

What do all baby mammals need?

Materials

In this pack, students read informational text about baby mammals. Students must read closely to understand the text and to locate evidence to support their answer to answer the Key Question.

Giraffes Giraffes are the tallest land animals on Earth. Read about how baby giraffes are cared for.

Blue Whales These whales are the biggest animals in the world. But even big baby mammals need care.

Kangaroos Kangaroos are marsupials. Read to learn what a marsupial is and how they take care of their babies.

Squirrels There is a reason you do not see many baby squirrels in your backyard. Read to learn why.

CONNECTING PASSAGE

Polar Bears Read to learn how mothers in this species of the bear family take care of their young.

Student Response Sheet

Learning Goals

These stories support student learning of the following Common Core State Standards:

Informational Text

- Identify the main topic of a multi-paragraph text as well as the focus of specific paragraphs within the text.
- Describe the connection between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text.
- Explain how specific images contribute to and clarify a text.

BEFORE READING

Introduce the Key Question

What do all baby mammals need?

- Write the Key Question on the board and read it with students. Ask: *What do all babies need?* (food, shelter, protection) *How are baby humans and baby mammals alike and different?* (Accept reasonable responses.)
- Tell students that they will read some passages that contain information which they can use to answer the Key Question.

Preview the Passages

- Divide the group into teams of four and distribute the four passages (not the Connecting Passage) among team members. Have each student preview his/her passage by reading the title and looking at the images.



Lesson Plan

- Introduce passage-related vocabulary by writing the words on the board and reading them aloud for students. (See Word Work)
- Distribute a Student Response Sheet to each student. Point out the Main Idea and Details Chart on page 1. Ask students to read the directions.
- Tell students to read the selection one time to look for hard words and to understand what the text is about.
- Then have students reread and look for details in the text and underline or circle them. After they read, they can use the details to write their first answer to the Key Question.

DURING READING

Reading and Discussing the Passages

Each selection includes information about what baby mammals need and how their needs are met. Students will first use this information to answer the Key Question about one selection; team members will discuss all the selections to generate a team answer to the Key Question. Use the questions below to guide students as they read individual selections and use what they learn to write their first answer to the Key Question.

WORD WORK

The following words appear in one or more of the stories.

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| hibernate (v.) | to go into a state of deep sleep, often during winter |
| litter (n.) | a group of mammals born to a mother at the same time |
| nutrients (n.) | substances that living things need to live, stay healthy, and grow |
| offspring (n.) | a person's child or another animal's young; descendants |
| predator (n.) | an animal that hunts and eats other animals to survive |
| species (n.) | a group of living things that are physically similar and can reproduce |

Giraffes

1. *What is the main idea in this passage?*
(Newborn giraffes are born tall, but still need the food and protection that their mothers can offer them.)
2. *How does the picture help you understand how tall a newborn giraffe is?*
(I can compare it to the height of its mother.)
3. *What is the most important detail in the last paragraph?*
(Giraffes have predators and the mother giraffes watch over their young to keep them safe.)

My First Answer Sample: A baby giraffe needs milk from its mother, and needs to be protected from predators such as lions and hyenas.

Blue Whales

1. *What is the main idea of the fourth paragraph?*
(Baby whales need to be taught how to get to the surface of the water to breathe.)
2. *How does the comparison illustration help you understand the size of a blue whale?*
(I've seen a school bus and can compare them to understand how big the whale is.)
3. *What did you learn about the nutrients in a mother whale's milk?*
(They are rich enough to make the babies gain 200 pounds a day.)

Lesson Plan

My First Answer Sample: Baby whales need milk from their mother. They need to be shown how to swim to the surface of the water to breathe.

Kangaroos

1. *What is the most important detail you learned about this species of mammal?*
(I learned that kangaroos are marsupials. This means they carry their offspring in a pouch on the mother's body.)
2. *How does the picture of a newborn kangaroo help you understand the passage?*
(It shows how undeveloped the offspring are and why they need to stay in the pouch so long in order to grow.)
3. *How are mother kangaroos alike and different from other species of mammals you know about?*
(Other mammal mothers also take care of their offspring. The offspring of other mammals are born fully developed.)

My First Answer Sample: Joeys are not fully developed when they are born, so they need to be in the mother's pouch to get the milk they need to finish developing.

Squirrels

1. *How are mother squirrels and other mammal mothers alike and different?*
(They are alike in the way they care for their offspring. They are different in that they build nests like birds do to keep their babies safe from predators.)
2. *How does seeing what a squirrel nest looks like help you understand the text?*
(The picture helps me see the differences between a squirrel's nest and a bird's nest.)
3. *Why do squirrels build more than one nest?*
(to make it easier for them to get away from predators)

My First Answer Sample: Baby squirrels need milk from their mothers and to be protected from predators.

AFTER READING: TEAMWORK

Answer the Key Question

- Have teams gather. Students will need their passages and their Student Response Sheets. If you have not already introduced the Reporter and Discussion Leader roles for teams, you should do so now. (See [Using the Passage Packs](#).)
- Each group will share by having members talk about their passages and showing how they completed the Main Idea and Details Charts.
- Tell the teams that their task is to look at all of the charts and choose the details that apply to all the mammals.

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------|
| Baby mammals need _____. | • • |
| Baby mammals also need _____. | • • |
| Baby mammals also need _____. | • • |

Lesson Plan

- The Discussion Leaders should ask the questions on the Student Response Sheet to help teams focus on the information they need to answer the Key Question.

How are the baby mammals' needs alike and different?

(They are alike because they all need milk from their mothers in order to grow. Although they all need some protection, some of the babies need more protection than others.)

How do the baby mammals get their needs met?

(They stay with their mothers until they are grown enough to be on their own.)

- Tell the teams to write their team's answer to the Key Question.
- Discuss with students the importance of using general terms in place of specific examples from their individual stories so the answer can apply to all the animals they read about. For example, students can say *mammals* rather than *giraffes*, *whales*, or *squirrels*.

Our Team's Answer Sample: All baby mammals need milk from their mothers in order to grow and protection from their predators until they are old enough to go out on their own.

- Bring the teams together for a whole-class discussion and ask each team to share their answer. Ask: *Is there anything you would add to the answer? Why or why not?* (Some students might want to add that some baby mammals need to stay with their mothers longer than others do.)
- Facilitate further whole-class discussion using questions similar to those on page two of the Student Response Sheet. Guide students to arrive at a class consensus for a Key Question response.

Confirm or Revise the Team's Answer

- Distribute the Connecting Passage, *Polar Bears*. Guide students in a culminating activity. Say: *Describe how mammal mothers help their babies get what they need.* Have students read the passage in pairs, independently, or as a team. Tell students to read the passage and decide whether this passage confirms the class answer to the Key Question. If not, ask: *How should the class revise its answer to the Key Question?*
- Use the Mini-Lesson to provide additional instruction using the passages.

MINI-LESSON

Comprehension: Graphic Sources

- Tell students that informational text is often accompanied by graphics that help clarify the concepts being explained. Tell them that graphics visually represent information that may not be easily explained by using words only.
- Ask: *How did the picture of a polar bear's den help you understand how the mother polar bear sleeps through much of winter?* (It helped me understand what a den is.) Ask: *How does the polar bear's den help the mother meet her babies' needs?* (She can watch over them and feed them in the den without worrying that something will happen to the babies.)
- Have pairs of students review the graphics for each of the passages. Then have them discuss what questions they still might have had after reading the passages and what they learned by looking at the graphics. Ask: *How did the graphics help you better understand the text?* Students can record their ideas on an Ask and Answer Questions chart.

| What I want to know | What I found out |
|---|---|
| How does the pregnant polar bear sleep in the winter? | The den covers her completely and protects her. |