

*my*Perspectives™
Home Connection

Highlights of Unit 2: Animal Allies

Dear Family,

In this unit, students will learn about the special relationship between people and animals, considering how humans and animals can benefit each other. Students will read a variety of texts and view media as they discuss the Essential Question for the unit.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

As a class, in small groups, and independently, students will work to answer the question *How can people and animals relate to each other?* Give your student the opportunity to continue the discussion at home.

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR STUDENT

- What are some of the ways you could answer the question *How can people and animals relate to each other?*
- What do these selections say about our relationship to animals? How can animals teach us to be better people?
- Why do you think stories about animals are so popular in the media and in books and film?

UNIT 2 SELECTION TITLES, AUTHORS, GENRES



WHOLE-CLASS LEARNING

<i>from My Life With the Chimpanzees</i>	<i>Jane Goodall</i>	memoir
“Hachiko, The True Story of a Loyal Dog”	<i>Pamela S. Turner</i>	historical fiction



SMALL-GROUP LEARNING

“A Blessing”	<i>James Wright</i>	poetry
“Predators”	<i>Linda Hogan</i>	poetry
“Monkey Master”	<i>Waldemar Januszczak</i>	essay
“Black Cowboy, Wild Horses”	<i>Julius Lester</i>	short story



INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Your student will choose one of the following to read independently. You may want to read it as well, so that you can discuss it together.

from <i>The Wind in the Willows</i>	<i>Kenneth Grahame</i>	novel excerpt
“How the Camel Got His Hump”	<i>Rudyard Kipling</i>	fable
“The Girl Who Gets Gifts From Birds”	<i>Katy Sewall</i>	news article
“Pet Therapy: How Animals and Humans Heal Each Other”	<i>Julie Rovner</i>	news article

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR STUDENT

- How did you choose which selection to read?
- What is the most interesting aspect of the idea of animal “allies” that you learned from your reading?

PERFORMANCE TASKS AND PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT

Your student will need to answer the question *How can animals and people help one another?* He or she will write an explanatory essay and then give an informative presentation, drawing on knowledge gained from the selections in this unit, as well as from the Performance Tasks he or she completed.



Whole-Class Learning Performance Task

After completing the Whole-Class section of the unit, your student will learn how to put together an explanatory essay. He or she will write an essay answering the question *What qualities do Goodall and Turner believe people and animals share?*



Small-Group Learning Performance Task

After completing the Small-Group section of the unit, your student will work with his or her group to plan and present a multimedia presentation addressing the question *How can the bonds between people and animals be surprising?*

End-of-Unit Performance-Based Assessment

At the end of the unit, your student will pull together his or her learning by completing a Performance-Based Assessment addressing the question *How can animals and people help one another?* In response to that question, he or she will write an explanatory essay, then give an informative presentation.

STANDARDS

Activities and assignments in Unit 2 will help your student meet the following Common Core State Standards for reading literature and informational texts, writing, and speaking and listening. Here are some key standards students will work toward mastering in this unit.

Reading

- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.
- Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).
- Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

Writing

- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- Introduce a topic or organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

- Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Speaking and Listening

- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.

Thank you for your continuing support!