or another underwater structure, and keep it in one place.

WHITE SKATE (ALSO CALLED SPEARNOSE SKATE)

This is the largest skate in Namibia's coastal waters, and can grow up to 2.4 metres in length – that's really big! It is often caught by recreational anglers fishing from the beach. This skate produces the largest eggcases you can find on beaches in Namibia – the walls of the eggcase are very thick and ridged, and it has a pointed horn extending from each of its four corners. These eggcases are between 12 and 19 cm long without the horns, or up to 28 cm long including the horns, when rehydrated.

BISCUIT SKATE

This beautiful skate is found in shallow coastal waters around Lüderitz, and its eggcases are very common on beaches in southern Namibia. They are a similar shape to those of the white skate but are much smaller - when rehydrated, they are between 6 and 10 cm in length (excluding horns). There is a visible 'keel' along the long edges of the eggcase and the horns taper to very fine tips.

Chimaeras (also called ghost sharks) are relatives of sharks and rays that live in the deep ocean, but one type of chimaera, called the St. Joseph shark or elephantfish, lives closer to shore. It produces a large, spindle-shaped eggcase with a single point at each end and a frill along both edges.

HOW CAN EGGCASES HELP US LEARN MORE ABOUT SHARKS AND SKATES?

Sharks, skates and chimaeras move around a lot, which means it can be difficult to pinpoint specific areas where we can give them protection. If we record the places where we find eggcases, it gives us an indication of which areas are important for unborn sharks, skates and chimaeras. By protecting those areas, we can give many of these species a better chance of hatching and making it through the first few challenging days or weeks of their lives.

If you are lucky enough to live near the sea and want to go in search of mermaids' purses yourself, look at the high tide line, where bands of seaweed have been left by the tide. You need sharp eyes to notice the eggcases amongst the seaweed. The next time you find one, take a closer look and imagine the tiny shark or skate that spent the first few weeks of its life inside!

To learn more about our work, follow us on social media:



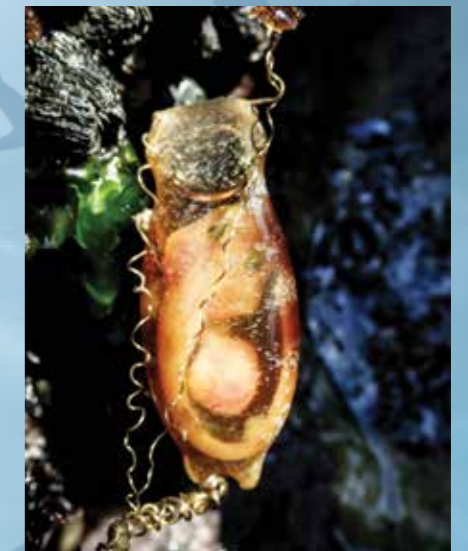
@namibia_sharks



Namibia's Rays and Sharks



A pyjama shark's olive green eggcase, suspended between two kelp stipes. Pyjama sharks are found in South Africa but not in Namibia. Photo © Helen Walne.



A developing dark shyshark inside its eggcase, photographed in False Bay, South Africa. Photo © Lisa Beasley.



Two biscuit skate eggcases, from a beach in southern Namibia. Photo © Ruth H. Leeney.



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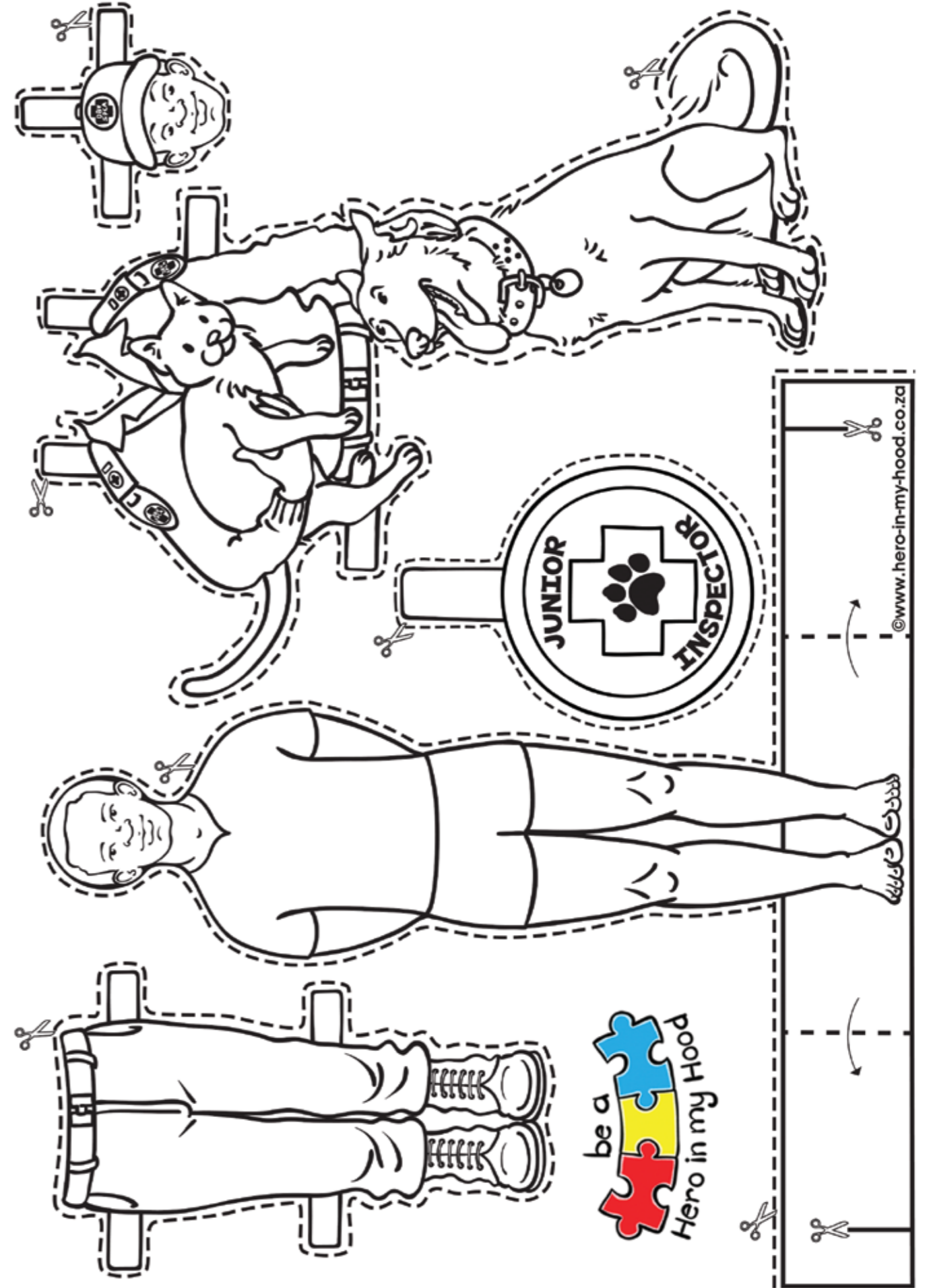
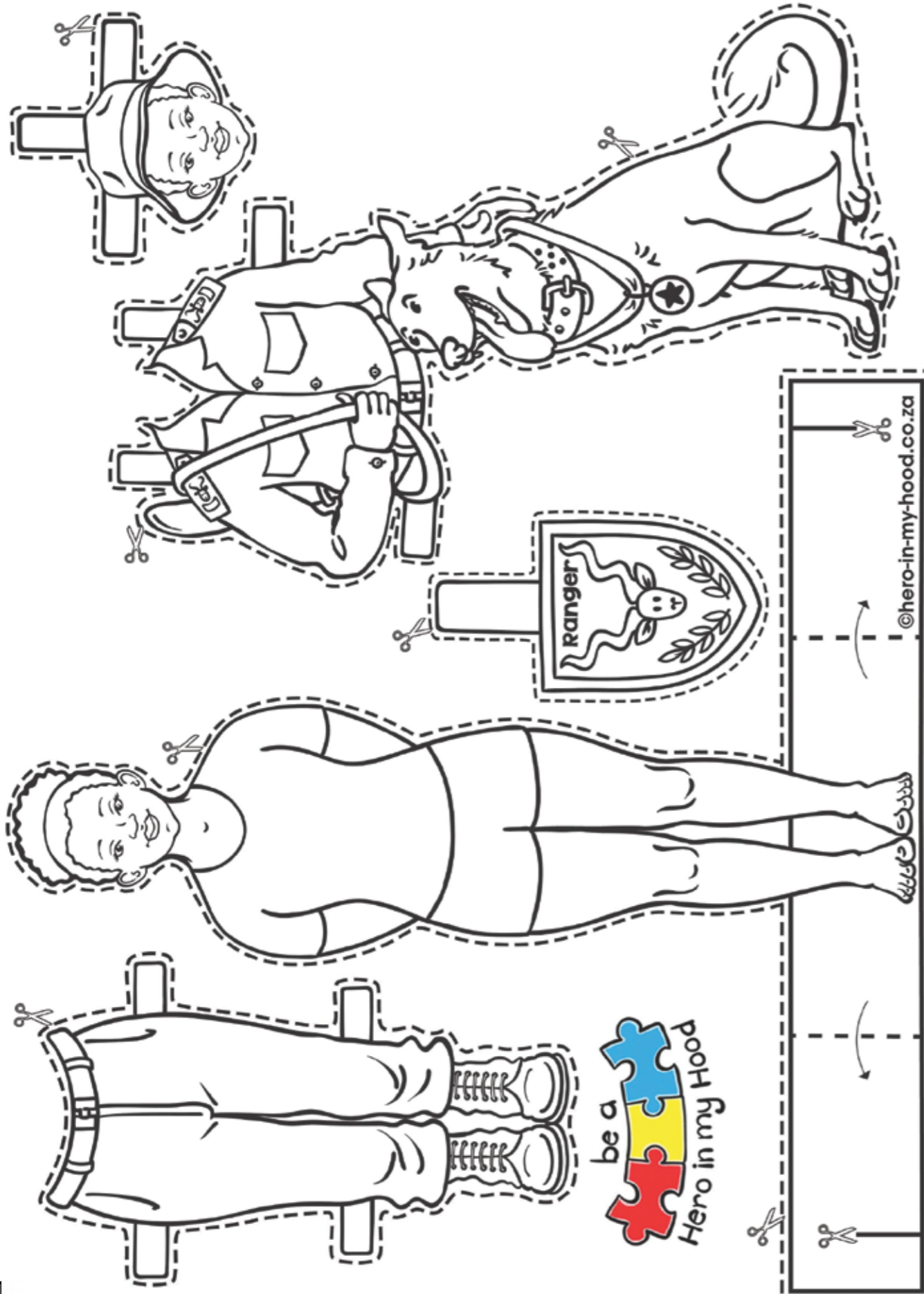
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TRUE OR

FALSE?

Dolphins don't have ears.

- True
- False



TRUE OR

FALSE?

Unlike other species, sea turtles cannot retract their paddle-shaped flippers and head into their shells.

- True
- False

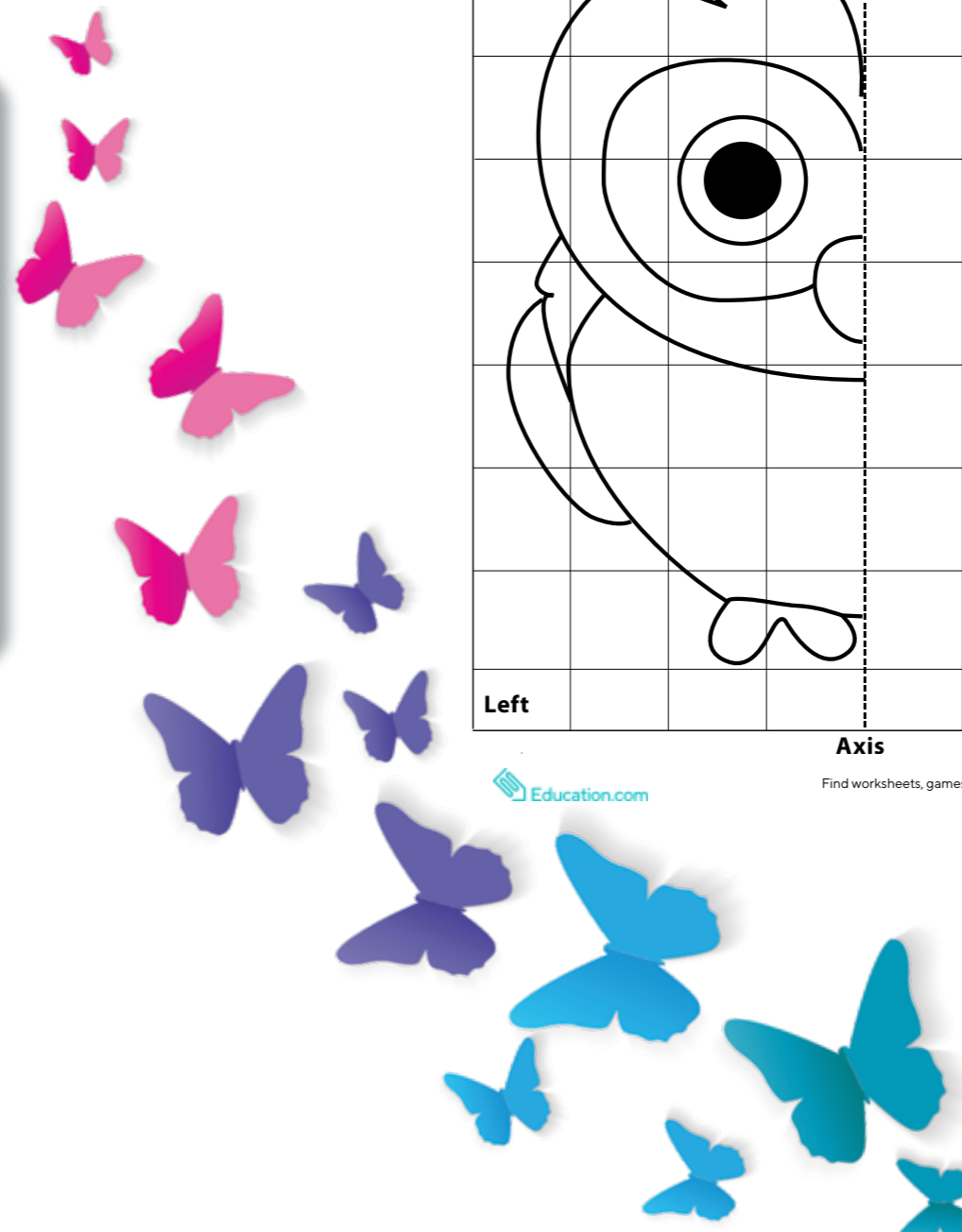


Practice in Symmetry

Use the grid below to draw a mirror image of the owl's left side on the blank side of the chart.

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Word Scramble

Use the letters to spell the word

T R U
T E L

Word Scramble

Use the letters to spell the word

U I D
E G B

(find answers on page 22)

WORDSEARCH

G	L	A	C	I	E	R	S	N	C	L	I	M	A	T	E	E
R	E	S	Y	C	E	Z	E	L	Y	G	U	O	W	D	P	Q
T	Y	E	L	E	T	O	A	P	O	O	C	E	A	N	O	N
E	P	A	M	C	X	I	T	V	D	K	T	H	X	V	L	R
T	U	R	T	L	E	J	C	U	R	R	E	N	T	S	F	H

TURTLE ICE
CURRENTS
SEA GLACIERS
CLIMATE
OCEAN



HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE IN GIRAFFES



© MARIOLA GROBELSKA on Unsplash

A giraffe is a bit of an odd looking animal with its long neck and legs. They come in handy while browsing trees, but giraffes have overcome another serious challenge... How to get blood from the heart to the brain over a distance of about 2 meters? Luckily, nature has a solution for everything!

To pump blood all over the giraffe's body, the giraffe has an incredibly high blood pressure. To maintain a blood pressure of about 110/70 mm Hg in the brain (average for large mammals), the giraffe's heart needs a blood pressure of

about 220/180 mm Hg (to compare, an adult man's blood pressure should be less than 120/80 mm Hg).

In humans, a high blood pressure causes all kinds of problems, from swollen ankles to heart failure. Chronic high blood pressure causes the heart muscle to thicken. Part of the heart becomes stiffer (fibrosis) and will be less able to fill up with blood. In giraffes, the heart muscles are also thick, but fibrosis of the heart does not occur. Giraffes manage the sudden change in blood pressure as they have special valves in their necks. When their heads are down,

such as when they are drinking water, blood collects in the big veins in their neck. More than 1 litre of blood can be stored in the neck, which temporarily reduces the amount of blood returning to the heart. As there is less blood in the heart, less pressure is generated per heartbeat. When the head is raised again, the stored blood flows back to the heart. The heart responds with a strong high-pressure heartbeat to help getting blood back to the brain before any damage is caused.

Then giraffes have another trick to avoid heart failure... They have a different electrical heart rhythm than other mammals. The filling-phase of the heart is extended, allowing the heart to pump more blood with each heartbeat. While the legs and ankles of humans can become swollen due

to a high blood pressure, giraffe legs have built-in support stockings! Their legs consist of dense connective tissue, and the arteries have thick walls to withstand the high blood pressure.

A last big question remains... You know the feeling when you get up to quickly, you sometimes get dizzy? Knowing now that the giraffe has such high blood pressure, how come the giraffe does not faint when it has a drink and rises its head again?

We still don't have all the answers, but researchers found that giraffes can partly buffer the sudden change in blood pressure in the brain. During a study, several giraffes were immobilized and their heads were raised and lowered.

When the head was down, blood pooled in the big veins of the neck. Giraffes have specialized blood valves in their necks to counter 'gravity'. Much more research still needs to be done to fully understand this mechanism.

The better we understand these amazing animals, the greater the chances that we can come up with ideas to improve on human medical conditions.



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Did You Know?

GIRAFFES ARE THE TALLEST LAND ANIMALS ON EARTH! ADULT GIRAFFES CAN GROW UP TO 5.5 METERS TALL (THAT'S AS TALL AS 3 ADULT HUMANS STACKED ON TOP OF EACH OTHER).

They have such big hearts too, not just in size but also in how much they care for other giraffes. They are social animals and love hanging out in a group called a "tower." They look out for each other and stick together, just like we do with best friends and family!

Their tongues can reach up to 45 centimeters!

That's as long as a ruler! It helps them grab leaves from tall trees with ease.

Giraffes are not only good at reaching tall trees, but they can run fast too!

They can gallop at speeds up to 56 kilometers per hour! Imagine a giraffe racing alongside fast cars!

ACTIVITY ANSWERS

PAGE 5

Word Scramble:
OCEANS

CARACAL

It is often confused with a lynx.

It is the smallest of the four species.

Their name is derived from a Turkish word 'karakulak' meaning 'black ear'.

At birth the coat resembles that of adults, but the abdomen is spotted.

CHEETAH

It is the fastest land animal.

It makes sounds like a high pitched chirp or bubble.

LEOPARD

Its spots are called rosettes.

It drags carcasses up trees to take them out of reach of scavengers.

It is a skilled climber, and likes to rest in the branches of trees during the day.

It can also have a black coat, so the spots are hard to see because its fur is so dark.

CHEETAH

Unlike the other cats it only has 'semi-retractable' claws so can't pull them back.

Cubs have long hair that runs from their neck all the way down to the base of their tail.



LION

They live in groups called prides.

It is the biggest cat of the four species.

A new-born has dark spots, which fade as the cub reaches adulthood.

It can eat up to 40kg of meat in a single meal - around a quarter of its body weight.

PAGE 18

False:

Dolphins have ears. They're just hard to see because these animals don't have outer auricle ears. You can only see small holes from the outside.

True:

Sea turtles cannot retract their paddle-shaped flippers and head into their shells.

Word Scramble:
TURTLE
BUDGIE

PAGE 19

G	L	A	C	I	E	R	S	N	C	L	I	M	A	T	E	E
R	E	S	Y	C	E	Z	E	L	Y	G	U	O	W	D	P	Q
T	Y	E	L	E	T	O	A	P	O	O	C	E	A	N	O	N
E	P	A	M	C	X	I	T	V	D	K	T	H	X	V	L	R
T	U	R	T	L	E	J	C	U	R	R	E	N	T	S	F	H

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birthday parties

music lessons

Schools

education

life skills

dancing

sport

theatre

art



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- ✓ Animal Assisted Therapy
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- ✓ Dance Schools
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- ✓ Entertainment / Leisure Time
- ✓ Language Courses / Life Skills
- ✓ Music & Instruments
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- ✓ Pre-Primary Schools
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- ✓ Schools
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Pako Clever Kids offers parents and teachers easy ways to extend their child's learning and activity opportunities beyond the classroom.

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