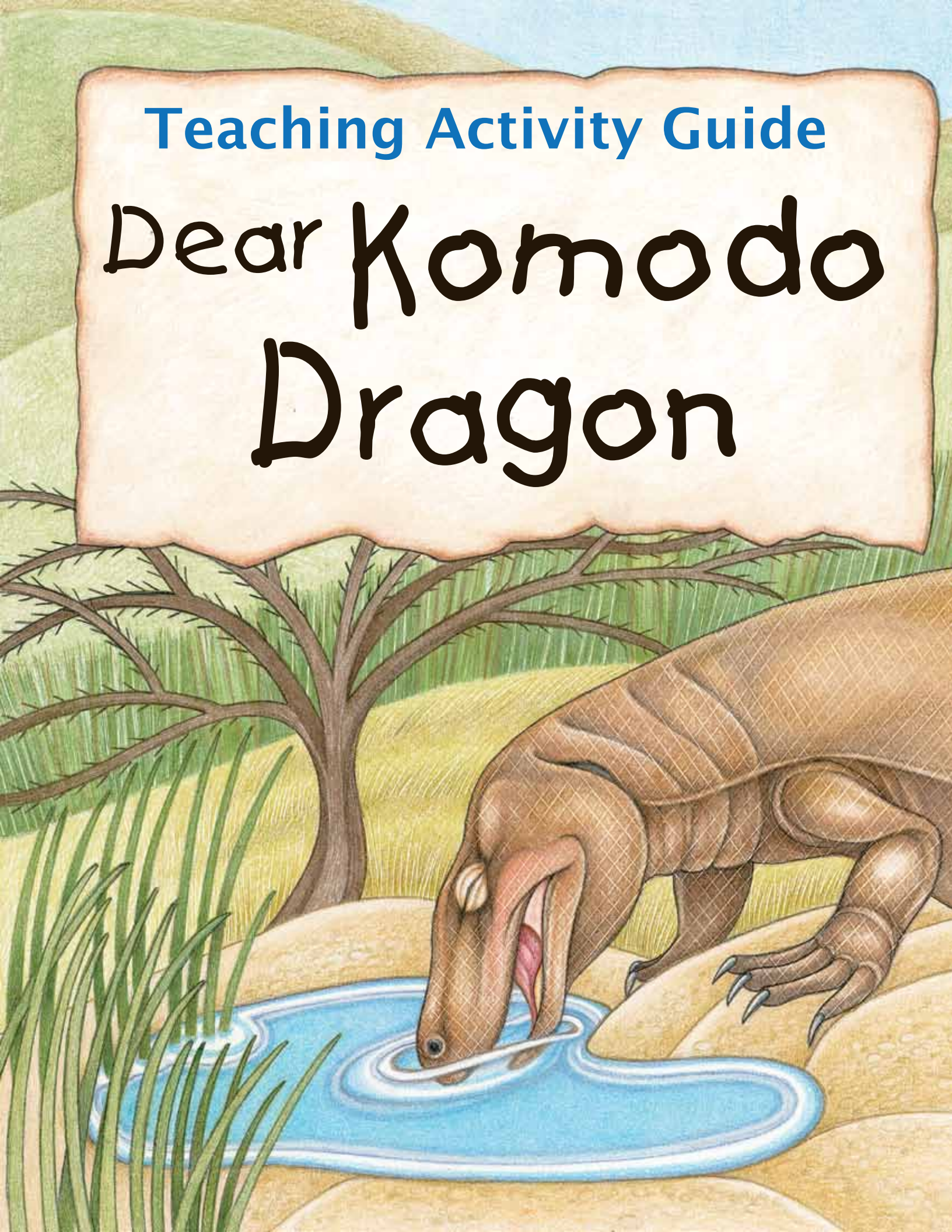
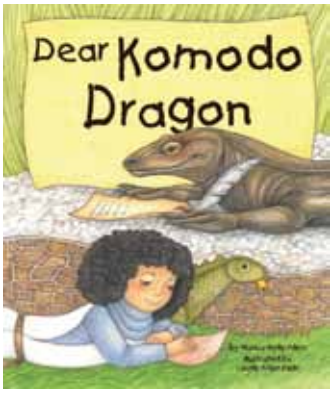
Teaching Activity Guide

# Dear Komodo Dragon



# 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!

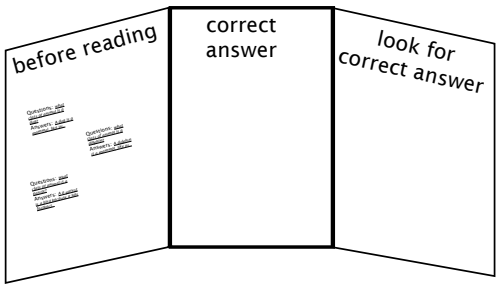
**For librarians and bookstore employees; after-school program leaders; and zoo, aquarium, nature center, park & museum educators:** Whether reading a book for story time or using the book to supplement an educational program, feel free to use the activities in your programs. We have done the "hard part"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

1. How would you describe a dragon?
2. Are the dragons you usually think about real or fictional?
3. Do you think there are any real dragons?
4. Do lizards breathe fire?
5. What does it mean when an animal is endangered?
6. Where in the world do Komodo dragons come from?
7. What kind of habitat do Komodo dragons live in?
8. What is a pen pal?
9. What is a traditional way to start a letter?

# Comprehension Questions & Writing Prompts

1. If you could write a letter to an imaginary/fictional animal, what type of animal would you write to?
2. If you could write a letter to a real animal, anywhere in the world, what animal would you write to?
3. Imagine you have a Komodo dragon for a pen pal. What questions would you ask?
4. Write a letter to an animal, asking them about their life and telling them about yours.
5. Pretend you are an animal. Write back to your human pen pal.

# 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 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
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| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

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?

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

DRAGON

ENDANGERED

KOMODO

LETTER

NEST

PEN PAL

REPTILE

TAIL

# 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.*

*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.*

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 | human | Komodo dragon |
|---|---|---|---|
| **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) | | |

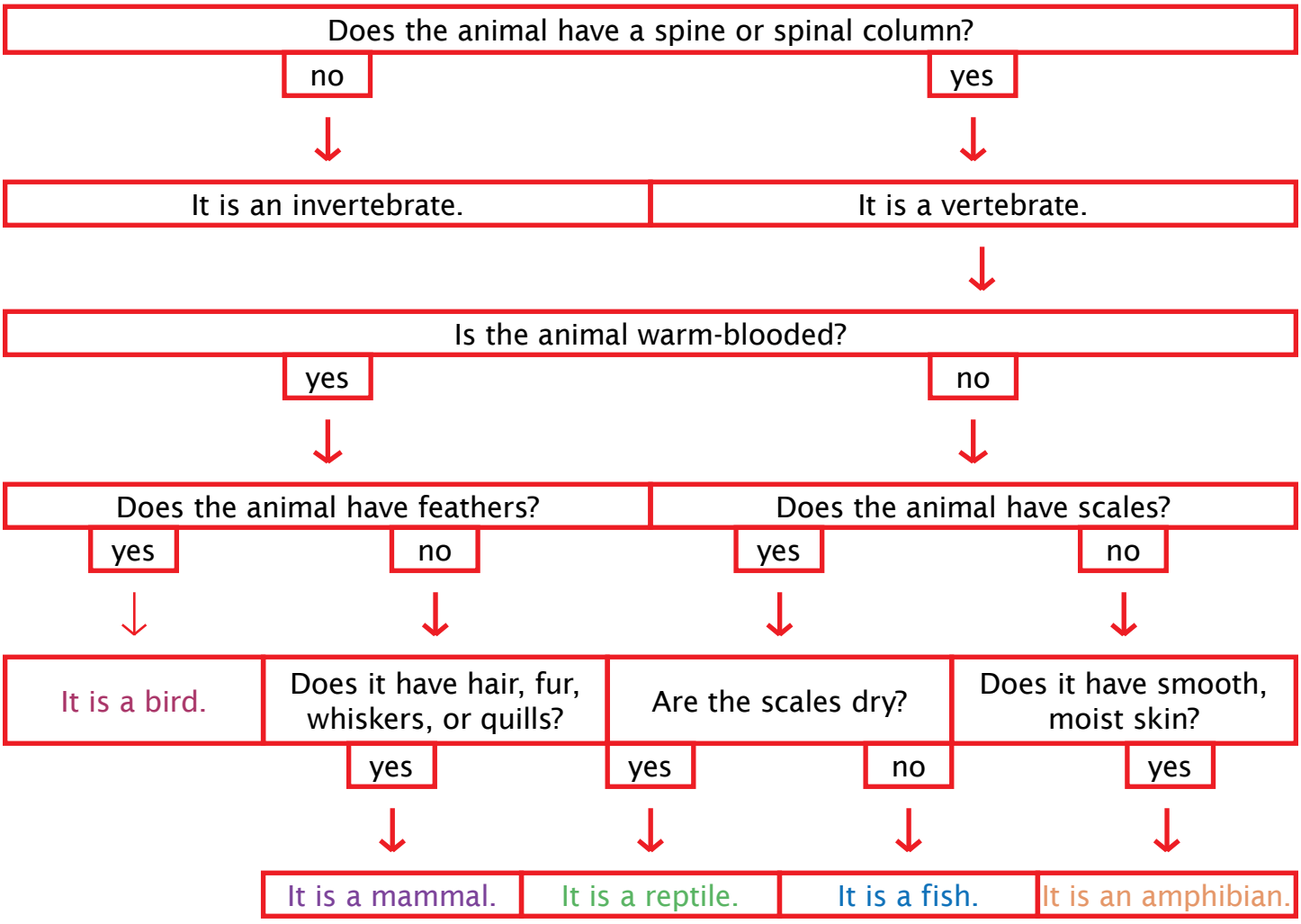
# Dichotomous (Yes/No) Key

A dichotomous key helps to sort (classify) animals. These keys work by asking yes or no questions. Each answer leads to another yes or no question, until the animal class is identified. There are five classes of animals with backbones (vertebrates): fish, reptiles, amphibians, birds, and mammals. Use the information found in the book to match the animal to its classification.

*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.*



# Compare/Contrast: Animal and Human Senses

*Objective Core Language Literature 4: Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses.*

*Students know that senses can provide essential information (regarding danger, food, mates, etc.) to animals about their environment.*

*Identify the five senses and their related body parts: sight – eyes, hearing – ears, smell – nose, taste – tongue, touch – skin,*

*Identify the structures of living organisms and explain their function.*

Compare and contrast Komodo dragon and human body parts used for senses.

| to smell | to feel |
| --- | --- |
| to hear | to see |

# Adaptations

*Objective: Identify adaptations that help plants and animals survive and grow in their environment*

*Identify external parts of plants and animals*

*Observe and compare the structures and behaviors of different kinds of plants and animals*

Adaptations help animals to live in their habitat: to get food and water, to protect themselves from predators, to survive weather, and even to help them make their homes. Here are a few different types of adaptations.

## Physical Adaptations

Use the illustrations in the book to see how many physical adaptations you can see for each animal.

### body parts

teeth—depends on type of food eaten

feet, flippers, fins—ability to move

placement of eyes

gills, lungs, or other—how does the animal get oxygen

ears—or how the animal hears/senses

### body coverings

hair or fur

feathers

scales

moist skin

### camouflage and protection

color of skin or pattern to blend into background

body structure resembles another organism to fool predators

poisonous or stinky smells

## Behavioral Adaptations

instinct: behaviors or traits that the animals are born with

learned behavior: traits that animals learn to improve their chances of survival or to make their life easier

social groups versus solitary living

communication with other animals

defense

hiding in an area that provides camouflage

reaction to cycles (day/night, seasons, tides, etc.)

migration: the seasonal movement of animals from one location to another

hibernation: a long, deep sleep in which the animal's breathing and heartbeat are slower than usual

| dragon | |
|---|---|
| my definition | my drawing |

| Komodo dragon | |
|---|---|
| my definition | my drawing |

| island | |
|---|---|
| my definition | my drawing |

| lizard | |
|---|---|
| my definition | my drawing |

# Animals Around You: Observation Journal

**Researcher Name:** _____
**Location:** _____
**Date:** _____

| Time | Notes |
|---|---|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

**Researcher Name:** _____
**Location:** _____
**Date:** _____

| | | | | | | | | | | | Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | | | | Weather |
| | | | | | | | | | | | Location |
| | | | | | | | | | | | Species |
| | | | | | | | | | | | Photos |
| | | | | | | | | | | | Notes |

# Living or Nonliving?

*Objective: Identify differences between living and nonliving things.*

What things in this book are living things? What are nonliving things? How can you tell? It can be hard sometimes to know the difference. A living thing will meet most or all of the criteria on this checklist.

- ☐ Breathes
- ☐ Takes in water
- ☐ Gets nutrients and energy from its environment
- ☐ Reproduces
- ☐ Grows and changes

# Math Cards

*Objective Core Mathematics  Classify objects into given categories; count the numbers of objects in each category and sort the categories by count. (up to 10)*
*Solve addition and subtraction word problems, and add and subtract within 10, e.g., by using objects or drawings to represent the problem.*
*Use numbers, up to 10, to place objects in order, such as first, second, and third, and to name them*
*For any number from 1 to 9, find the number that makes 10 when added to the given number, e.g., by using objects or drawings, and record the answer with a drawing or equation.*

## Math Card Games

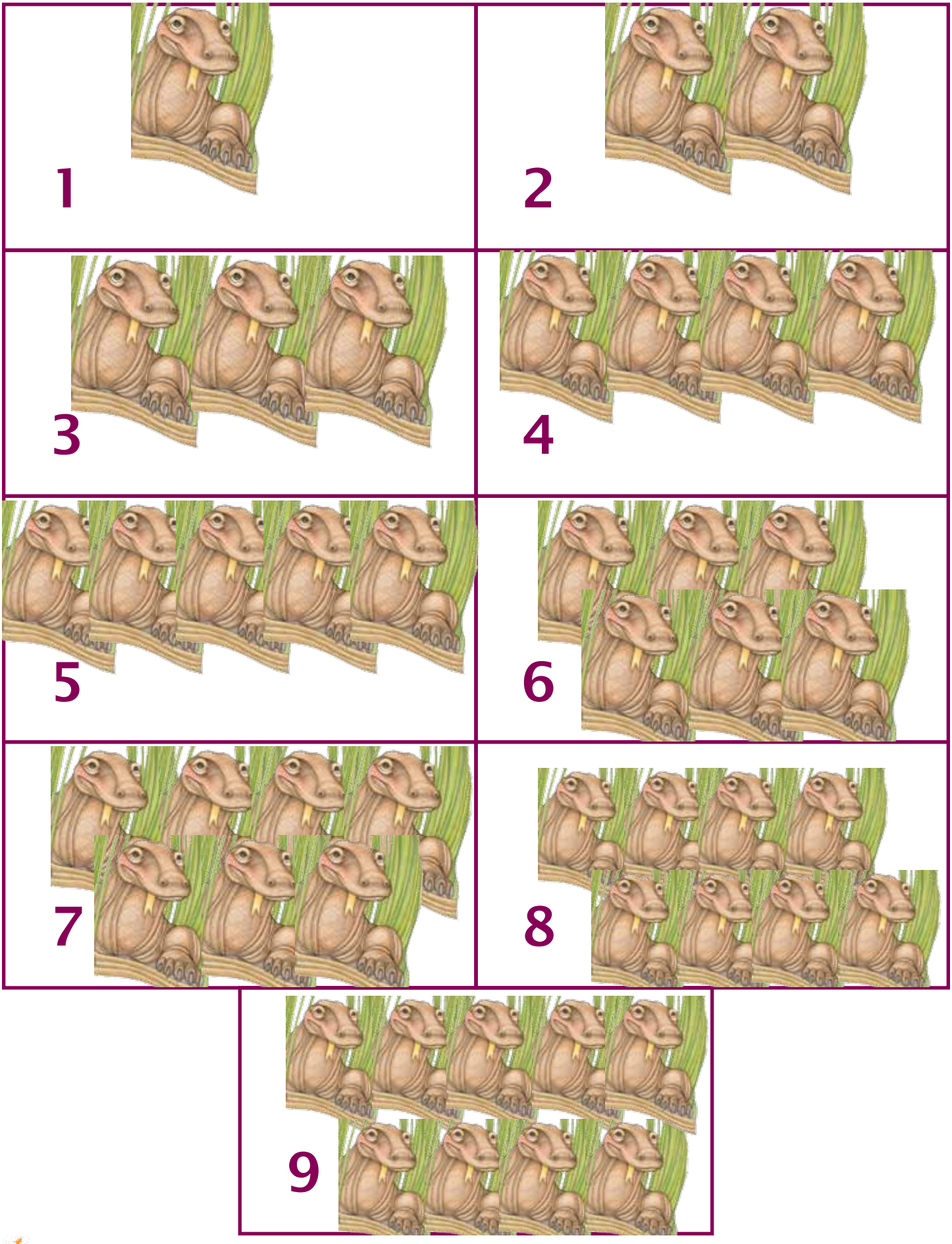
(Make four copies of the math cards to play these games):

**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."

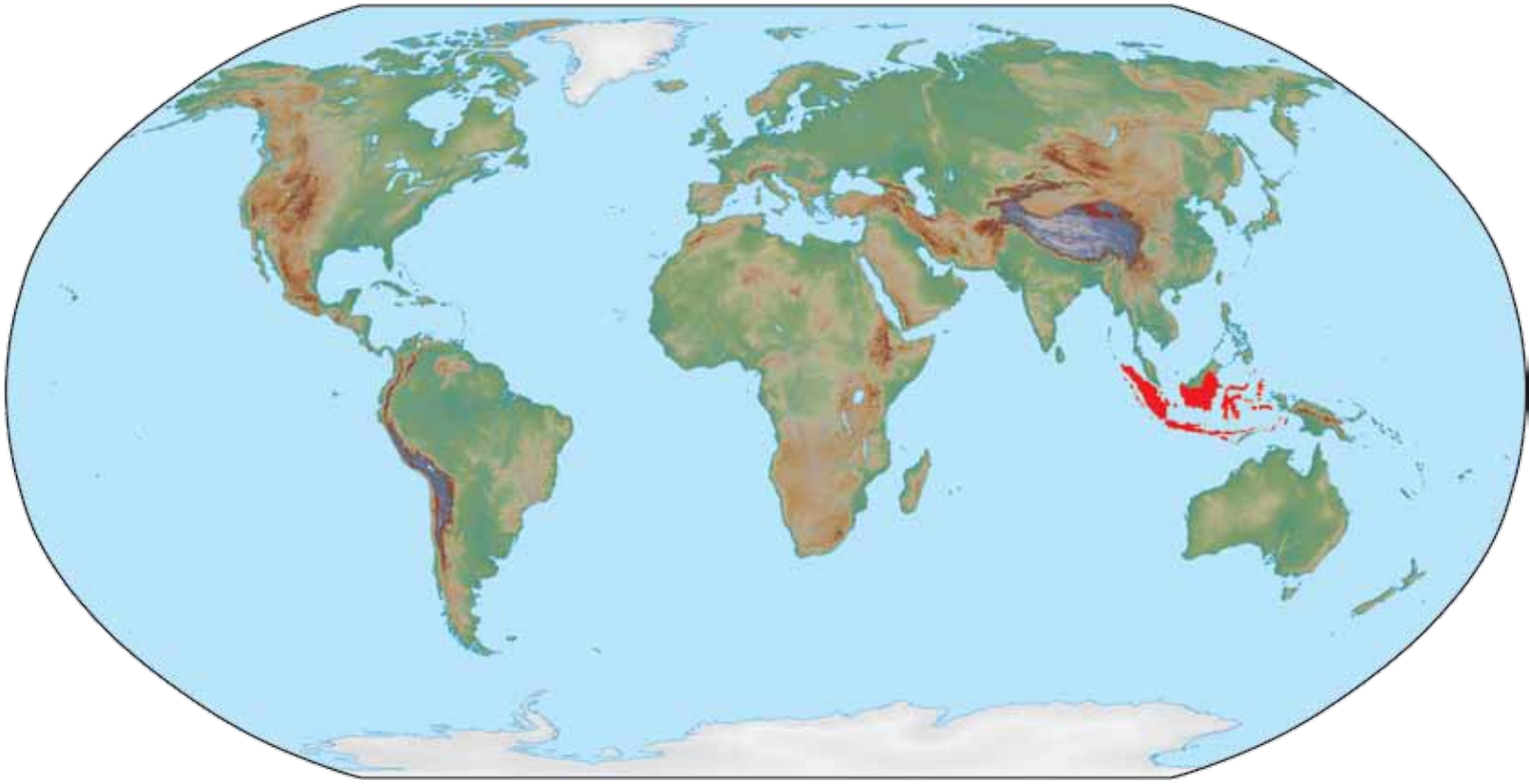
- Shuffle cards and deal five cards to each player. Put the remaining cards face down in a draw pile.
- If the player has three cards that make a fact family, he/she places them on the table and recites the four facts related to the family. For example, if someone has a 2, 3, and 5, the facts are: 2 + 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.


1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9

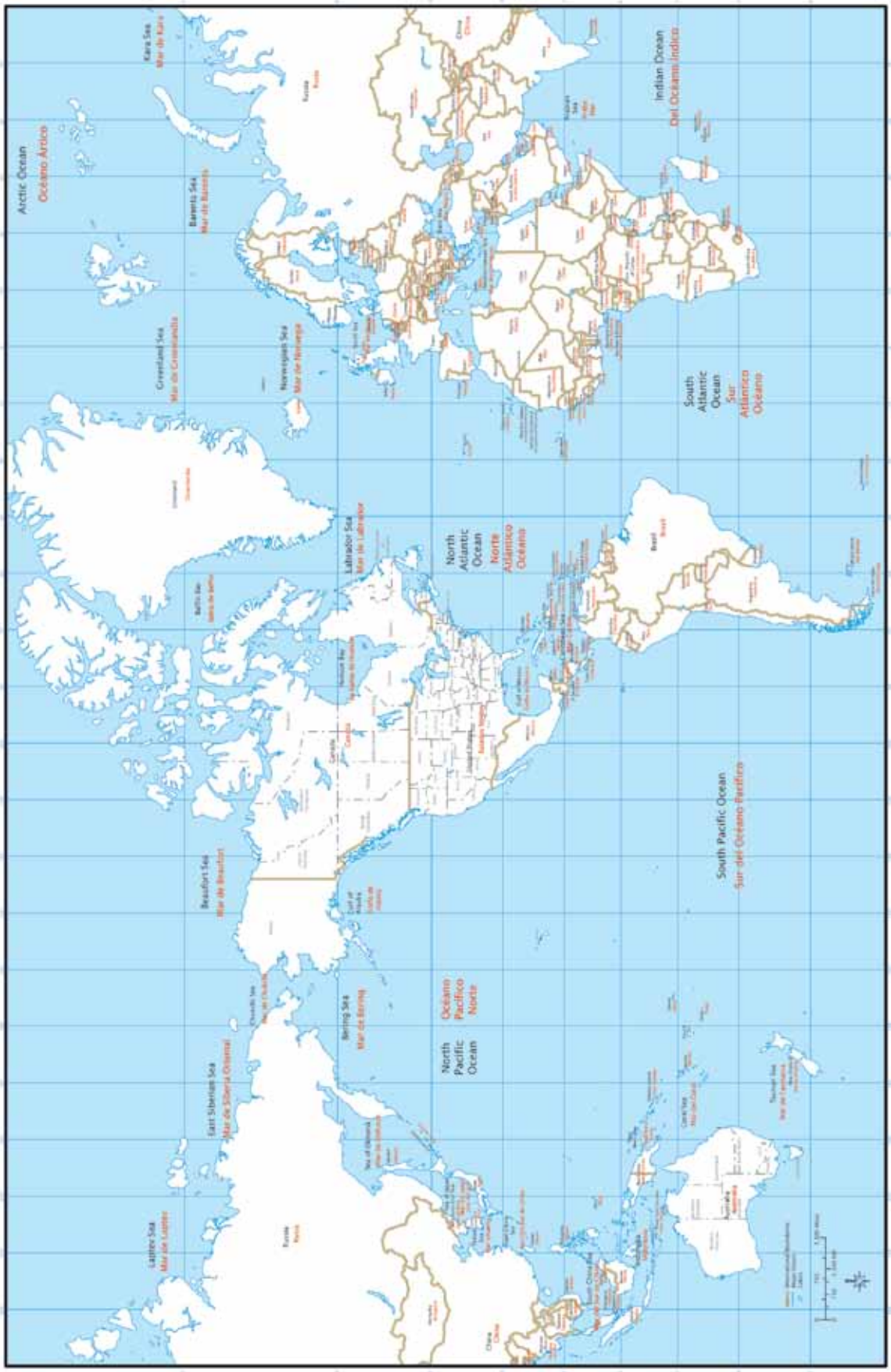
# Map Activity

*Objective: reading maps, geography, know that plants and animals live in different locations*

Using this maps as a reference, color the country of Indonesia on the world map on the next page. Color the country you live in. If you wanted to travel from your home to see Komodo dragons, how would you get there?



# Maps


Arctic Ocean
Océano Ártico
Kara Sea
Mar de Kara
Barents Sea
Mar de Barents
Greenland Sea
Mar de Groenlandia
Norwegian Sea
Mar de Noruega
Indian Ocean
Del Océano Índico
South Atlantic Ocean
Sur Atlántico Océano
Labrador Sea
Mar de Labrador
North Atlantic Ocean
Norte Atlántico Océano
Beaufort Sea
Mar de Beaufort
Bering Sea
Mar de Bering
North Pacific Ocean
Océano Pacífico Norte
East Siberian Sea
Mar de Siberia Oriental
Laptev Sea
Mar de Laptev
South Pacific Ocean
Sur del Océano Pacífico

# Letter Writing

Write a letter to an animal that lives in a different part of the world than you. Your letter should have:

Your name
Address
City, State, Zip Code
Country

Date

Your animal's name
Address
City, State, Zip Code
Country

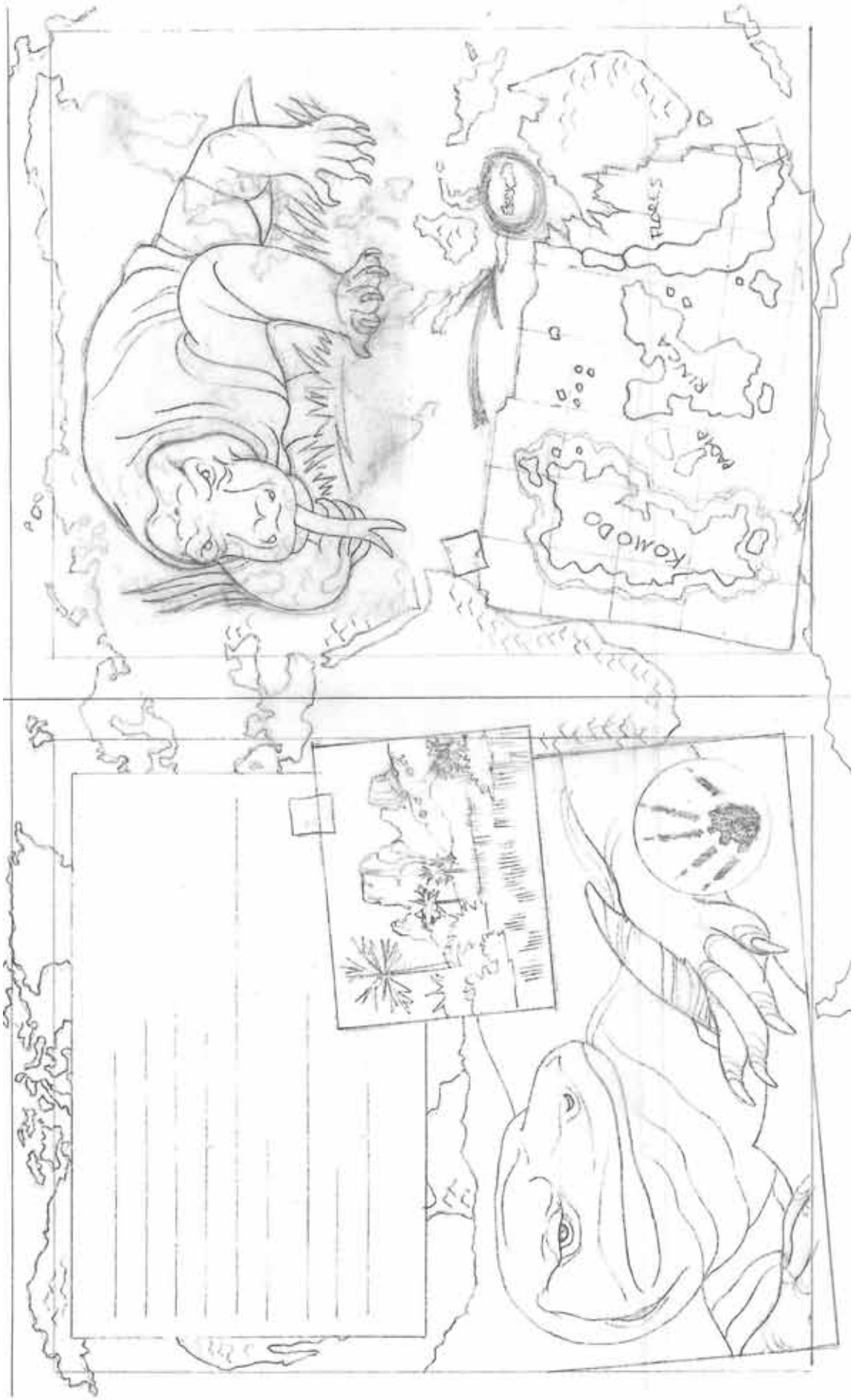
Greeting

The contents of the letter go here. Write a few sentences or a few paragraphs! You could tell your animal about your life or ask about its life.

Closing,
your name

Now pretend you are the animal you had written to and write a letter back to yourself.

# Coloring Pages



# Answers

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

# Appendix A—"What Children Know" Cards

| | |
|---|---|
| Question:<br><br>My answer:<br><br>This information is correct!<br>This information is not correct; can you find the correct information? | Question:<br><br>My answer:<br><br>This information is correct!<br>This information is not correct; can you find the correct information? |
| Question:<br><br>My answer:<br><br>This information is correct!<br>This information is not correct; can you find the correct information? | Question:<br><br>My answer:<br><br>This information is correct!<br>This information is not correct; can you find the correct information? |