

Save the Tiger!

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Name _____

Panthera tigris, more commonly known as the tiger, is one of the world's awe-inspiring animals. At local zoos, crowds gather at the tiger habitat, amazed at the grace and power of these magnificent cats. All over the world, the tiger is a symbol of strength, vitality and natural beauty.

A world without tigers seems impossible but sadly, it could happen. Tigers are on the verge of extinction—only 5,000 to 7,000 tigers are left in the wild—and they need our help. In this month's Internet Challenge™ we're going to find out interesting facts about this endangered animal and learn ways to help save it. Ready to start?

Our first web site, The Tiger Information Center, is located at <http://www.5tigers.org/>

In the navigation bar on the left, click Kids and then Tiger Basics. Click Physical Characteristics. Try out each of the highlighted links on this page. When you are done, click your browser's Back button to return to Physical Characteristics.

1. Tigers live in *steamy* hot jungles as well as icy cold forests. Choose an antonym for the word *steamy*.
 - a. humid
 - b. sweltering
 - c. dry
2. What kind of mark is found on a tiger's head?

3. How are a tiger's stripes similar to a human's fingerprints?
4. What unusual color variations for some tigers have been reported?
5. In the tiger taxonomy, do you think the tiger's order name means that they are meat-eaters or plant-eaters?
6. A tiger's paw prints are called pug marks.
 - a. True
 - b. False
7. In alphabetical order, list the five surviving different kinds of tigers.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.

Good answers!

Click Back until you get to the Kids page. Then, click The 5 Tiger Subspecies. Click on each of the highlighted links to learn about each subspecies.

8. What's another name for the Siberian tiger?

Fantastic!

Let's zoom to our second web site, [The Tiger Foundation](http://www.tigerfdn.com) at www.tigerfdn.com.

9. Which subspecies of tigers is the largest?

Click Tiger World. Click each of the following links: Tiger Facts, Tiger Ecology, and Tiger Trivia. (Use your browser's Back button to return each time to the Tiger World page.)

10. White tigers are frequently found in the wild.

- a. True
- b. False

15. From which animal did the tiger descend?

11. Why does the environment of the wild Indochinese tiger prevent us from learning more about it?

16. What does the word *manifest* mean in the following sentence?: Approximately two or three million years ago in central or eastern Asia, a specific early group of cats began to *manifest* the characteristics that survive to this day in the animal we call the tiger.

- a. show
- b. hide

12. Which subspecies of tiger is the most critically endangered and how much do we know about it?

17. How many wild tigers live in Africa?

13. Describe the Sumatran tiger.

18. Why isn't the term saber tooth tiger accurate?

14. Name the three extinct subspecies of tigers.

- a.
- b.
- c.

19. Should white tigers be identified as albinos?

- a. Yes
- b. No

20. What is a group of tigers called?

21. Which sentence is correct?
- a. White tigers are found only in the wild.
 - b. White tigers are raised in captivity.
 - c. White tigers can be found in snowy regions of North America.

22. About how many hours a day does a tiger stay awake?

23. Tigers dislike the water and rarely swim.

- a. True
- c. False

Way to go!

Let's zip back to our first site, [The Tiger Information Center](#), to learn about what dangers exist for tigers. Go to www.5tigers.org/. Click Kids on the left navigation bar, and then Tigers in Trouble. Click on each of the links you find there.

24. List three threats to tigers.

- a.
- b.
- c.

25. Why are poachers killing tigers?

26. What happens when there is less forest space for the tiger?

27. What does population fragmentation mean?

Remarkable responses!

Extension Activity

Read about the [Save the Tiger Fund](#). Find it at www.nfwf.org/programs/stf.htm.

How do we spread the word to others about saving the tiger? Your assignment: Design your own Save the Tiger advertisement. Create a poster (by using the computer or regular art tools) that includes a picture and at least one reason why the tiger should be saved. Make it colorful and creative! After you're done, show it to your teacher and classmates. Explain your message about saving the tiger. Perhaps your class can create a magazine that shows off all of your fine illustrations and messages of hope for the tiger.

Congratulations! You've done an exemplary job completing this Internet Challenge™. We've only scratched the surface in learning about this fascinating feline. Do more exploring on your own. Create your own save-the-tiger activity. With wild tigers on the brink of extinction, immediate action is needed. Making an effort to preserve wildlife is one step in saving our planet and ourselves.

Answers to February's Internet Challenge

1. (c)
2. The tiger's head often carries the Chinese mark of wang or king on the forehead.
3. Tiger stripes are like human fingerprints; no two tigers have the same pattern of stripe.
4. White tigers, white tigers without stripes and black tigers have been reported.
5. They are in the carnivora order, which means that they eat meat.
6. (a)
7. These tigers are called Bengal, Indochinese, Siberian, South China, and Sumatran. (The Siberian tiger is now called the Amur tiger.)
8. It's called the Amur tiger.
9. The Amur tigers are the largest.
10. (b)
11. Indochinese tigers live in remote forests in hilly to mountainous terrain, much of which lies along the borders between countries of Thailand, Myanmar, southern China, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and peninsular Malaysia. Access to these areas is often restricted, so very little is know about wild Indochinese tigers.
12. The South China tiger is the most critically endangered of all tiger subspecies. It is estimated that there are only 20-30 South China tigers still alive in the wild. Because there are so few wild South China tigers, and they have rarely been seen, very little is know about them.
13. The Sumatran tiger has the darkest coat of all tigers. Its broad, black stripes are closely spaced and often doubled. It also has striped forelegs.
14. The three types of tigers that are extinct are the Caspian, Javan and the Bali tigers.
15. Like many other carnivores, tigers descended from a small animal known as the miacid, which lived many millions of years ago.
16. (a)
17. None
18. Scientists agree that there never was a member of the tiger species with saber teeth that roamed areas such as North America. The correct term is saber-tooth cat.
19. (b)
20. It's called a streak.
21. (b)
22. A tiger would be awake for approximately eight hours since it sleeps 16 hours a day.
23. (b)
24. Threats to tigers include poaching, habitat loss and population fragmentation.
25. Tigers are being poached today because their bones, whiskers and other body parts can be sold on the black market for a lot of money. Tiger parts are used in traditional Chinese medicine because some people believe that tiger parts have special powers.
26. As forest space is reduced, the number of animals left in the forest is also reduced, and tigers can't find the prey they need to survive. As a result, tigers begin to eat the livestock of villagers who live near them.
27. As human populations move farther into the forest, villages and farms separate groups of tigers from each other. This means that tigers in one area can no longer mate with tigers in nearby areas. Instead, tigers must breed repeatedly with the same small group of animals. Over time, this inbreeding weakens the gene pool, and tigers are born with birth defects and mutations.

Extension Activities – students' own work.