Teaching Activity Guide for

The
Perfect Pet
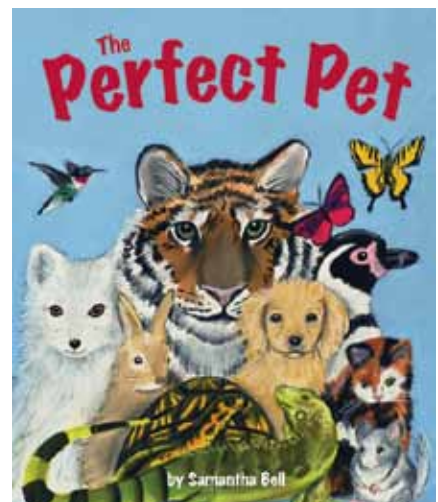
Table of Contents

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How to Use This Activity Guide (General)

There are a wide variety of activities that teach or supplement all curricular areas. The activities are easily adapted up or down depending on the age and abilities of the children involved. And, it is easy to pick and choose what is appropriate for your setting and the time involved. Most activities can be done with an individual child or a group of children.

For teachers in the classroom: We understand that time is at a premium and that, especially in the early grades, much time is spent teaching language arts. All Arbordale titles are specifically selected and developed to get children excited about learning other subjects (science, geography, social studies, math, etc.) while reading (or being read to). These activities are designed to be as comprehensive and cross-curricular as possible. If you are teaching sentence structure in writing, why not use sentences that teach science or social studies? We also know and understand that you must account for all activities done in the classroom. While each title is aligned to all of the state standards (both the text and the For Creative Minds), it would be nearly impossible to align all of these activities to each state's standards at each grade level. However, we do include some of the general wording of the CORE language arts and math standards, as well as some of the very general science or social studies standards. You'll find them listed as "objectives" in italics. You should be able to match these objectives with your state standards fairly easily.

For homeschooling parents and teachers in private schools: Use as above. Aren't you glad you don't have to worry about state standards?

For parents/caregivers: Two of the most important gifts you can give your child are the love of reading and the desire to learn. Those passions are instilled in your child long before he or she steps into a classroom. Many adults enjoy reading historical fiction novels . . . fun to read but also to learn (or remember) about historical events. Not only does Arbordale publish stories that are fun to read and that can be used as bedtime books or quiet "lap" reading books, but each story has non-fiction facts woven through the story or has some underlying educational component to sneak in "learning." Use the "For Creative Minds" section in the book itself and these activities to expand on your child's interest or curiosity in the subject. They are designed to introduce a subject so you don't need to be an expert (but you will probably look like one to your child!). Pick and choose the activities to help make learning fun!

For librarians and bookstore employees; after-school program leaders; and zoo, aquarium, nature center, park & museum educators: Whether reading a book for story time or using the book to supplement an educational program, feel free to use the activities in your programs. We have done the "hard part" for you.

What Do Children Already Know?

Young children are naturally inquisitive and are sponges for information. The whole purpose of this activity is to help children verify the information they know (or think they know) and to get them thinking "beyond the box" about a particular subject.

Before reading the book, ask the children what they know about the subject. A list of suggested questions is below. The children should write down their "answers" (or adults for them if the children are not yet writing) on the chart found in Appendix A, index cards, or post-it notes.

Their answers should be placed on a "before reading" panel. If doing this as a group, you could use a bulletin board or even a blackboard. If doing this with individual children, you can use a plain manila folder with the front cover the "before reading" panel. Either way, you will need two more panels or sections—one called "correct answer" and the other "look for correct answer."

Do the children have any more questions about the subject ? If so, write them down to see if they are answered in the book.
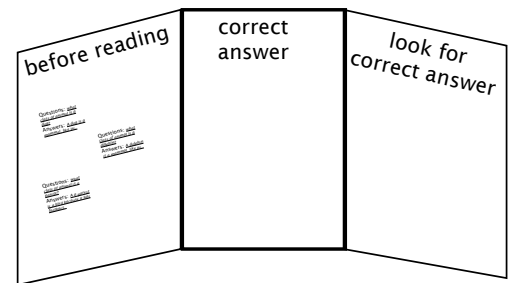
After reading the book, go back to the questions and answers and determine whether the children's answers were correct or not.

If the answer was correct, move that card to the "correct answer" panel. If the answer was incorrect, go back to the book to find the correct information.

If the children have more questions that were not answered, they should look them up.

When an answer has been found and corrected, the card can be moved to the "correct answer" panel.

Pre-Reading Questions

How are animals sorted into groups?

What kinds of categories are there for animals?

What are some animals that make good pets?

What is a vertebrate?

What is a mammal?

What is "taxonomy"?

Comprehension Questions & Writing Prompts

Objective Core Language Arts, Speaking and Listening: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.
Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.
Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

If you could have any pet, what would it be? Why?

Some animals would not make very good pets! Some are too big, too dangerous, or too hard to take care of. Pretend you have a pet that is too big— like an elephant, a blue whale, or a lion. What is it like?

Why did the child in the story decide not to get a dog? Do you think they made a good choice?

What responsibliities come with a pet? How would your daily life be impacted by a new pet?

The Perfect Pet

1. Do you have a pet? If so, what is it?

2. What would your dream pet be?

3. How do you take care of a pet?

4. What would you name a new pet?

5. If you were writing this story, how would you have it end?

6. Do you think it is harder to care for an animal or a plant? and why?

7. What would you like best about having a pet? What would you like least?

Language Arts & Science: Basic Needs

Objective: Describe the basic needs of living things and how they are met.

Plants need water, oxygen, food, light and space to grow and reproduce; animals need water, oxygen, food, and shelter/space to grow and reproduce.

Re-read the story and write down any words that relate to how the plants or animal(s)meet their basic needs.

Plant/ Animal	water	oxygen	food	light	space

If not mentioned in the text, are there any indications in the illustrations of how these needs are met? Can you describe, draw, or write an explanation of how the needs are met?

Language Arts: Word Families & Rhyming Words

Language Arts, Reading Standards: Foundational Skills, Recognize and produce rhyming words.

Word families are groups of words that have some of the same combinations of letters in them that make them sound alike…or rhyme. For example ad, add, bad, brad (Brad), cad, Chad, clad, dad, fad, gad, glad, grad, had, lad, mad, pad, plaid (silent 'i"), sad, shad, and tad all have an "ad" letter combination and rhyme.

· Find and write down rhyming words in the poem.

· Are they in the same word family?

· If so, circle the combination of letters that are the same.

· Can you think of more words in the word family?

Rhyming words are:

Pet

and

Get

They are / are not from the same word family.

Other words that rhyme are:

Rhyming words are:

Instead

and

Head

They are / are not from the same word family.

Other words that rhyme are:

Rhyming words are:

too

and

you

They are / are not from the same word family.

Other words that rhyme are:

Rhyming words are:

Seen

and

Clean

They are / are not from the same word family.

Other words that rhyme are:

Language Arts: Sequence Sentence Strips

Cut into sentence strips, laminate if desired, and place in a "center." Have children put the events in order.
Children may work alone or in small groups. Cards are in order but should be mixed up when cut apart.

Objective Core Language Arts:
Use temporal words and phrases to signal event order.
Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.

"A fish," Mom said, "would be quite nice.
I think that's just the thing."

I thought the family Canidae
would make a lot more sense.

The kingdom Animalia
is where I'd start my search

Then Canis lupus familiaris
gently licked me on the hand.
This furry species liked me
and it seemed to understand.

I decided the class Mammalia
was the way that I should go.

"All invertebrates are out.
Backbones are in," she said.
"Look through phylum Chordata."

"Try the order Carnivora."
So I had to search some more.

"No reptiles or amphibians;
they are too hard to scrub."

"How about an arctic fox—
white in winter, gray in spring?
Or a coyote, genus Canis—
I hear they eat most anything."

I rubbed his head, then put him back.
I knew we couldn't stay—
'cause my new pet just wasn't here . . .
but from the kingdom Plantae.

Word Search

Find the hidden words. Even non-reading children can match letters to letters to find the words! Easy—words go up to down or left to right (no diagonals). For older children, identify the coordinates of the first letter in each word (number, letter).

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	O	Q	E	W	P	L	A	N	T	R
2	R	F	A	M	I	L	Y	T	Y	D
3	D	T	S	P	E	C	I	E	S	O
4	E	G	O	A	N	I	M	A	L	G
5	R	E	R	G	R	E	P	E	T	G
6	S	N	T	A	S	F	H	X	C	E
7	L	U	A	F	E	U	Y	I	O	D
8	I	S	O	E	G	C	L	A	S	S
9	N	T	Y	E	D	V	U	W	K	J
10	K	I	N	G	D	O	M	M	H	O

KINGDOM

PHYLUM

CLASS

ORDER

FAMILY

GENUS

SPECIES

ANIMAL

DOG

PET

PLANT

SORT

Edible Sorting and Classifying Activity

Objective Core Language Arts Vocabulary Acquisition and Use: Sort common objects into categories (e.g., shapes, foods) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.

Objects and materials can be sorted and described by their properties. (color, shape, size, weight and texture)

Use whole numbers*, up to 10, in counting, identifying, sorting, and describing objects and experiences.

Gather a cup of edible "sorting items." For example:

- As many different kinds of M&Ms as you can find
- Chocolate & peanut butter chips
- Hershey Kisses
- Peanuts or other type of nuts

Ask the children to sort the items into groups. There is no right and wrong, only what makes sense to the child. When finished, ask the child:

What feature or attribute (color, size, ingredient, etc.) did you use to sort the items?

- Were there some items that fit more than one group or don't fit any group?
- If so, how did the child decide which attribute was more important?
- How are various objects similar and different?
- Was it easy to sort or were there some items that were a little confusing?

If more than one person did this, did everyone sort by the same attribute? To extend the learning, graph the attributes used to sort the items (blank graph below).

Graph the attributes that children used to sort their items. (Graph provided on next page.

What was the most common attribute (size, shape, color, etc.) used?

Objective: Classify organisms according to one selected feature, such as body covering, and identify other similarities shared by organisms within each group formed.

Describe several external features and behaviors of animals that can be used to classify them (e.g., size, color, shape of body parts).

Identify observable similarities and differences (e.g., number of legs, body coverings, size) between/among different groups of animals.

10			
9			
8			
7			
6			
5			
4			
3			
2			
1			
attribute			

Classifying Animals

Objective: Classify organisms according to one selected feature, such as body covering, and identify other similarities shared by organisms within each group formed.

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Identify observable similarities and differences (e.g., number of legs, body coverings, size) between/ among different groups of animals.

Just as we sort candy, scientists sort all living things into groups to help us understand and connect how things relate to each other. Scientists ask questions to help them sort or classify animals.

Based on the answers to the questions, scientists can sort the living organisms. The first sort is into a Kingdom. There are five commonly accepted Kingdoms: Monera, Protista, Fungi, Plantae, and Animalia. All of the living things in this book belong to Animalia or the Animal Kingdom.

The next big sort is into a Phylum. One of the first questions that a scientist will ask is whether the animal has (or had at some point in its life) a backbone. If the answer is "yes," the animal is a vertebrate. If the answer is "no," the animal is an invertebrate.

Each Phylum is broken down into Classes, like mammals, birds, reptiles, fish, amphibians, insects, or gastropods (snails). Then each class can be broken down even further into orders, families, genus and species, getting more specific.

The scientific name is generally in Latin or Greek and is the living thing's genus and species. People all over the world use the scientific names, no matter what language they speak. Most living organisms also have a common name that we use in our own language.

Some questions scientists ask:

· Does it have a backbone?

· What type of skin covering does it have?

· Does it have a skeleton? If so, is it inside or outside of the body?

· How many body parts does the animal have?

· Does it get oxygen from the air through lungs or from the water through gills?

· Are the babies born alive or do they hatch from eggs?

· Does the baby drink milk from its mother?

· Is it warm-blooded or cold-blooded?

Using what you know, and information and pictures in the book, see how many Animal Chart squares you can fill in for each animal.

Animal Chart

	Animals		
Appendages	legs (how many)		
	flippers/fins		
	wings		
	tail/no tail		
	horns/antlers		
Feet or hands: if they have; may have more than one	claws		
	web		
	toes		
	opposable thumbs/toes		
	hooves		
Movement: may do more than one	walks/runs		
	crawls		
	flies		
	slithers		
	swims		
	climbs		
	hops		
Backbone	backbone/vertebrate		
	no backbone/invertebrate		
Skeleton	inside skeleton (endoskeleton)		
	outside skeleton (exoskeleton)		
	no skeleton		
Body covering	hair/fur/whiskers/quills		
	feathers		
	dry scales or bony plates		
	moist scales		
	smooth, moist skin		
	hard outer shell		
	hard outer covering		
Color/patterns	stripes or spots		
	mostly one color		
	skin color changes		
	bright, vivid colors		
Gets oxygen	lungs		
	gills		
Body temperature	warm-blooded (endothermic)		
	cold-blooded (ectothermic)		
Babies	born alive		
	hatch from eggs		
	born alive or hatch from eggs		
Metamorphosis	complete		
	incomplete		
	none		
Teeth	sharp		
	flat		
	no teeth (bill/beak)		
Food	plant eater (herbivore)		
	meat eater (carnivore)		
	both (omnivore)		

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	incomplete		
	none		
Teeth	sharp		
	flat		
	no teeth (bill/beak)		
Food	plant eaters (herbivore)		
	meat eather (carnivore)		
	both (omnivore)		

Vertebrate Classes

Objective: Compare structures (e.g., wings vs. fins vs. legs; gills vs. lungs; feathers vs. hair vs. scales) that serve similar functions for animals belonging to different vertebrate classes

Mammals:

hair, fur, whiskers, or quills at some point during their lives

backbone (vertebrate)

inside skeleton (endoskeleton)

lungs to breathe

most give birth to live young

produce milk to feed young

warm-blooded

Birds:

feathers

backbone (vertebrate)

inside skeleton (endoskeleton)

lungs to breathe

hatch from hard-shelled eggs

warm-blooded

Warm-blooded animals make their own heat and have a constant body temperature

Reptiles:

dry scales or plates

backbone (vertebrate)

inside skeleton (endoskeleton); most turtles also have a hard outer shell

lungs to breathe

most hatch from leathery eggs

cold-blooded

Cold-blooded animals' body temperature comes from their surroundings

Fish:

most have scales covered with a thin layer of slime

backbone (vertebrate)

inside skeleton (endoskeleton)

gills to breathe

babies are either born alive or hatch from jellylike eggs

cold-blooded

Amphibians:

soft, moist skin

backbone (vertebrate)

inside skeleton (endoskeleton)

most hatchlings (jellylike eggs) are called larvae or tadpoles and live in water, using gills to breathe

as they grow, they develop legs and lungs and move onto land

cold-blooded

Using the sorting cards, sort the animals into their class.

Common Invertebrates

Arthropods: Insects:

hard outer covering

no backbone (invertebrate)

outside skeleton (exoskeleton)

adults have 3 body parts: head, thorax & abdomen

mouthparts adapted for chewing, biting, sucking and lapping

breathe through trachae

compound eyes

3 pairs of legs

usually 2 pairs of wings and 1 pair of antennae

most hatch from eggs

metamorphosis: none, incomplete, or complete

cold-blooded

Mollusks Bi-valves:

have a two-part shell with a hinge to open/close

no backbone (invertebrate)

outside skeleton (exoskeleton)

hatch from eggs

cold-blooded

marine and freshwater

symetry:

Mollusks Gastropods (Snails):

most have hard shells

no backbone (invertebrate)

outside skeleton (exoskeleton)

hatch from eggs

cold-blooded

Anthropod Arachnia (Spiders):

no backbone

one or two body segments

pincers or fangs near mouth

4 pairs of legs

no antennae

Arthropod Crustaceans (Crabs):

hard outer covering

no backbone (invertebrate)

outside skeleton (exoskeleton)

mouthparts adapted for chewing

5 or more pairs of legs

claws

2 pairs of anntenae

2 compound eyes on stalks

adults have 2 or 3 body segments

hatch from eggs

cold-blooded

Dichotomous (Yes/No) Key

Use the information found in the book to match the animal to its classification.
Answers are upside down.

Objective: Classify organisms according to one selected feature, such as body covering, and identify other similarities shared by organisms within each group formed.

Describe several external features and behaviors of animals that can be used to classify them (e.g., size, color, shape of body parts).

Identify observable similarities and differences (e.g., number of legs, body coverings, size) between/ among different groups of animals.

Does the animal have a backbone?

↓ yes
vertebrate

↓ no
invertebrate

↓

Is the animal warm-blooded or cold-blooded?

↓ warm-blooded
Does the animal have feathers?

↓ cold-blooded
Does the animal have scales?

↓ yes
It is a bird.

↓ no
Does it have hair, fur, whiskers, or quills?

↓ yes
Are the scales moist or dry?

↓ no
Does it have smooth, wet skin?

↓ yes
It is a mammal.

↓ moist
It is a fish.

↓ dry
It is a reptile.

↓ yes
It is an amphibian.

Animal Sorting Cards

Objective: Classify organisms according to one selected feature, such as body covering, and identify other similarities shared by organisms within each group formed.

Describe several external features and behaviors of animals that can be used to classify them (e.g., size, color, shape of body parts).

Identify observable similarities and differences (e.g., number of legs, body coverings, size) between/ among different groups of animals.

Animal Card Games:

Sorting: Depending on the age of the children, have them sort cards by:

where the animals live (habitat)	tail, no tail
number of legs (if the animals have legs)	colors or skin patterns
how they move (walk, swim, jump, or fly)	animal class
type of skin covering (hair/fur, feathers, scales, moist skin)	
what they eat (plant eaters/herbivores, meat eaters/carnivores, both/ omnivores)	

Memory Card Game: Make two copies of each of the sorting card pages and cut out the cards. Mix them up and place them face down on a table. Taking turns, each player should turn over two cards so that everyone can see. If the cards match, he or she keeps the pair and takes another turn. If they do not match, the player should turn the cards back over and it is another player's turn. The player with the most pairs at the end of the game wins.

Who Am I? Copy and cut out the cards. Poke a hole through each one and tie onto a piece of yarn. Have each child put on a "card necklace" without looking at it so the card hangs down the back. The children get to ask each person one "yes/no" question to try to guess "what they are." If a child answering the question does not know the answer, he/she should say, "I don't know." This is a great group activity and a great "ice-breaker" for children who don't really know each other.

Charades: One child selects a card and must act out what the animal is so that the other children can guess. The actor may not speak but can move like the animal and imitate body parts or behaviors. For very young children, you might let them make the animal sound. The child who guesses the animal becomes the next actor.
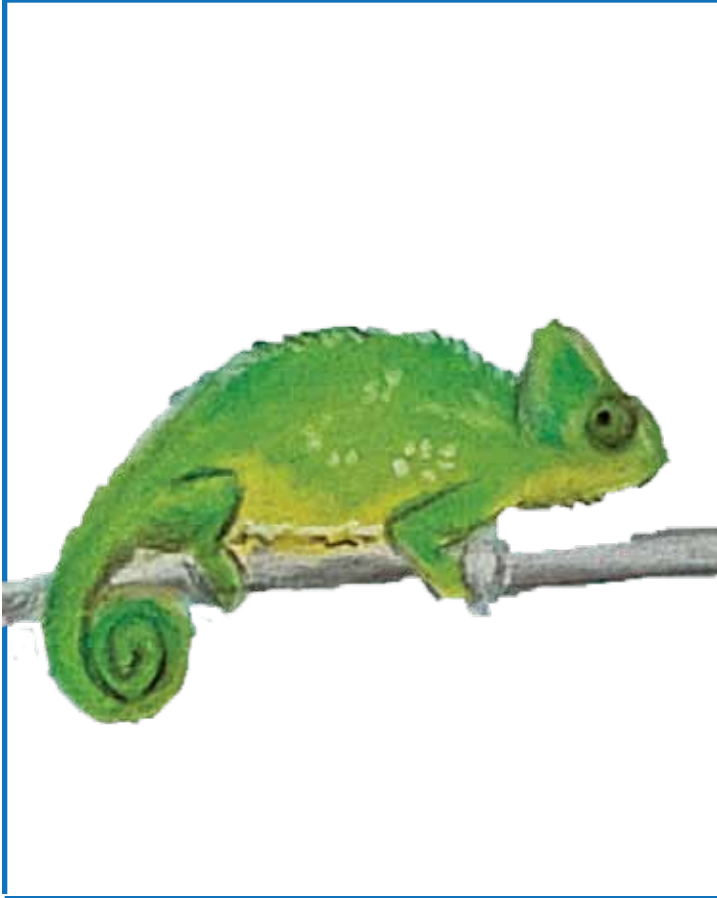
Name your own animal:

_____

Name your own animal:

_____

Pick an animal from the book and answer the following questions:

My animal is:

Where (in what kind of habitat) does your animal live?	What is one of its physical adaptations and how does it help the animal live in its environment?
What is another of its physical adaptations and how does it help the animal live in its environment?	What is another of its physical adaptations and how does it help the animal live in its environment?

What behavioral adaptations (if any) were mentioned in the story?

Carnivore

my definition	my drawing

Mammal

my definition	my drawing

Species

my definition	my drawing

Canis lupus familiaris

my definition	my drawing

Math Cards

Math Card Games

(Make four copies of the math cards to play these games):

Tens Make Friends Memory Game is a combination of a memory and adding game.

- Play like the memory game, above.
- If the animal numbers add up to 10, the child keeps the pair and takes another turn.
- If they do not add up to ten, the player should turn the cards back over and it is another player's turn.

Go Fish for Fact Families is a twist on "Go Fish."

- Shuffle cards and deal five cards to each player. Put the remaining cards face down in a draw pile.
- If the player has three cards that make a fact family, he/she places them on the table and recites the four facts related to the family. For example, if someone has a 2, 3, and 5, the facts are: $2 + 3 = 5$, $3 + 2 = 5$, $5 - 2 = 3$, $5 - 3 = 2$.
- The player then asks another player for a specific card rank. For example: "Sue, please give me a 6."
- If the other player has the requested card, she must give the person her card.
- If the person asked doesn't have that card, he/she says, "Go fish."
- The player then draws the top card from the draw pile.
- If he/she happens to draw the requested card, he/she shows it to the other players and can put the fact family on the table. Otherwise, play goes to the next person.
- Play continues until either someone has no cards left in his/her hand or the draw pile runs out. The winner is the player who then has the most sets of fact families.
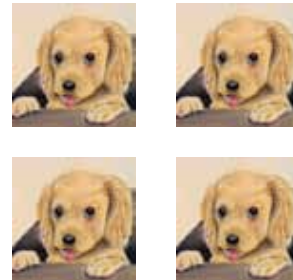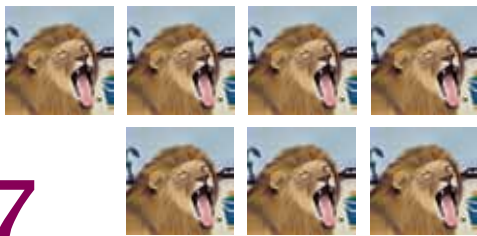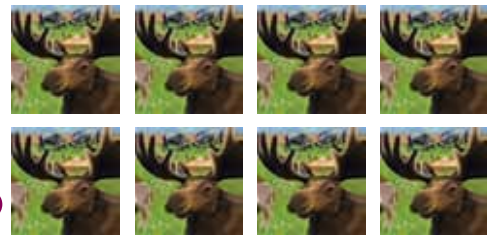
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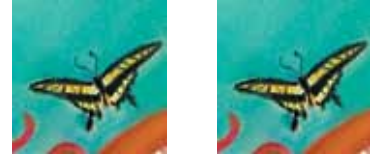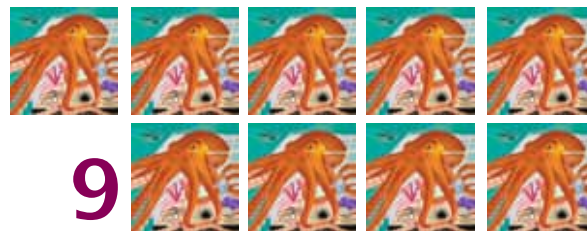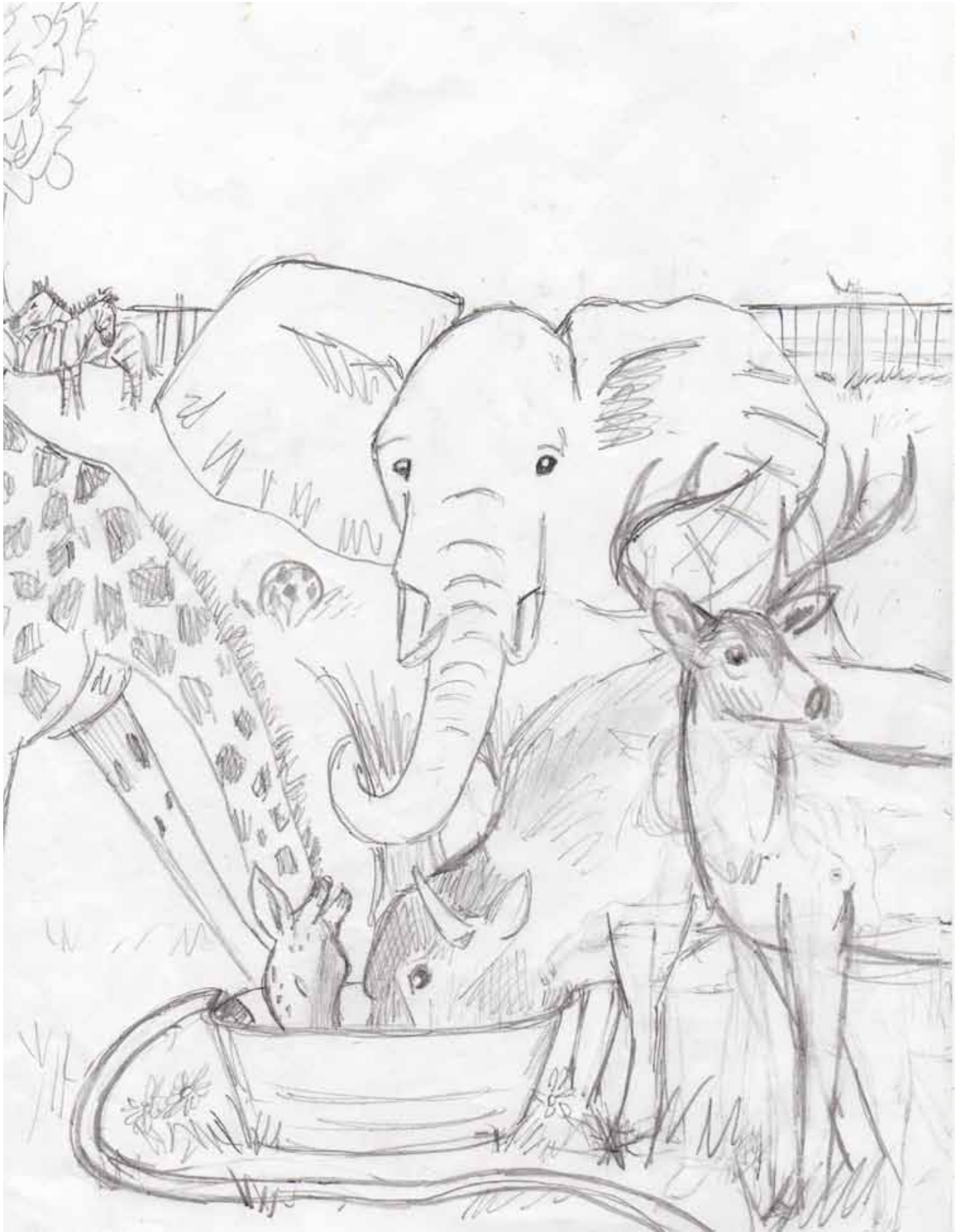
Answers

Sequence Sentence Strips

The kingdom Animalia
is where I'd start my search

"All invertebrates are out.
Backbones are in," she said.
"Look through phylum Chordata."

"No reptiles or amphibians;
they are too hard to scrub."

"A fish," Mom said, "would be quite nice.
I think that's just the thing."

I decided the class Mammalia
was the way that I should go.

"Try the order Carnivora."
So I had to search some more.

I thought the family Canidae
would make a lot more sense.

"How about an arctic fox—
white in winter, gray in spring?
Or a coyote, genus Canis—
I hear they eat most anything."

Then Canis lupus familiaris
gently licked me on the hand.
This furry species liked me
and it seemed to understand.

I rubbed his head, then put him back.
I knew we couldn't stay—
'cause my new pet just wasn't here . . .
but from the kingdom Plantae.

Word Search

Coord	Word
A,10	KINGDOM
G,5	PHYLUM
F,8	CLASS
A,1	ORDER
B,2	FAMILY
B,4	GENUS
C,3	SPECIES
C,2	ANIMAL
J,2	DOG
G,5	PET
E,1	PLANT
C,3	SORT

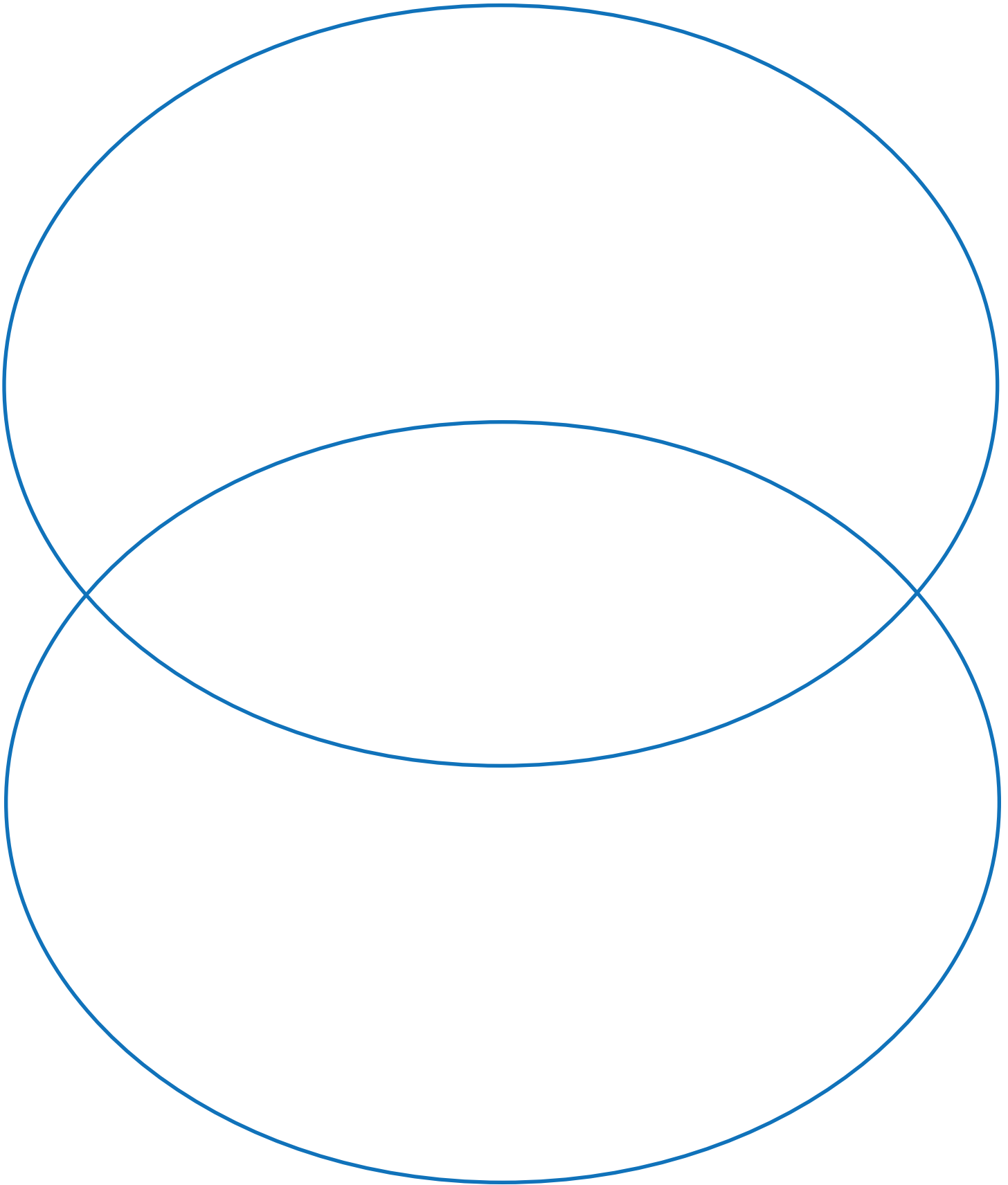|	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	O					P	L	A	N	T	
2	R	F	A	M	I	L	Y			D
3	D		S	P	E	C	I	E	S	O
4	E	G	O	A	N	I	M	A	L	G
5	R	E	R				P	E	T	
6		N	T				H			
7		U					Y			
8		S				C	L	A	S	S
9							U			
10	K	I	N	G	D	O	M			

Appendix A—"What Children Know" Cards

Question:

My answer:

This information is correct!

This information is not correct; can you find the correct information?

Question:

My answer:

This information is correct!

This information is not correct; can you find the correct information?

Question:

My answer:

This information is correct!

This information is not correct; can you find the correct information?

Question:

My answer:

This information is correct!

This information is not correct; can you find the correct information?

Appendix B—Venn Diagram

Compare and contrast two of the animals in this book.