

Transcripts

Nature and the Environment

Unit 1 A Big Responsibility

- B : Mom, can I get a puppy?
W : No, Billy. Taking care of a pet is a big responsibility.
B : I promise to take good care of him, and you won't have to remind me to do things for him.
W : A dog isn't a toy that you play with for awhile. He will be part of our life for the next 10 or 20 years. He is a living creature.
B : I understand that, Mom. I promise to feed him every morning and take him for walks every afternoon.
W : That's part of the responsibility, but there's more. He needs a license and has to go to the vet to get shots. A dog also needs companionship. You can't go off with your friends and leave him locked up in the house all day.
B : I understand, Mom. I have almost \$100 in the bank so I can pay for his license and shots now.
W : There are other expenses, too. Dog food is rather expensive.
B : Well, I have my job mowing lawns and I'll get a newspaper route.
W : I think we should discuss this with your father when he gets home. This is a family decision.
B : OK, Mom. Thanks!

Unit 2 Elephants Are Amazing

- M : Elephants are interesting. They are intelligent. They also have a great memory. You should always be kind to elephants. They remember everything. A woman from India told me a story. When she was a little girl, she knew of an evil elephant keeper. He often hit his elephant. He was very mean and cruel to the elephant. Then the evil keeper sold the elephant. The new keeper was a very kind man. Many years later, the evil keeper met the elephant again. The elephant remembered the evil man. He picked up a stone with his trunk and threw it at the evil man. The elephant still knew the man, even after so many years.

Elephants help each other, too. Elephants use a special sound. The sound is so low that people cannot hear it. This sound travels really far.

Groups of elephants can communicate with each other, even if they are far apart. This is very useful because it helps the elephants to find water and food. The elephants cooperate to help each other.

Unit 3 Ants, Ants, Everywhere!

- G : Hello, Mrs. Wilson. How are you?
W : I'm worried, Brianna. Thousands of ants are all over my patio!
G : That's quite a problem.
W : What's worse is that my daughter's birthday party is in a few days and I wanted to have it on the patio.
G : Why don't you call an exterminator?
W : I would, but I don't want all those hazardous chemicals around my children. It's harmful and unhealthy. I also don't want dangerous substances to seep into the garden.
G : I usually don't have problems with ants, and I don't use any chemicals.
W : What's your secret?
G : Well, ants are difficult to control, so I planted a lot of mint plants near my deck. I also use cinnamon and cayenne pepper. I just sprinkle them around the places I don't want ants. Some people have tried it and said it worked. Others said that they needed to try something else.
W : I think it's worth a try. I would rather use cinnamon and mint around my patio than some hazardous chemicals. Besides, I don't mind having the ants in the yard. I simply don't want them coming to the birthday party. Would you mind helping me?
G : It would be a pleasure. I have a lot of cinnamon at home and I can run to the store to get the plants for you.
W : Thank you, Brianna. You're such a thoughtful person.

Unit 4 The Oil Spill

- G : My best friend Katy lives near a beautiful white sand beach. Her parents take us there every summer. The water is clean and refreshing. We have a lot of fun in the waves. Last year, there was an oil spill at Katy's beach. We volunteered at the

beach to clean up the oil and help the birds that were caught in the spill.

When we arrived at the beach that day, the water was slick with oil and the white sand had turned black. It was an ugly sight. At first, the rescue workers would not let us on the beach. We had to watch from a distance. We watched as they put a huge float in the water, called a boom. This device kept the oil slick from spreading. Once they stopped the slick, we were allowed on the beach to help. Each of us was given a broom. We swept the oil into a pile. The workers took it away in big trucks. We all worked very hard that day to restore the beach.

Once the oil was removed, the birds that had been caught in the oil had to be helped. The workers showed us how to remove the oil from their wings. Then the birds could fly away to safety. We were very proud of ourselves that day. We helped save our beautiful beach and the birds who visit it.

Unit 5 The Amazing Amazon

M: The Amazon is an amazing river. It is unique in many ways. It is the second longest river in the world. It is 6,500 kilometers long. It starts up in the Andes Mountains. Its drainage basin (the area of land that collects water) covers 40 percent of South America. The Amazon River has many small rivers that supply it with water.

It is the widest river in the world. The river rises more than nine meters during the rainy season. It overflows its banks. It floods large areas of the rainforest. During that time, in some parts, it has a width of up to 40 kilometers. The Amazon River is over 325 kilometers wide at its mouth. It has more water than any other river in the world.

The Amazon River is also home to many animals. Over 2,000 types of fish live in the Amazon River. One kind of fish is the piranha. The piranha is a terrifying fish. A piranha grows up to 60 centimeters long. It hunts in a group. A group of piranha can kill and eat cattle in a matter of minutes. They are so efficient that only the bones are left. This fish is one of the most dangerous creatures in the Amazon River.

Science and Technology

Unit 6 Research

W: What are you doing, Billy?

B: I'm doing research. I found a lot of great websites.

W: You know, I think you might want to go to the library and look at some books.

B: I don't want to. It takes too much time, and besides, this is fast, easy, and fun. This paper will be done in no time.

W: The Internet is great for finding information. But it is also full of misinformation and lies. You don't really know what you are looking at unless you are at a reliable site. It's safer to get some books first and then search for more information.

B: Grandma, I love you, but I think you are a little old-fashioned. Look at all this great information! My report is on Albert Einstein. Now, according to this site, he was born in 1979, came up with the theory of relatives, and was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1922.

W: Your information is wrong. Albert Einstein was born in 1879 and developed the theory of general relativity. He won the Nobel Prize in 1921.

B: Wow! That means all this stuff is inaccurate. How did you know all that?

W: Come with me to the library and I'll help you find the books with those facts.

B: Thank you, Grandma. You're a real life-saver!

Unit 7 A New Calculator

W: Hi. I'd like to see your calculators.

M: Did you have a certain model in mind, ma'am?

W: I'm not thinking of any specific model. I want something simple for basic math.

M: Is it for personal use?

W: Yes. I just need it for shopping and keeping track of my bills.

M: Well, the great thing is that these simple calculators are very inexpensive and small. Here is a solar model that never needs batteries. It is thin, too.

W: It's too small. I can't read the numbers very easily.

M: How about this one? It is a pocket calculator. It's a bit bigger. The display is easier to read.

W: Yes, I can see the numbers better. It is easier to hold, too. Is it also solar?