

Learning New Moves

Damitra and her cousin Ana walked slowly down the steps. Checking the tickets in their hands, the girls were trying to find their seats. But there were so many. Row after row of seats wrapped around the field. Eventually, Damitra's dad found the seats. People stood up to let them squeeze by. Finally, they sat down.

"The field is huge!" Damitra said, admiring the view.

"It must be ten times larger than our soccer field," Ana said.

Damitra's dad laughed. "It's not that much bigger, Ana. But you're right. It's impressive." Just then, players stepped onto the field to begin warming up.

"There she is!" Damitra said, pointing to Julie Foudy. "I can't wait to see her play! Foudy is famous for passing the ball with the back of her heel. And she fakes out defenders by moving her foot over the ball. I'm going to have to watch her in action so I can try those moves at our next game!"



Julie Foudy

In high school, Julie Foudy was the soccer player of the year for southern California. She was also an All-American player.

After high school, Foudy went to Stanford University, where she earned a degree in biology. In college play, Foudy scored 52 goals and had 32 assists. She won many awards, including Most Valuable Player.

Foudy was a strong player on the U.S. Women's National Team. She was also one of the captains. Foudy played in World Cup and Olympic games. As a midfielder, she was known for making great passes and key goals.

Today, Foudy and her husband run The Julie Foudy Sports Leadership Academy. There, women soccer players teach girls, ages 12–18, how to improve their game. At the same time, they teach them leadership skills on and off the field.



Liam's Spring Break

It was spring break. Or at least, that's what the school calendar said. Snow still covered the ground. Liam wouldn't be riding his new bike to the park today or any day this week. It was expected to snow every day. "Mom, is it ever going to stop snowing?"

"Be patient, Liam. Spring weather will be here soon," she said.

"I'm not sure I believe it," Liam replied. "I think we're in the middle of another Ice Age. It's going to last a thousand years, or at least until the end of spring break."

Liam's mom laughed. "I agree. It's cold, but we're lucky. We can put on an extra sweater and heavy boots. And exercise helps us stay warm."

"Uh-oh," Liam said. "I think I see where this is going." Without another word, Liam went to the garage. He came back wearing an extra sweater, heavy boots, and holding a snow shovel. "I'll be clearing the snow off the sidewalk if you need me, Mom."



QUESTION

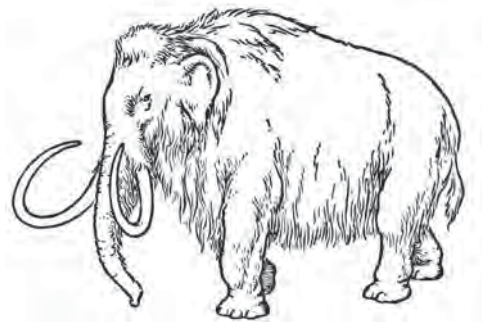
Woolly Mammoths

About 150,000 years ago, a large, hairy animal walked the frozen landscape in northern Europe and Asia. This animal, related to modern elephants, was adapted to the cold. It had a thick layer of shaggy hair that gave the animal its name—the woolly mammoth.

Mammoths had a thick layer of fat beneath the skin. They also had special oil glands. Greasy fats oozed from the glands into the animal's hair. The oily hair and fat beneath the skin helped keep the mammoth warm.

Woolly mammoths had curved tusks up to 16 feet long. Some scientists think that the animal used the long tusks to find food beneath the ice.

Most woolly mammoths died out about 12,000 years ago. Today, scientists study bones and frozen bodies to learn about woolly mammoths.



Saying Hello

Katrin entered the classroom early. She saw her teacher helping some students with their homework. And there, she noticed, was someone new. The student sat at a desk next to the window, watching students get off the buses. Katrin decided to introduce herself.

“Hi! I’m Katrin. What’s your name?”

The new student said nothing. She continued to look out the window. So, Katrin tried again. This time, she spoke louder. Still, the girl said nothing.

Katrin’s teacher walked over. She tapped the new student on the shoulder. The student turned and smiled. The teacher then used her hands while she spoke. “Bonnie,” the teacher said. “This is Katrin. Katrin, this is Bonnie. Bonnie is deaf, but she knows sign language and can read lips, too.”

Katrin smiled and said, “Welcome to our class! Can you teach me the sign for hello?”

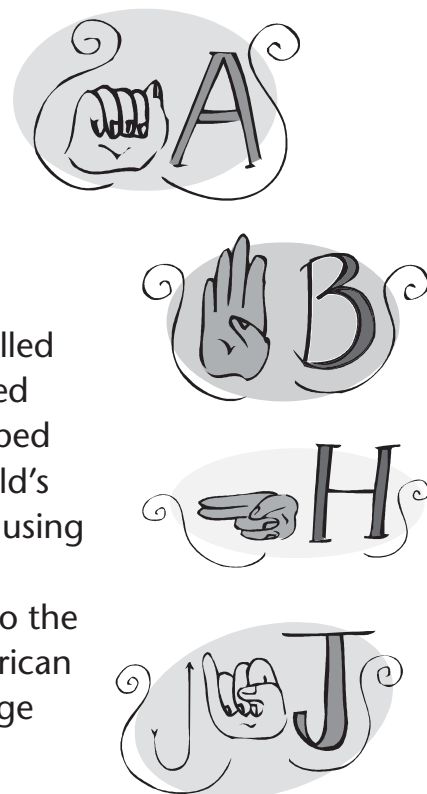


Speaking Without Sound

People who speak with their hands instead of their voices use sign language. In North America, another name for this language is ASL, or American Sign Language. This language has rules and grammar that are different from English.

In France, a man named Charles-Michel de l’Epée is called the “Father of the Deaf.” Using his own money, he opened a shelter for deaf children in the 1700s. There, he developed a system for signing. In time, the shelter became the world’s first school for deaf children. Children learned and spoke using Signed French.

Later, Laurent Clerc, a teacher from the school, came to the U.S. He worked with Thomas Gallaudet to open the American School for the Deaf. It is here that American Sign Language was born.



Cave Explorers

Catherine was thrilled. She had read every book in the school library about caves. She had watched special television programs and even written to a famous cave explorer. Now *she* was the cave explorer.

At the cave entrance, her parents and the guide checked everyone's equipment a second time. Then her dad yelled, "We're ready. Let's go, everyone!"

Catherine followed her father. Inside the cave, it was dark, cool, and damp. Needles of rock hung above their heads. Others stood upright on the ground. Water oozed from the walls. Noises came from deeper in the cave. Catherine knew that some interesting animals lived in caves, including her favorite—the Mexican Free-tailed bat.

"What was that?" her brother cried, hiding behind Catherine.

"Bats, I hope," Catherine said, taking her brother's hand. "Let's walk quietly so we don't disturb their sleep."



Ruby Falls Cave

Near Chattanooga, Tennessee, a 145-foot-high waterfall tumbles underground. It falls inside an underground cave within Lookout Mountain.

Over time, dripping water has created interesting rocky shapes inside the cave. Each drop of water leaves minerals behind. Over time, dripping water formed stalactites, or dripstones. Water that fell to the ground left minerals behind, too. The minerals built up, forming stalagmites. Where stalactites and stalagmites joined, they formed columns of stone.

Water flowing down the cave's walls and over the floor formed flowstone. This rock is also called cave bacon. That's because thin rocky sheets hang over parts of the cave's wall. Some parts of the sheets let light through. Others are brown and beige.

People have been visiting Ruby Falls Cave since 1930. Today, the falls and all of the caves inside the mountain are a National Historic Landmark.



A Giant Mystery

“Class, I’d like your help in solving a mystery,” Mr. Mack said. “The mystery is growing. And it has some familiar names attached to it. They include General Sherman, Lincoln, King Arthur, and Franklin. What do these names have in common? Your job is to solve the mystery. Your only clue is this: You’ll find your answer in California.”

We each chose a partner to work with. I chose Ricardo, my best friend. The clue made me think of a recent geography lesson. We had been studying different states. I remembered something special about our study of California and its symbols. Ricardo and I looked in our notes for information. We checked online, too.

“Look!” Ricardo whispered excitedly. “They’re trees! They’re some of the tallest giant sequoias in all of California!”



The Giant Sequoia

The fastest growing trees in the world are in California. They are the evergreens called giant sequoias. These trees can grow more than 300 feet tall!

Giant sequoias have grooved bark that can be two feet thick at a tree’s base. This bark helps protect the tree against fires. The tree’s seeds form inside cones. The cones, less than three inches long, remain closed for up to twenty years. Each cone holds about 230 seeds. There can be more than 11,000 cones on a single tree.

The heat of fires and animals can cause cones to release their seeds. Heat dries and opens the cones. Longhorn beetles gnaw holes in cones to lay their eggs. The holes cause the cones to dry out and open. Douglas squirrels eat young cones. Seeds fall as the squirrels eat.

Although people grow giant sequoias around the world, their natural home is in California. The world’s largest tree, by volume, is the General Sherman. It lives in the Giant Forest in Sequoia National Park.



Poetry Reading

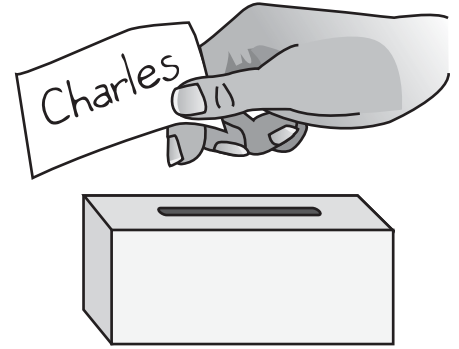
"When I draw your name from the box," Ms. Simon said, "please come forward to read your poem."

"I'm nervous," Darnell whispered to Eddie as Ms. Simon called the first name. "Me, too," Eddie agreed. "But I bet everybody's nervous."

"Charles, you're first," announced Ms. Simon. Charles stepped forward, his hands shaking. He began to read, and suddenly, the class was laughing. Each burst of laughter made Charles more confident. After he finished, the class clapped wildly.

"I didn't know poetry could be so funny," Darnell said to Eddie. "I know," Eddie responded. "It was great!"

After the last person read her poem, Ms. Simon smiled broadly. "What a wonderful time I've had," she said. "You made me feel sad, joyful, frightened, and excited, all in one class period. That's what poetry is all about. Thank you, class."



Dr. Maya Angelou

Dr. Maya Angelou was born in 1928. At age three, she was sent to live with her grandmother in Arkansas. After moving back and forth over the years, Angelou eventually went to live with her mother in California. Life was difficult there, and Angelou ran away to her father's house. Life there was also difficult, so Angelou ran away again. She spent a month living in a junkyard with other homeless children before returning to her mother. The experience changed Angelou forever. Living and working beside other children of all colors made Angelou more tolerant of others for the rest of her life.



Angelou has accomplished many things in her life. She is a poet, a teacher, an author, and an actress. She is a stage, movie, and television director and producer. She has received many, many honors for her work. Her life experiences and the words she uses to describe them give hope to people around the world.

A Big Hint

"Fiona," her mom called. "Did you put this dog bookmark in my book?"

"It's great, isn't it?" Fiona asked, as she pressed a key her keyboard and the printer began to whir.

"Yes, it is," her mom replied. "But it seems to be multiplying. I've found at least twenty so far. And I've found a number of these, too," she said, as she showed Fiona a brochure for the local animal shelter.

"They both look really professional, don't you think, Mom?" Fiona asked. "I made them for a project in computer class."

"Congratulations," her mom said. "They're remarkable. But I have the feeling that these are more than just a class project."

"I wondered how long it would take for you to figure it out. I've hidden them everywhere I think you'll look. I thought you might need a hint, since my birthday's coming soon."

Fiona's mom smiled. "I'd call these more than a hint. I suppose I'll be finding bookmarks and brochures long after we visit the animal shelter."



Caring for a Dog

You may have heard someone say, "A dog is a furry person." That person was saying that dogs offer so much love and good company that they become friends. And good dog owners know that like friends, dogs need care.

The best food for dogs is made especially for dogs. Food should always be served in a clean bowl. Fresh water should always be available.

Dogs need regular visits to the doctor. Veterinarians give dogs shots to protect them from disease. They can also put a microchip inside a dog's skin. This chip, like a collar and tags, helps people find lost pets.

Dogs need exercise and play. Always use a leash to walk a dog. Provide toys, too. Dogs enjoy playing. At the end of play, dogs need a comfortable place to sleep.

You probably offer love and attention to the people who mean the most to you. A dog requires the same things. In exchange, a dog remains your friend for life.



What You Put on Your Plate

Amit and Thomas were serious about baseball. They were working hard to get in good shape for the beginning of the season. Their coach told them to exercise every day, practice batting and fielding, and eat well.

"What does eating have to do with baseball?" Amit asked his friend.

Thomas shrugged his shoulders. "I don't know," he said. "We'll ask later. Right now, let's practice." *Crack!* Thomas hit the ball hard.

The next day, Coach told the team again how important it was to eat well. Amit asked, "Coach, what does eating have to do with baseball?"

"Think of your body as a car," Coach said. "If you take good care of it, it gets you where you want to go. If you don't, well, you're probably going to be walking a lot. Eating well is like putting good gasoline in your car. You'll have more energy, and you'll run smoothly."

"I get it," Amit said. "What I put on my dinner plate can get me to home plate!"

"You got it!" Coach said, laughing.



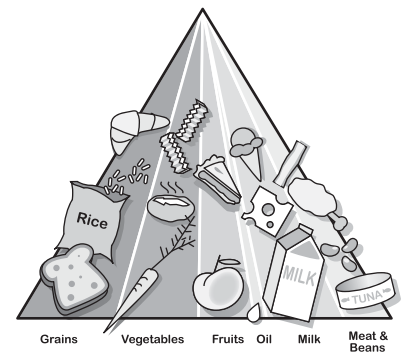
The Food Guide Pyramid

A Food Guide Pyramid is one guide for eating well. The pyramid has a rainbow of stripes. Five stripes stand for these food groups: grains; vegetables; fruits; fats and oils; milk and dairy products; and meat, beans, fish, and nuts.

Some stripes on the pyramid are wider than others. That means we should eat more of the foods in the wide stripes than foods in the thin stripes. The stripes from meats and oils are thinnest of all. We need less of these foods to stay healthy.

Each stripe is wider at the bottom of the pyramid than at the top. The foods at the bottom of each stripe are better for you than the foods at the top. The fruit stripe is an example. A fresh peach is better for you than a piece of peach pie. So it's in the widest part of the stripe.

A balanced diet includes food from all of the groups every day. Eating a balanced diet gives your body what it needs to stay healthy and active.



A Place to Visit

If you could visit any place in the world, where would you go? That's the question my teacher, Mr. Eisen, asked us to answer in an essay. It is our homework assignment. My classmates look puzzled, but I know my answer already.

We've been studying rain forests in science class. Rain forests are wet and thick with tall plants. The plants block the sun, keeping the forest floor dark. The forest is filled with unusual animals. There are sloths that live, sleep, eat, and even give birth upside down. The rhinoceros beetle can lift 850 times its own weight. The spider monkey uses its tail like a hand, swinging from tree to tree. I'd love to see them in the wild!

I can't wait to go home and write my essay. If I can visit any place in the world, I know exactly where I'm going!



Loudest Animal on Land

The howler monkey is the loudest animal on land. Its noises can be heard up to three miles away! Neither the male nor the female howler monkey actually howls. Males roar, and females grunt like pigs.

These monkeys live in the rain forest canopy, or treetops. Monkeys move from tree to tree, eating leaves, fruits, flowers, and nuts. Unlike other monkeys, howler monkeys rarely hang or swing by their tails. Instead, they use at least two hands, or a hand and the tail, to cling to branches.

Howler monkeys usually live in friendly groups. Even when they argue, the monkeys don't bite. They yell. But they do not live well as pets. And people are cutting down their rain forest homes. Without the tall trees in the rain forest, howler monkeys have no safe place to live. Like so many animals and plants, howler monkeys will disappear unless humans protect their rain forest habitat.

