

Making Connections

Reading Comprehension Skills and Strategies

Book 1

Unit 1 Skill Focus: Identifying Detail

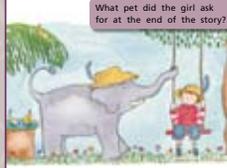
Unit 1 Theme: African Animals

Text 1

Unit 1 Identifying Detail Identifying detail is finding the words that tell about something.

My Pet Elephant

What pet did the girl ask for at the end of the story?



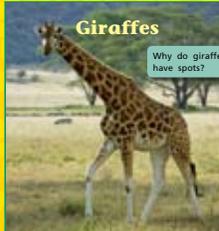
I really want an elephant for my birthday. I'll name my elephant Sam. Sam can live in our big backyard!

4

Text 2

Giraffes

Why do giraffes have spots?



This is a giraffe. Giraffes live in Africa. They live in family groups called herds.

10

Text 3

Meerkats

What jobs do meerkats have?



These desert animals are meerkats. They live in big family groups. They sleep in dens.

18

Scaffolding Level:

MODELING

GUIDED

COACHING/INDEPENDENT

Text 4

The Animal Show

Who won the animal show?

Three cheetahs lined up for an animal show. "I will win," said the first. "I have long legs!" "I will," said the second. "I have sharp claws." "No, I will," said the third. "I have a shiny coat!"



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Text 5

Name: _____

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Lions

Lions are big cats. They live in Africa. Lions live in family groups. The group is called a pride. The pride has males, females, and babies. The pride works together to keep safe. The pride lives in the grasslands. Lions can hide in the grass.



Fill in the circle next to the best answer.

1. A pride of lions is a

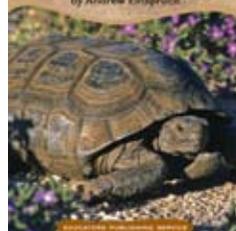
- family group.
- female.
- baby.

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Text 6

Desert Tortoise

by Andrew Eisenbruch



Scaffolding Level:

INDEPENDENT

INDEPENDENT

INDEPENDENT

Identifying Detail

Text 3: Meerkats

BEFORE READING

Skill Focus

Ask a volunteer to explain what readers do when they identify details. (*find the words that tell about something*) Ask another volunteer to tell why authors include details in their writing. (*so readers can “see” pictures in their minds to understand ideas better*) Have others explain one way illustrations can help them understand a text better. (*Sometimes they show details that are not mentioned in the text.*)

Background Knowledge

Ask students if they remember any interesting details about giraffes. Then ask if they have ever heard of meerkats. Explain that many people have never heard of them because meerkats live in the wild in Africa. Students should know where Africa is from the previous text. Invite a volunteer to point to Africa on a map.

Text Structure and Purpose

Have students open their books to page 16. Explain that they are going to read another text about an African animal. The first sentence tells that the text is about meerkats. The rest gives details about these animals. Pages 17, 18, and 19 describe the jobs meerkats have and how they perform them.

Text Features

Invite students to read the title and focus question silently, then ask a volunteer to read them. Direct them to look at the photographs on pages 16–17 and invite them to discuss what they see with a partner. Ask: “Do these little animals remind you of others you know?” Students may suggest small, furry animals such as ferrets or rabbits. Tell them that, like these animals and like humans, meerkats are also mammals.

Meerkats

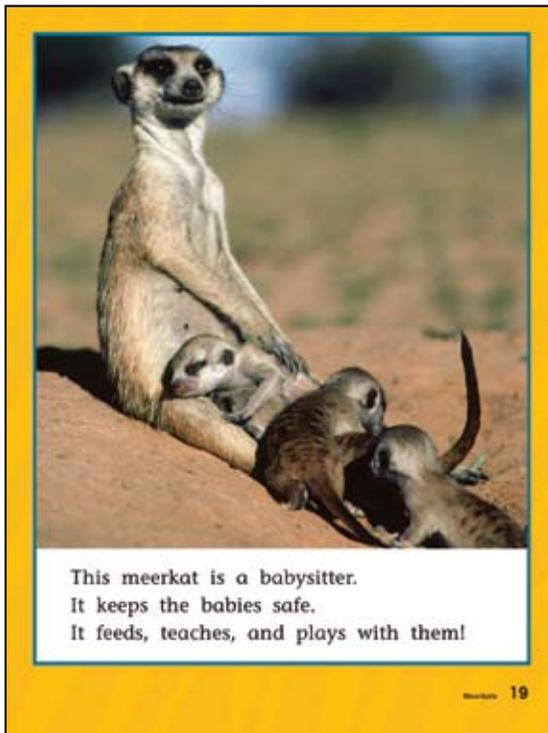
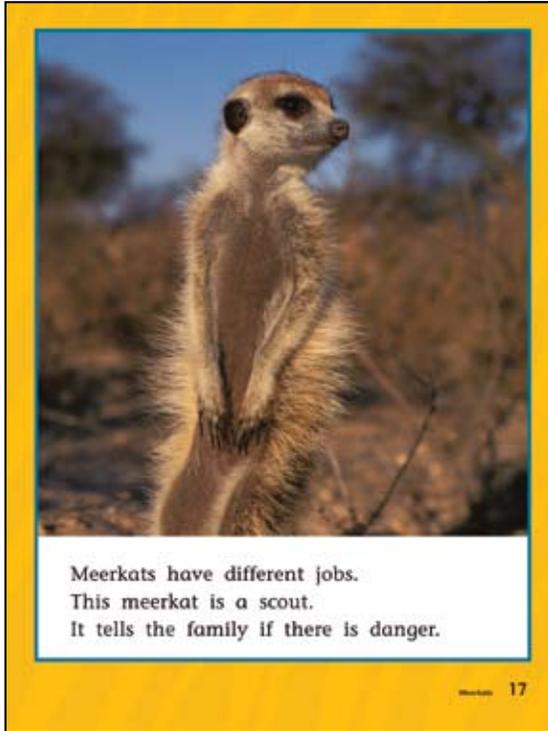
What jobs do meerkats have?

These desert animals are meerkats. They live in big family groups. They sleep in dens.

16 see p. identifying detail

These meerkats are housekeepers. They clean the family den. Then they line the den with grass.

18 see p. identifying detail



DURING READING

**Comprehension Monitoring/
Question Generating**

First Reading

Depending on students' needs, have them read the text independently, in small cooperative groups, or with you. Remind them that good readers circle words and phrases they can't read or can read but don't understand.

Vocabulary Encourage students to use context clues to determine the meaning of circled words.

- For example, they will probably be able to decode *den*, but might not know what it means. Help them use clues from the text and the photograph on page 18 to figure out that *den* describes a place where animals sleep.
- If they have circled the words *scout*, *housekeepers*, or *babysitter*, help them use context clues to figure out the meanings of these words from the text. (*The scout is the meerkat that tells the family of danger; housekeepers clean and line the den; and the babysitter cares for the babies.*) You may also ask them to think about how meerkat scouts, housekeepers, and babysitters do many of the same things that humans with those jobs do.



Find ELL support for vocabulary on page 35.

Identifying Detail

Text 3: Meerkats

Phrases and Sentences If students have circled the phrase “line the den,” explain that the word *line* is being used as an action word that means “to cover on the inside with a layer of something.” So when meerkats “line the den,” they cover the inside of the den with a layer of grass.

Rereading

Have students underline words and phrases that give details about meerkats. Remind them to underline as few words as possible, as this helps them highlight only the details.

Have students reread the focus question silently, then ask a volunteer to read it aloud. Ask three volunteers to name the jobs done by the meerkats. (*scout, housekeeper, babysitter*)

Cooperative Learning

Give students the opportunity to work in small groups or with you to discuss any other words, phrases, and sentences, and the details they have underlined. Then invite each group to share its ideas with the class.

Next, students can reinforce their understanding of identifying details with the following activity.

- Assign each group one of the jobs of a meerkat. (*scout, housekeeper, babysitter*) Tell them that each group is going to act out their assigned meerkat’s job. Give students time to practice.
- Have each group perform for the class. Invite the rest of the class to guess which job the meerkat is doing.

Practice the Skill

Finding Details

1. Where do meerkats sleep?

Meerkats sleep in dens.



2. This meerkat tells the family if there is danger. This meerkat is a scout.



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3. This meerkat keeps the babies safe. It feeds, teaches, and plays with them.



This meerkat is a babysitter.

4. These meerkats clean the den. These meerkats are housekeepers.



Vocabulary
Find a word on page 16 that means "a place with little rain." desert

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AFTER READING

Reread for Fluency

Write the following “big” words on the board: *animals, family, different, danger, housekeepers, babysitters*. Read this list of words chorally with the group a few times. You may then point to the words out of order to make sure that students can recognize them by sight. Then ask students to reread the text with a partner, alternating pages. Have them monitor each other for accuracy and appropriate expression of all words, with special attention to the “big” words that they have practiced.

Graphic Organizers and Question Answering

Read the directions on pages 20 and 21 with students and have them complete the activities. Tell them they will find all the

answers in the text. Point out that if they first find some important words from each question in the text (*sleep, danger, babies, clean*), the answer will be nearby. Provide assistance where needed.

Summarizing

Have students work in small groups to summarize the text. Remind them to focus on the important details about meerkats. Tell them the summary should answer these questions: “Where do meerkats live? What different jobs do meerkats have? What does each one do?”

You may also provide them with a framework so that they only need to supply important facts. For example, “Meerkats live in the (*desert*) in family (*groups*). They help each other by doing different (*jobs*).” Display the finished summaries and read them aloud together.

ELL Support

Using the photos for support, pantomime to build meaning for key vocabulary. For the word *scout*, mimic the meerkat on page 17, then shade your eyes while scanning for danger; for *housekeeper*, point out the den on page 18 and pantomime sweeping; for *babysitter*, count the babies shown on page 19 and pantomime feeding and caring for them.



ACTIVITIES FOR USE UPON COMPLETION OF UNIT 1, TEXTS 1–5

Text Connections

Explore the following questions, ideas, and projects with the whole class or in small groups, or assign them for independent work. Review Texts 1 through 5 with students, including the activity pages. Tell students they may need to look back at these pages.

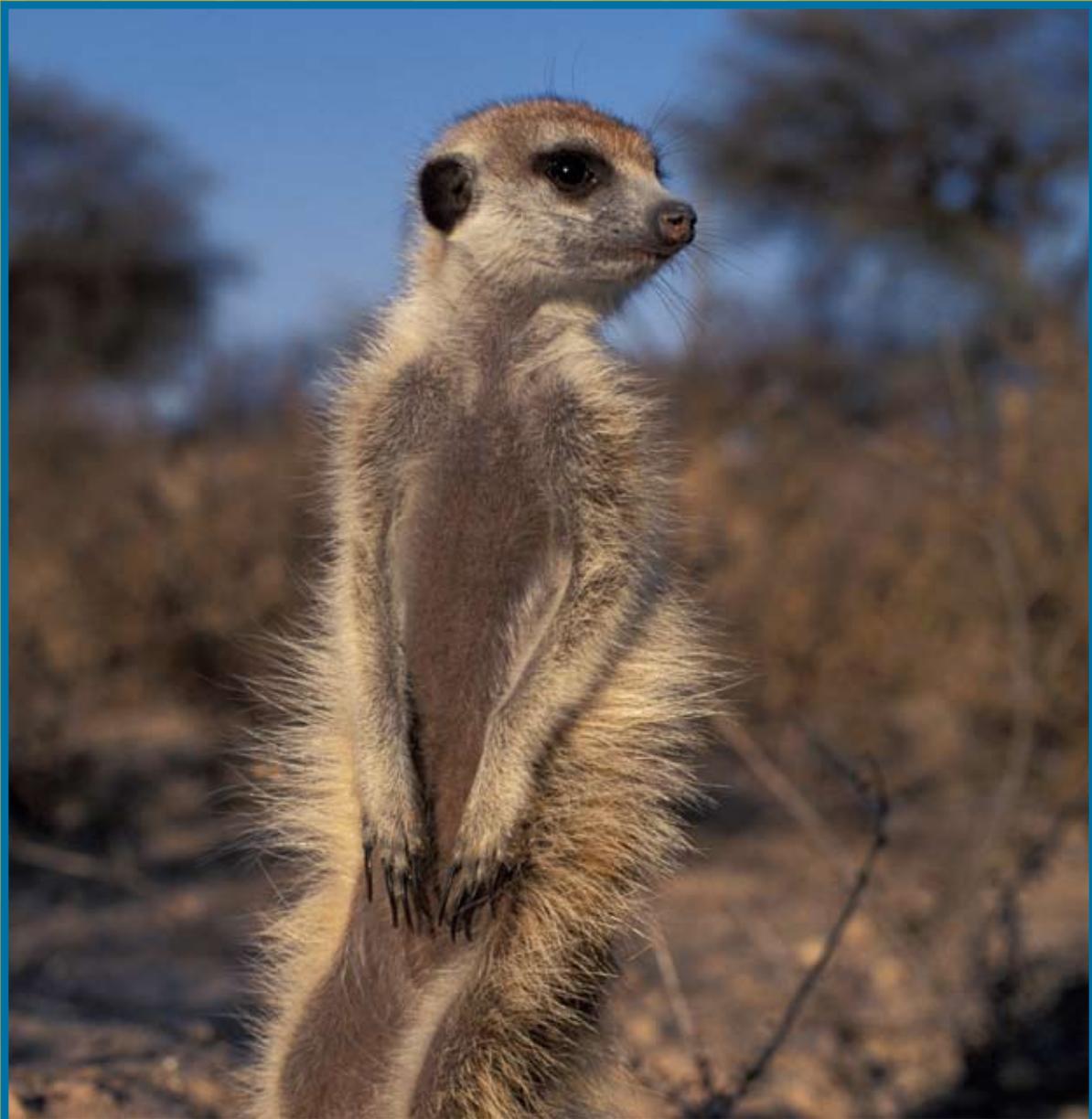
- 1** You have read about five different animals. Which one did you find most interesting, and why?
- 2** If you could choose any animal in the world to have as a pet, which animal would you choose? What special things could it do? Draw a picture of your pet and write about it.
- 3** Work with a partner or in a group to make a mural of African animals to display in the classroom. You may draw animals from this unit as well as any other African animals you may have heard of or read about. Remember to include details in your drawing. Details will help people better understand what the animals look like and where they live.
- 4** Work with a group to find some books in the library about elephants, cheetahs, meerkats, lions, and giraffes. Find three more details about each animal. List the details on a piece of paper along with a drawing of the animal. Put all papers into a class book and lend it to other classes or display it in the library.
- 5** Pretend you are a meerkat and write a story about what is going on around you. Remember to include details that will help readers make pictures in their minds about what is happening in the story.
- 6** Cheetahs and some other animals are sometimes called “big cats.” Find out what other animals are called “big cats,” choose one, and write some details about it.
- 7** Choose an animal and make a poster about it. Draw your animal in the middle of the poster, and write some details about the animal around your drawing. (*where it lives; how it looks, feels, sounds, moves; what it eats*) Present your poster to the class, but first read the details without giving the name of the animal or showing your drawing. Have other students guess the animal. Then show them your picture. Did anyone guess your animal?

Meerkats

What jobs do meerkats have?



These desert animals are meerkats.
They live in big family groups.
They sleep in dens.



Meerkats have different jobs.
This meerkat is a scout.
It tells the family if there is danger.



These meerkats are housekeepers.
They clean the family den.
Then they line the den with grass.



This meerkat is a babysitter.
It keeps the babies safe.
It feeds, teaches, and plays with them!

Practice the Skill

Finding Details

1. Where do meerkats sleep? _____

Meerkats sleep in _____.



2. This meerkat tells the family if there is danger. This meerkat is a _____

_____.



3. This meerkat keeps the babies safe. It feeds, teaches, and plays with them.



This meerkat is a

_____ .

4. These meerkats clean the den. These meerkats are



_____ .

Vocabulary

Find a word on page 16 that means _____

“a place with little rain.” _____