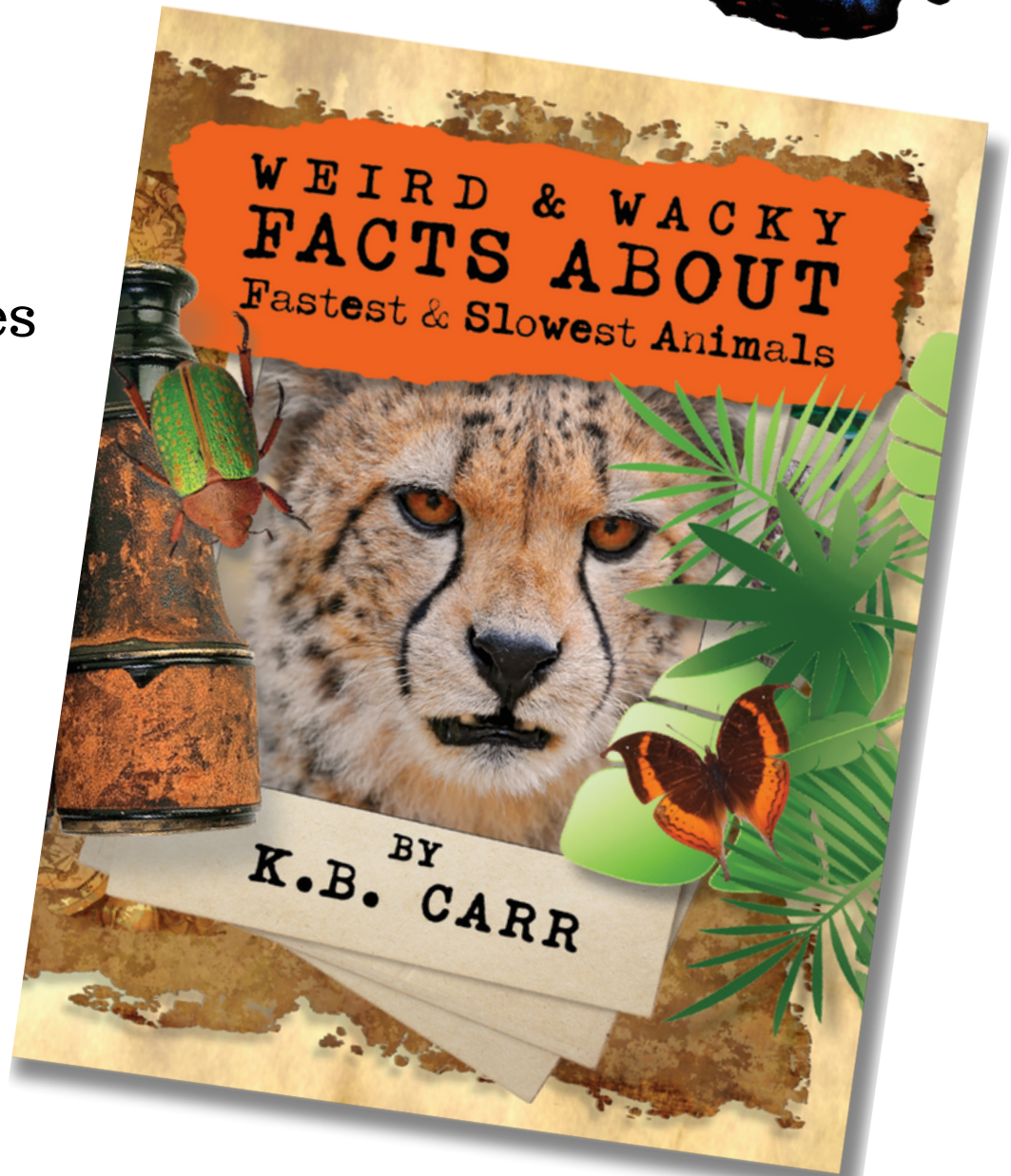


Weird & Wacky Planet Series/Podcast Classroom Guide



With Activities
& Questions
for Students
3rd to 5th
Grade.



Additional activities are available with
classroom author visits.

ABOUT THE WEIRD & WACKY PLANET BOOKS



Book Category -

- JUVENILE NON-FICTION

Age Level -

- AGES 8 TO 12 OR 3RD TO 5TH GRADE

Subjects -

- SCIENCE, EARTH SCIENCE, NON-FICTION

Additional Book Information -

- AUTHOR-K.B.CARR
- ILLUSTRATOR-K.B. CARR
- PUBLISHER-DSG KIDS-IMPRINT OF DSG PUBLISHING

Common Core Standards

Non-fiction books about animals can cover a range of Common Core State Standards, particularly in English Language Arts and Literacy. Here are some standards that such books could address for 3rd and 4th graders:

Reading Standards for Informational Text:

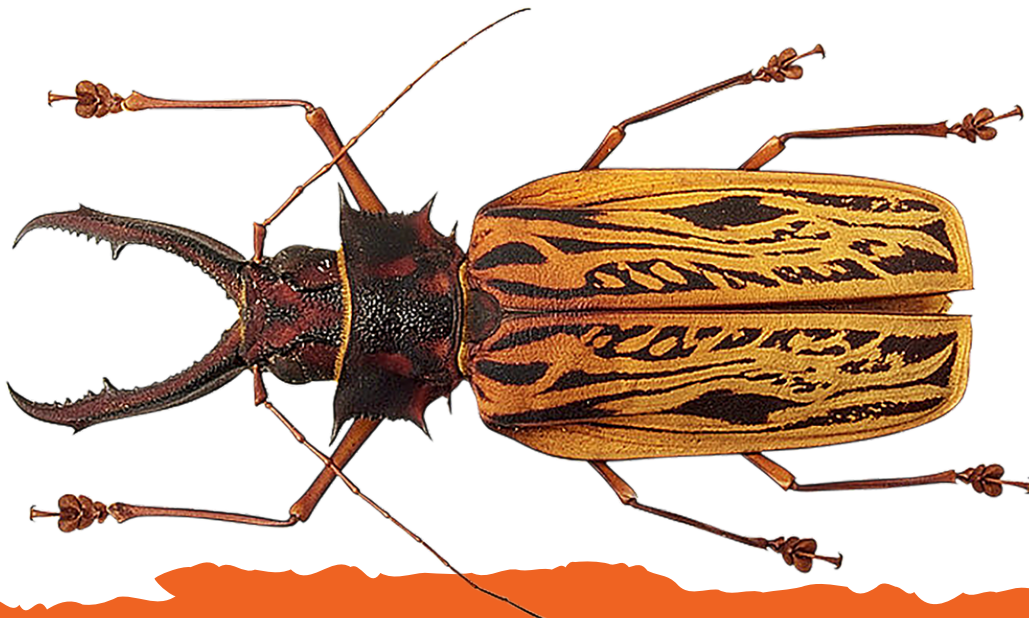
- RI.3.1: Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- RI.3.2: Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.
- RI.3.3: Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas, or concepts in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.
- RI.3.4: Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area.
- RI.3.7: Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text.
- RI.3.8: Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence).



Common Core Standards - cont.

Writing Standards:

- W.3.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- W.3.7: Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.
- W.3.8: Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.
- W.4.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- W.4.7: Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
- W.4.8: Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.



Common Core Standards - cont.

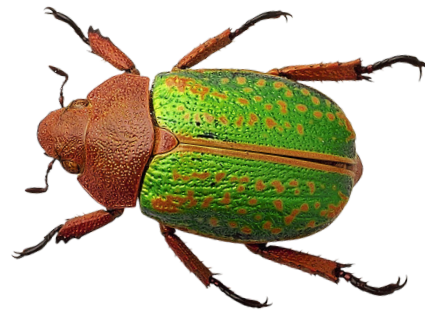
Speaking and Listening Standards:

- **SL.3.1:** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- **SL.4.1:** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

These are just a few examples of the Common Core standards that non-fiction books about animals could align with. Depending on the content of the book and the specific learning objectives you have in mind, you may find additional standards that are relevant to the material. It always depends on your curriculum goals and the needs of your students when selecting and using educational materials, but we hope this helps!



QUESTIONS BEFORE READING

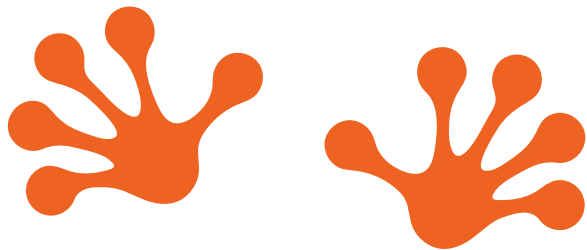


Asking questions before reading a book can help students engage with the material and activate their curiosity.

Encourage students to write down their questions and revisit them after reading the book to see if they were answered or if new questions arose. This approach can foster critical thinking, active engagement, and a sense of inquiry as they delve into the subject matter.

Here are some questions they could ask before reading a book about weird animals for critical thinking:

1. What makes an animal "weird," and what are some examples of animals that might be considered weird?
2. How do animals adapt to their environments, and what kinds of adaptations might we learn about in this book?
3. What are some reasons animals might have developed unique features or behaviors over time?
4. How might scientists study and learn about animals that are different from the ones we're familiar with?
5. What are some ways that animals interact with each other in their habitats, and how might weird animals fit into these interactions?
6. What are some ways humans impact animals and their habitats, and how might that relate to the survival of these weird animals?
7. How can learning about weird animals help us better understand the diversity of life on Earth?
8. Why is it important to approach reading about weird animals with an open and curious mind?
9. What are some ways we can connect what we learn about these animals to our everyday lives?
10. What do you hope to discover or learn from reading about these weird animals?



QUESTIONS AFTER READING

After reading the book about weird animals, students can reflect on their learning and deepen their critical thinking skills.

Encourage students to share their thoughts and insights with each other, fostering discussion and allowing them to learn from different perspectives.

Reflective questions like these promote critical thinking, synthesis of information, and a deeper understanding of the material they've read.

1. Which weird animal surprised you the most, and why?
2. How did the adaptations of these weird animals help them survive in their environments?
3. Can you identify any common patterns or themes among the different weird animals discussed in the book?
4. Were there any connections you made between the behaviors of these animals and those of more familiar animals?
5. What new vocabulary words did you learn from the book, and how do they help you understand the animals better?
6. Were there any ethical or moral considerations that arose from learning about these animals and their habitats?
7. How might the information about these weird animals be useful for scientists, conservationists, or even everyday people?
8. Can you think of any additional questions that arose while reading the book? How might you find answers to these questions?
9. Were there any aspects of the book that left you with unanswered questions or wanting to know more? How might you go about seeking more information?
10. How has reading about these weird animals changed your perspective on the diversity of life on Earth?

ADDITIONAL CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

Here's a list of additional questions that 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students could ask about weird animals to encourage critical thinking.

Feel free to adjust these questions to suit the specific interests and abilities of your students. The goal is to encourage them to think critically about the animals' characteristics, behaviors, and their role in the natural world.

1. Why do some animals have unique adaptations that help them survive in specific environments?
2. How might the unusual physical features of a weird animal be an advantage or a disadvantage for its survival?
3. What could be the reasons behind an animal's strange behavior that differs from other animals?
4. How do scientists study and learn about these weird animals and their behaviors?
5. Can you think of any other animals that might share similar characteristics with the weird animal you're studying? What are the similarities and differences?
6. Why do you think some animals evolve to have such different appearances compared to their relatives?
7. If you encountered one of these weird animals in the wild, how would you predict its role in the ecosystem?
8. What kind of challenges might a weird animal face when trying to find food or avoid predators?
9. How do the unique features of these animals help them interact with other species in their habitat?
10. Imagine you could design an environment for a group of weird animals to live in. What would the environment look like, and how would it support their needs?
11. Why is it important to protect and conserve even the strangest and rarest animals on our planet?
12. How do these weird animals fit into the broader classification of species and families?
13. What can we learn from these animals that might inspire new inventions or technologies for human use?
14. How might the presence of these weird animals affect the balance of nature in their ecosystems?
15. Can you think of any ways humans could unintentionally impact the survival of these animals, both positively and negatively?

ABOUT THE NATURE
JUST GOT REAL!
PODCAST FOR KIDS



Category -

- KIDS AND FAMILY

Age Level -

- AGES 8 TO 12 OR 3RD TO 5TH GRADE

Subjects -

- SCIENCE, EARTH SCIENCE, NON-FICTION

Additional Information -

- HOST - K.B. CARR
- SPONSOR - WEIRD & WACKY PLANET
- FOUND ON ALL PODCAST FEEDS AND ALSO AS A VIDEO PODCAST ON YOUTUBE @weirdandwackyplanet



BENEFITS OF LISTENING TO KIDS' PODCASTS

Podcasts offer a dynamic and engaging way for students to learn, explore new ideas, and connect with the world around them. They can be a valuable addition to traditional classroom instruction, supporting students' holistic development and lifelong learning habits. Listening to podcasts can offer a wide range of benefits including:

1. **Improved Listening Skills:** Podcasts require active listening and the ability to follow a spoken narrative, helping students develop better listening skills, focus, and attention to detail.
2. **Enhanced Comprehension:** Listening to podcasts exposes students to different speaking styles, accents, and vocabulary, which can improve their overall comprehension and language skills.
3. **Expanded Vocabulary:** Podcasts often introduce new words and concepts, expanding students' vocabulary and language proficiency.
4. **Cognitive Development:** Engaging with podcast content can enhance critical thinking, reasoning, and analytical skills as students process and evaluate information presented in an auditory format.
5. **Increased Engagement:** Podcasts often use storytelling, interviews, and real-world examples to captivate listeners, making learning more engaging and relatable.
6. **Exposure to Different Topics:** Podcasts cover a wide array of subjects, allowing students to explore new areas of interest and learn about topics they might not encounter in their regular curriculum.
7. **Flexibility and Accessibility:** Podcasts can be listened to anytime and anywhere, providing flexibility for students to learn outside of traditional classroom settings.
8. **Cultural and Global Awareness:** Many podcasts feature diverse perspectives, cultures, and experiences, helping students develop a broader worldview and empathy for others.
9. **Strengthened Communication Skills:** Listening to well-structured podcasts can model effective communication, including clear articulation, pacing, and organization of ideas.
10. **Technology Literacy:** Engaging with podcasts familiarizes students with digital audio content and different podcast platforms, contributing to their overall technology literacy.
11. **Independence and Self-Directed Learning:** Podcasts allow students to choose topics that interest them, fostering a sense of ownership over their learning and encouraging self-directed exploration.
12. **Multi-Sensory Learning:** Podcasts combine auditory input with mental imagery, which can enhance memory retention and understanding.
13. **Inspiration and Creativity:** Exposure to diverse perspectives and creative storytelling can inspire students' own creativity and imagination.
14. **Reinforcement of Literacy Skills:** Listening to spoken language can reinforce foundational literacy skills such as phonics, comprehension, and pronunciation.

BENEFITS OF LISTENING TO KIDS' NATURE PODCASTS

Listening to nature podcasts can provide students with a unique set of benefits that are specifically related to the exploration of the natural world. Here are some specific advantages of students listening to nature podcasts:

1. **Environmental Awareness:** Nature podcasts can increase students' understanding of environmental issues, conservation efforts, and the importance of protecting the natural world.
2. **Connection to Nature:** Even if students don't have direct access to natural environments, nature podcasts allow them to connect with and learn about various ecosystems, animals, and plants.
3. **Biodiversity Education:** Nature podcasts often showcase the incredible diversity of species and habitats on our planet, promoting an appreciation for the richness of life.
4. **Science Exploration:** Nature podcasts introduce scientific concepts related to biology, ecology, geology, and other disciplines, fostering curiosity and a deeper interest in science.
5. **Inspiration for Outdoor Exploration:** Listening to podcasts about nature can inspire students to go outdoors, explore their surroundings, and observe nature firsthand.
6. **Cognitive Development:** Learning about complex ecological relationships, animal behaviors, and natural phenomena enhances critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
7. **Empathy and Stewardship:** Nature podcasts can evoke empathy for animals and plants, promoting a sense of responsibility and stewardship for the environment.
8. **Cultural and Indigenous Knowledge:** Some nature podcasts may share traditional knowledge and cultural perspectives on nature, promoting cultural awareness and sensitivity.
9. **Mindfulness and Well-being:** The calming and soothing sounds of nature and environmental recordings in podcasts can contribute to mindfulness and relaxation.
10. **Personal Connections:** Nature podcasts often feature stories about people's experiences in nature, fostering emotional connections and relatability.
11. **Global Perspective:** Listening to podcasts about nature from different parts of the world broadens students' understanding of global ecosystems and environmental challenges.
12. **Creative Exploration:** Nature podcasts can spark creativity and imagination by discussing the unique adaptations and behaviors of animals and plants.
13. **Language Development:** Exposure to descriptive language used to convey the beauty and complexity of the natural world enhances students' language skills.
14. **Cross-Curricular Learning:** Nature podcasts can connect to various subjects, such as science, geography, language arts, and even history, providing interdisciplinary learning opportunities.
15. **Future Engagement:** Engaging with nature podcasts may inspire students to pursue careers or hobbies related to biology, ecology, conservation, or environmental advocacy.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS FOR LISTENING TO PODCASTS

Listening to a science and nature podcast can align with various Common Core State Standards, especially in the areas of English Language Arts and Literacy. Here are some standards that such podcasts could cover for 3rd and 4th graders:

Listening and Speaking Standards:

- **SL.3.1:** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- **SL.3.2:** Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- **SL.3.3:** Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.
- **SL.4.1:** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- **SL.4.2:** Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- **SL.4.3:** Identify the reasons and evidence a speaker provides to support particular points.

Reading Standards for Informational Text:

- **RI.3.7:** Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text.
- **RI.4.7:** Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
- **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:**
- **RI.3.8:** Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence).
- **RI.4.9:** Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:

- **SL.3.4:** Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.
- **SL.3.5:** Create engaging audio recordings of stories or poems that demonstrate fluid reading at an understandable pace; add visual displays when appropriate to emphasize or enhance certain facts or details.
- **SL.4.4:** Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.



About the Author

K.B. Carr is an animal enthusiast, not an animal expert. They both start with the letter "e", but shouldn't be confused. One of them requires much larger student loans.

K.B. lives in West Michigan with her dog Jack. Jack is a girl dog with a boy's name.

K.B. says her children Ryan and Kelsey and Jack are - and always will be - her favorite Weird & Wacky Creatures.

SEE WHAT
PROGRAMS/SUBJECTS/ACTIVITIES
ARE AVAILABLE WITH A
CLASSROOM AUTHOR VISIT IN THE
SCHOOL VISIT GUIDE.

FOLLOW ME ON ALL THE SOCIALS
@weirdandwackyplanet
EMAIL ME AT
kbcarr@weirdandwackyplanet.com

