THE GROVE RANGER

Amazing animals!

You might think that what makes us different from animals is our ability to think and to build friendships with others, but in fact animals are capable of more extraordinary things than you might imagine. Find out why...

Big love

In many cultures, elephants are seen as a symbol of wisdom and are known for having an excellent memory. They have the largest brains of all land animals and their intelligence is evident in their ability to learn, use tools and even in their sense of humour. They are very social animals and although they live in herds, they spend their lives in pairs devoted to a best friend. These friendships between elephants are well-known, but in an elephant sanctuary in the United States, an unusual friendship blossomed.

Tarra, an Asian elephant, chose Bella, a dog, as her best friend. The odd pair loved spending all their time together, eating, sleeping and playing. Then one day, Bella had an accident. For the entire three weeks it took her to recover, Tarra waited outside the sanctuary office. She was free to wander the 2200 acres but she was loyal to her friend and chose to wait for her to get better. It just shows us how animals don't consider differences when they choose their friends.

Clever crows

We use the word 'birdbrain' for people who aren't very clever, but just because birds have small brains it doesn't necessarily mean they aren't intelligent, especially crows. Some crows make tools for finding food. They think about what tool they need and look for it. If they cannot find the right shape, they make the tool themselves by cutting bits of wood from trees, leaves or grass. They even store their tools in a safe place to use at a later time. Another thing they hide is food. This is common among many animals, but if a crow thinks another crow from the flock is watching, it will pretend to store food in one place, then put it somewhere else. Crows in Japan are clever enough to leave nuts on the road at traffic lights so that cars will run over them and crack them open. And amazingly, crows have been filmed using food scraps for fish bait. They drop the scraps into the sea to attract fish and catch them. Pretty smart thinking for such a small brain!

Dolphin to the rescue!

Dolphins are well-known for their intelligence and their ability to understand human language. However, many people do not realise how well they communicate with other animals with which they share the oceans. In 2008, two whales, a mother and her calf, ended up getting stuck in shallow waters off the coast of New Zealand. A group of people gathered at once wanting to help. They spent hours trying to direct the whales back into deeper waters. Both the rescuers and whales were exhausted and after some time the authorities were at a loss. They didn't know what to do next and in the end, they decided to give up. They were considering putting the animals down, when a dolphin turned up. Somehow, it calmed the whales down and communicated with them. Within a few minutes the whales were following the dolphin back to the freedom of safe waters. The dolphin had saved their lives and had accomplished something that humans had not been able to. It reminds us that even though we might not understand what animals are saying, other animals probably do!

LIVEWORKSHEETS

THE GROVE RANGER

Name :

Class :

C. Read the text again and write E for Elephant, C for Crow or D for Dolphin.
Which animal...

1. uses its knowledge to help other species? ◯
2. doesn't care about species when building a relationship? ◯
3. sometimes plays tricks on other members of the same species? ◯
4. is intelligent despite the size of its brain? ◯
5. has been known to succeed where people can't? ◯
6. has developed the ability to plan for future events? ◯
7. shows unusual levels of loyalty? ◯
8. uses humans to accomplish a task? ◯

D. Match the highlighted words/phrases in the text with their meanings. There are two extra meanings which you do not need to use.

1. devoted ◯
2. odd ◯
3. recover ◯
4. run over ◯
5. shallow ◯
6. gather ◯
7. accomplish ◯

a. drive over something
b. understand what's happening
c. not deep
d. strange, unusual
e. come together to form a group
f. succeed in doing something
g. get well after an illness or injury
h. relax
i. having great love for somebody and being loyal to them

E. Discuss.

- Do you know of any other amazing facts about animals?
- Do you know of any other stories similar to these?

LIVEWORKSHEETS