
Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Anaconda	4–12
Tree Houses Grow Up	13–21
Howl Like a Wolf	22–29
Bring 'Em Back Alive	31–37
The Enemy Within	38–45
Top of the World	46–54
Bone Detective	56–62
Alien Attack	63–70
China's Mysterious Mummies	71–78
The Puzzling Face of Mars	79–86
Answer Key	87

Introduction

This book of short articles and activities seeks to stimulate the interests of teenagers who are reading far below their year level. Teachers who work with this population comment on the scarcity of engaging reading material accessible to these students; this book aims to fill this need. The primary goals of this book are to facilitate ease of readability by means of controlled vocabulary, simple sentence structure and non-distracting graphic design, and to provide interesting articles, relevant to teenage readers whose taste and sophistication are not matched by their ability to read.

The questions and activities were designed according to current educational research on improving the reading comprehension of remedial readers. Adaptability was also a very important consideration when writing this book. The articles, activities and questions can be used as part of a teacher-directed lesson, or they can be assigned as independent work.

Pre-reading Activities

Looking It Over

1. Read the title of the article that begins on page 6.
2. Leaf through the pages of the article, stopping to look at the illustrations.
3. Read the following list of vocabulary words.

Vocabulary

anaconda

large non-poisonous snake that crushes its prey in coils

Example: The anaconda wrapped around the deer and crushed it.

biologist

person who studies living things

Example: The biologist looked at the cells under a microscope.

Venezuela

country in South America

Example: Lisa needed a passport to go from Australia to Venezuela.

prey

animal hunted for food

Example: Rabbits are the prey of foxes.



Anaconda

The man takes a step. Mud and muck ooze through his toes. He takes another step. His foot sinks into the soft, squishy bottom of the swamp. The water is too dark and murky to see his feet. He takes another step. This time the swamp mud moves under his bare foot. It's alive. Does he scream in terror and run for his life? No. He smiles. Then he reaches down and pulls up a huge, twisting snake. This is what he does for a living.

Jesús Rivas is a field biologist. He studies the anaconda, which is the largest boa snake that is not poisonous. To study these snakes he must catch them. To catch them he must walk barefoot through swamps in Venezuela.

Comprehension

Circle the best answer. Highlight the sentence or sentences in the story where you find each answer.

1. Jesús Rivas finds anacondas by...
 - a. spotting them through a telescope.
 - b. walking barefoot through a swamp.
 - c. looking under logs.
 - d. looking in trees.
2. When Rivas was younger, he caught snakes...
 - a. with a net.
 - b. with a rope.
 - c. with a trap.
 - d. by letting the snakes bite him on the arm.
3. While catching snakes, Maria Muñoz wears...
 - a. lipstick and earrings.
 - b. gloves.
 - c. body armour.
 - d. a helmet.
4. During their study, the anacondas caught by Rivas and Muñoz have numbered...
 - a. 500.
 - b. less than 30.
 - c. 275.
 - d. more than 450.
5. The main goal of the study is to...
 - a. kill anacondas.
 - b. learn more about the anaconda's biology.
 - c. catch as many snakes as possible.
 - d. none of the above.

Find the Adjectives

An adjective is a word used to describe a noun or a pronoun. Find and circle the adjective in each row.

- | | | | |
|-----|---------|-------|--------|
| 1. | mud | soft | step |
| 2. | squishy | foot | scream |
| 3. | huge | this | leap |
| 4. | move | time | dark |
| 5. | hunt | young | Maria |
| 6. | small | grab | with |
| 7. | we | big | pick |
| 8. | this | trait | flashy |
| 9. | unruly | just | snake |
| 10. | over | small | find |

Extension Activity

Catching an anaconda with your bare hands doesn't sound like such a good idea. Design a trap you might use to catch an anaconda. You can describe the trap in a couple of paragraphs or draw a picture of it. If you draw a picture, write some short descriptions.