

# NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

## COMMON CORE ALIGNMENTS AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES



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# MISSION: LION RESCUE & MISSION: WOLF RESCUE

## Introduction

As noted in the mission of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), “the standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success . . .”<sup>1</sup> In other words, good reading skills can—and should—be used as needed during everyday learning activities. This includes not only texts designed to be used in the classroom, but authentic texts that readers might encounter as they read for information or pleasure in their daily life.

Good readers know when to apply each skill, and they know how to put them to their most beneficial use. Explicit instruction in these skills using these authentic, high-engagement texts, then, can help guide readers to know when and how to employ each skill.

In these teaching notes, we’ll highlight some of the Common Core State Standards that are best exemplified in the Mission: Animal Rescue series. The approaches to the skills introduced in the activities suggested—while tailored specifically to *Mission: Lion Rescue* and *Mission: Wolf Rescue*—can be used across the series. The activities are grouped by CCSS instructional focus. As the instructional focuses are spiraled across grade levels, you may wish to modify each activity as appropriate to meet the individual needs of your students.



<sup>1</sup> <http://www.corestandards.org>

# Common Core Standards

The following standards are addressed in these teaching notes:

(RI = Reading Informational Texts; W = Writing)

## Grade 4

### RI.4.2:

Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

### RI.4.6:

Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided.

### RI.4.9:

Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

### W.4.1:

Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

- Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer's purpose.;
- Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details.;
- Link opinion and reasons using words and phrases (e.g., *for instance*, *in order to*, *in addition*).;
- Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.



## Grade 5

### RI.5.2:

Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.

### RI.5.6:

Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the points of view they represent.

### RI.5.9:

Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

### W.5.1:

Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

- a. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer's purpose.;
- b. Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details.;
- c. Link opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., consequently, specifically).;
- d. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.

## Grade 6

### RI.6.2:

Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

### RI.6.5:

Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.

### RI.6.6:

Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

### W.6.1:

Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- a. Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.;
- b. Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.;
- c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.;
- d. Establish and maintain a formal style.;
- e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.

# Grade 7

**RI.7.2:**

Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

**RI.7.5:**

Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.

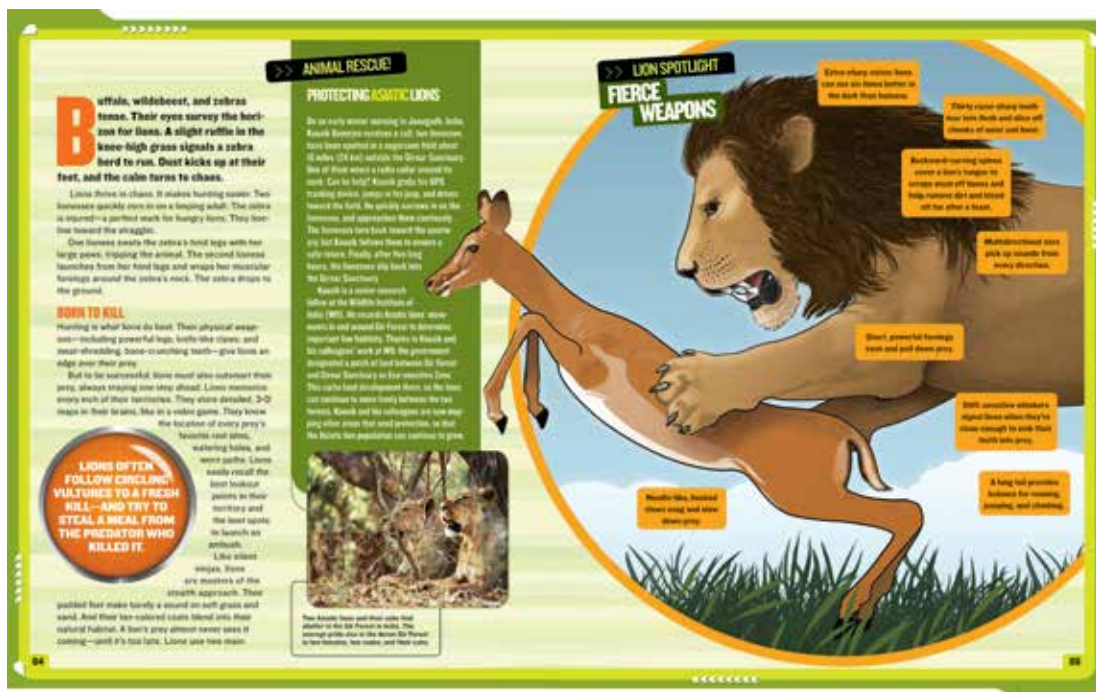
**RI.7.6:**

Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.

**W.7.1:**

Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically;
- b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.;
- c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.;
- d. Establish and maintain a formal style.;
- e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.



# Grade 8

## RI.8.2:

Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

## RI.8.5:

Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.

## RI.8.6:

Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.

## W.8.1:

Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.;
- b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.;
- c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationship among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.;
- d. Establish and maintain a formal style.;
- e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

**A LION IS CALLED TAUNIN IN BOTSWANA, SIMBA IN SWENYA, AND SIMER IN INDIA.**

**LIONS ROAR AND SPRAY MIXTURES OF URINE AND OTHER SECRETIONS ON TREES AND BUSHES TO MARK THEIR TERRITORIES.**

**SHELF TOUCH**

**KEYSOME SPECIES**

**LIONS ARE SOCIAL ANIMALS**

**LION PROFILE ZIHRA THE WHITE LION**

# Determine Main Ideas and Details

(RI.4.2, RI.5.2, RI.6.2, RI.7.2, RI.8.2)\*

## ACTIVITY 1: It All Adds Up

*Objective: Identify the main idea of the text*

Point out to students that while there may be many important ideas in a book, there are often one or two big ideas that span the entire book. These are the ideas that tie the book together. Sometimes these ideas are stated in the text itself—often at the very beginning or very end of the text—but sometimes readers must infer the overall big idea. In all cases, though, the big ideas are supported by the other main ideas in the text. For example, in a book with chapters, each chapter is generally a main idea.

On the board, write out this math equation: *main idea 1 + main idea 2 + main idea 3 = THE BIG IDEA*.

Ask a volunteer to read the equation out loud and explain it by putting it into his/her own words. (The big idea of a book is made up of several main ideas.)

Divide students into groups or pairs or ask students to work individually. Challenge students to write an equation showing how the main ideas in the text add up to the big idea. Encourage students to summarize each main idea and give examples of pages it is found on. Be sure the main ideas students note do logically add up to the same big idea.

Differentiation suggestions: For younger or struggling students, establish the big idea as a class. Then invite students to identify the main ideas that add up to it. For more advanced students, invite students to extend their equations by also including details that add up to the main ideas that add up to the big idea.

You may wish students to follow this format on page 8.



\* See pages 3-6 of this guide for CCSS

[MAIN IDEA] + [MAIN IDEA] + [MAIN IDEA] = [BIG IDEA]  
 \summary \summary \summary  
 \example pages \example pages \example pages

**Partial Sample Response:**

Main Idea 1

**LION**

Lions are a keystone species.

Summary

*A keystone species is one that, if removed from the ecosystem, would cause the entire ecosystem to collapse. Lions are a keystone species for their habitat.*

Example Pages

Chapter 1, page 18

**Main Idea 2**

+

There are conflicts between humans and lions.

Summary

*Because humans and lions must share resources, including space and food sources, conflicts can occur. Often these conflicts end with humans killing lions.*

Example Pages

Chapter 2, pages 36–40

=

**BIG IDEA**

Lions are important animals that should be saved.

**WOLF**

Some scientists consider wolves to be a keystone species.

*A keystone species is one that if removed from the ecosystem, would cause the entire ecosystem to collapse. Scientists observed that the Yellowstone National Park ecosystem suffered when wolves were removed.*

Chapter 1, pages 24–25

+

Studying wolves helps humans understand what wolves need to survive.

*Studying wolves in their natural habitats, including how and when they hunt, helps people understand how our actions affect wolves.*

Chapter 6, pages 98–102

=

Understanding wolves better can help us protect them.







## ACTIVITY 2: Tweet at Me

*Objective: Filter ideas to summarize text*

Ask a few volunteers to tell you the plot of their favorite movie or book in 10 seconds. After students have shared their responses, lead a discussion about the challenges of describing the story in such a short amount of time—what information could they include or not include? How do they know? Point out that the central, or main idea of a story doesn't usually include details.

Next, ask students if they have ever used the social media site Twitter. If not, tell students that the site only lets people write posts that are 140 characters or fewer. Writing a good Twitter post, or tweet, is challenging—you need to share the information you want without using much space. It takes practice! And it also takes narrowing down your message to exactly what you want to say. Sometimes people use hashtags to add extra information that doesn't fit into the sentence structure or to call attention to the most important ideas in their post.

Challenge students to compose a tweet that tells the main idea of *Mission: Lion Rescue* or *Mission: Wolf Rescue*. Remind students that their tweet should tell the main idea—not their opinion—of the book. Encourage them to use hashtags to call out important information.

Hand out slips of paper, and invite students to draw a profile picture, make up a username, and write their tweet. Then display the tweets on a wall as a classroom Twitter feed.

If you wish, photocopy this template and distribute one to each student:

### ACTIVITY 3: That's the Idea

Objective: Track the development of an idea through the text

Point out to students that when authors introduce an important idea, they generally build upon it and return to it throughout the text. As they do, they go deeper into the idea, add more details, or relate the idea to other concepts.

Invite students to preview the text in groups. Encourage them to read chapter and section titles, captions, and features, and to examine photos. As they preview the book, have them identify one idea that looks like it might carry throughout the book. For example, students might note that there seem to be a lot of references to the interactions of humans and animals.

Once students have settled on their idea, have them dig deeper into the book to identify as many places as they can where that idea appears. Have students note each spot with a sticky note. Before they stick the note on the page, have them summarize the information they are marking for easy reference.

When students have finished marking and recording the information, have them transcribe each of the summaries onto an index card. Each sticky note should correspond to one index card.

Next, have students sort their cards into logical groupings. Students may find that there are several strands of idea development. For example, under the umbrella idea of human and lion or wolf interactions, students might find one idea strand about conflict and one about how humans are working to save the animals.

Finally, invite students to tie their cards together with pieces of string to show the connection between ideas. Some cards may attach to more than one other card. The result should be a web of ideas that all relate to the same umbrella idea.

Display the idea webs in the classroom, and invite students to share theirs with the class. Ask students to describe how the umbrella idea developed throughout the book.

Differentiation suggestions: For younger or struggling students, concentrate on only one chapter and/or have students work together in groups or as a whole-class activity. For more advanced students, invite students to reflect on how and why the author chose to develop the ideas in the order she did and how that influences the overall structure of the text.



# Synthesize Multiple Accounts

(RI.4.6, RI.5.6, RI.4.9, RI.5.9)\*

## ACTIVITY 1: He Said/She Said

*Objective: Compare objective and subjective information about the same topic*

Have students write down a short description of something they did that day, including several details. Then divide students into small groups. Within each group, invite one student to read aloud his/her description. Tell the other group members to listen carefully.

When the first student is done reading, have a volunteer in the group repeat the description from memory. Have the first student mark down which details the second student remembered or didn't remember. Repeat the activity until each student in the group has had a chance to read his/her description.

Invite students to share observations from the activity—which description had more details, the version written by the student or the version repeated back? Which teller had more of a personal interest in the topic? What might that suggest about first-person accounts versus third-person accounts? Lead students to see that first-person accounts often have more detail and a more intimate relationship with the information. Discuss how this might affect information in a text presented in first- or third-person.

Next, invite students to choose one of the person-focused features in the text, such as the “Animal Rescue!” feature on page 43 of *Lion* or on page 104 of *Wolf*. Have students read their chosen feature and then locate similar information in the running text. For example, the “Lion Strongholds” section on page 36 of *Lion* or “Revolutionary Ranchers” on page 106 of *Wolf*. Have students name the topic described in both text selections and identify key points from each. Then have students compare what information came from only one selection and which information was covered in both. Invite students to share their observations.

Differentiation suggestion: For younger or struggling readers, photocopy both selections. Give students two highlighter colors: one for information found only in one of the selections and one for information found in both selections.



\* See pages 3-6 of this guide for CCSS

## Activity 2: Digging Deeper

Objective: Research additional information, including opposing points of view

Remind students that there is always more than one viewpoint on a topic. For example, while saving endangered animals might seem like common sense, it's not so simple. Lions and wolves can hunt and kill people's livestock. People also need space to live, which can encroach on animals' territory. Finding a solution requires identifying, understanding, evaluating, and addressing the different points of view of people affected by the issue.

As a class, choose one controversial topic from the book. Invite students to research the topic further. Students can use the book itself, the resources listed on pages 120–123, or other resources they have access to. Remind students to look for resources that present opposing viewpoints. They should keep careful notes of the different viewpoints, objective information, and subjective opinions they find in their research.

When students have finished their research, randomly assign sides for a classroom debate on the topic—students should be prepared to defend any side of the issue. Give students time to prepare their arguments, then hold the debate. If you wish, invite other classes to sit in the audience and ask questions.

After the debate, wrap up with a discussion about the topic. After examining the issue from all sides, what solution would the class recommend?

Differentiation suggestions: For younger or struggling students, create a class list of viewpoints and the arguments that support them. Post the list in a visible place so students can refer back to it during the debate. For more advanced readers, encourage students to follow formal rules of debate.

The image displays a digital resource page for 'WOLF' with a blue background and a central illustration of a wolf. The page is organized into several sections:

- RESOURCES**: A header with two right-pointing chevrons.
- WANT TO LEARN MORE?**: A sub-header with the instruction 'Click on these great resources to continue your lesson to learn about...'
- IN PRINT**: A list of books including:
  - Blank, Oliver. "Wolf Talk." *National Geographic Kids*, February 2020.
  - Brandenburg, Jim. *Wilder Wolf: A Fugitive Prey*. New York: Random House, 2013.
  - Brandenburg, Jim. *Wilder Wolf: Living With an Endangered Predator*. New York: Random House, 2010.
  - Brandenburg, Jim, and Jack Brandenburg. *Wolves in Park With Wolves*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2016.
  - Chabnick, Stephen. "Wolf Wars." *National Geographic*, March 2010.
  - Quinn, Jan, and James Dundas. *The Hidden Life of Wolves*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2015.
  - Green, Steve. "Wolf Wars." *National Geographic Wild* 12 no. 4 (December 2017): 80.
  - Hall, Corinne. *A Close Look at Red Wolf Recovery: A Conversation With Dr. David B. Rubin*. International Wolf 23 no. 2 (Summer 2015): 30.
  - Mech, L. David. *Wolves: Behavior, Biology, and Evolution*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011.
  - Reynolds, Ruth. "Wolf Wars." *National Geographic Kids*, February 2020.
  - Wong, Learning. *High Peak Food Solution and Endangered Wolfing*. New York: Creative Learning Press, 2020.
- ONLINE**: A list of websites including:
  - Wildlife Conservation Society: [www.wcs.org](http://www.wcs.org)
  - Wildlife Conservation Society: [www.wcs.org](http://www.wcs.org)
  - Wildlife Conservation Society: [www.wcs.org](http://www.wcs.org)
  - Wildlife Conservation Society: [www.wcs.org](http://www.wcs.org)
  - Wildlife Conservation Society: [www.wcs.org](http://www.wcs.org)
  - Wildlife Conservation Society: [www.wcs.org](http://www.wcs.org)
  - Wildlife Conservation Society: [www.wcs.org](http://www.wcs.org)
- WATCH**: A list of videos including:
  - "The Wolves of the Midwest." *Nature PBS*. Produced by Bob Lambie and John Pace. 2015. (TV documentary)
  - Living With Wolves: Wolves in the Wild. Produced by Lee Shibata and Susan Daniels. *National Geographic Wild*, 2015. (Documentary)
  - The Wolf of Man. *Nat Geo Wild*. 2010. (Documentary)
  - Wolf Park. *National Geographic Explorer*. Directed by Mike Lippin. 2016. (TV documentary)
  - Wolves of Lugiwa Reserve in Northeastern Thailand. *National Geographic Wild*. 2017. (Documentary)

# Analyze Text Structure

## (RI.6.5, RI.7.5, RI.8.5)\*

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### Activity 1: Piece by Piece

*Objective: Identify recurring text features*

Divide students into groups and assign each group a chapter in the book. Tell students they have 5 minutes to examine their chapter and identify all of the features that are in it. They should note each feature and on which page(s) it appears.

When time is up, invite one group to share their list aloud. Instruct the other teams to put a check mark next to each feature the first group mentions if it appears on their own list. Then invite other teams to share features they had on their own list that weren't mentioned by any other team.

HINT: The following features appear in all chapters: chapter title (opening pages), a meaningful quote (opening pages), photos and captions, fact bubbles, an infographic (such as a map or diagram), "Lion Profile"/"Meet a Wolf" (except Chapter 7), "Animal Rescue!" (can be more than one in the chapter), and a "Rescue Challenge"/"Rescue Activity" (last pages of the chapter).

Discuss the results of the activity with students—which features appeared in every chapter? Were there any features that appeared in the same place in each chapter? Why might the author have structured the book that way?

Differentiation suggestion: For more advanced readers, list the discussion questions on the board and have students write a short response individually. Then pair students to discuss their responses. Invite a few pairs to share their thoughts with the whole class.

Next, tell students to imagine they are the book's author, and they're planning an additional chapter for the book. Invite students to choose a topic for the chapter and then decide which features to include. Remind students that some features appear in all chapters of the book, and encourage students to think about what information each feature adds to the chapter.

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\* See pages 3-6 of this guide for CCSS

## Activity 2: What Moves Me

Objective: Analyze impact

Remind students that authors choose their words very carefully—each is chosen, and each sentence is crafted, to give a certain effect. Each of these choices adds up to the message the author is trying to communicate.

Invite students to take some time to review the book, noting any sentences, quotes, or paragraphs that had a profound effect on them as they read. (You may wish to refer to the standards on page 3 of this guide to direct students toward a grade-specific choice.)

When students have finished their review, have them choose one sentence, quote, or paragraph from their list. Invite them to write a short response about their choice, reflecting on why they chose it, its role in the paragraph/chapter/book, and its impact on the reader. (Again, you may wish to refer to the grade standards to direct students' responses.) Then, give students access to art supplies and invite them to represent their choice creatively.

Display students' art and writings around the room and invite the class to take an art walk to examine each. If you wish, invite students to present their art to the class.



# Write Persuasively

(W.4.1, W.5.1, RI.6.6, RI.7.6, RI.8.6, W.6.1, W.7.1, W.8.1)\*

## Activity 1: What Are You Trying to Say?

Objective: Identify author purpose and point of view

Remind students that authors always have a point of view and a message they're trying to communicate when they write. Sometimes they are trying to inform people. Other times, they are trying to persuade people to think a certain way or to do something.

Divide students into groups, and ask them to determine the author's purpose for this book. Students should be sure to note examples from the text as evidence. Then ask groups to share their responses. Lead students to understand that while each individual part of a book might have a different purpose, there is generally one overall purpose for the entire book. For this book, it's to persuade people. The point of view is that lions/wolves need humans' help to survive. The author does this by informing readers about lions and wolves, profiling explorers and conservationists, and introducing other emotionally driven anecdotes.

Next, in their groups, invite students to imagine that they are either a podcast host, the book's author, or a guest calling into the show. Have groups prepare a script with questions and responses for a podcast interview. Remind students that the author's goal is to communicate his/her purpose for writing the book. The host's goal is to ask interesting questions that can start a conversation for listeners to call in about. It's the job of the host to make sure the guest not only shares opinions but also gives reasons for them.

Once students have finished their scripts, have them record their interview and listener call-ins using a digital recorder. Share the podcasts with other classes or with students' families.

Differentiation suggestions: For younger or struggling readers, create the podcast as a class. As a class, decide on the author's talking points and on the host's questions. Then stage the podcast live in the classroom. For more advanced readers, save the discussion about the author's point of view (2nd paragraph above) until after students have completed and shared their podcasts.



\* See pages 3-6 of this guide for CCSS

## Activity 2: By Any Other Name

Objective: Analyze the impact of an author's point of view

Remind students that authors choose their words to communicate their point of view. That means that how a paragraph is written is a reflection of the author's purpose. Pose this question to students: How would a paragraph be different if the author had a different point of view?

Invite students to choose a paragraph from the book and copy it onto a separate piece of paper. Below the paragraph, have students summarize it, noting the content, what the author is trying to say about the content, and how the author gets that point across.

Next, ask students to choose a point of view about the topic of the paragraph different from the author's. On a separate piece of paper, have students note their alternate point of view and what a person with that point of view might want to communicate about the same topic. Have students list the arguments and evidence that someone with their new point of view would want to share.

Then, have students rewrite the original paragraph from the new point of view. Pair students and have them share their writings. In their pairs, have them discuss their process. How did they decide on their alternate point of view? How did they choose what evidence to include? How did they reword the paragraph to get their point across? Group each pair with another pair and have each group share their observations with each other.

**>> RESCUE CHALLENGE**

**HELP LIONS BE HEARD**  
Lions can be seen in many places, tracks, and logs. You will also discover lots of companies, brands, and services using lions as symbols. Capture the lion's roar with an adult and you will soon find lots of possible ways things are different now. This is because scientific and business have techniques that have in high regard for their strength, power, and intelligence. Ask how many of these organizations help the animals that they produce in their part? How can animals be those animals in relation to all?

**NOVICE**  
**MAKING YOUR VOICE HEARD**  
How can I make my voice heard? To make your voice as loud as possible without any technology. To a group, sing, or another technique. How loud can you get?

**PROFESSOR**  
**PROFESSOR**  
How can I make my voice heard? To make your voice as loud as possible without any technology. To a group, sing, or another technique. How loud can you get?

**PROFESSOR**  
**PROFESSOR**  
How can I make my voice heard? To make your voice as loud as possible without any technology. To a group, sing, or another technique. How loud can you get?

**EXTREME**  
**MAPPING LIONS IN YOUR WORLD**  
How can I make my voice heard? To make your voice as loud as possible without any technology. To a group, sing, or another technique. How loud can you get?

**ADVANCED**  
**LIONS AS LOGOS**  
LIONS OFTEN APPEAR IN LOGOS, SYMBOLS, STATUES, AND COATS OF ARMS. This is because they are symbols of strength, royalty, and nobility. How many can you find where you live?

**EXPERT TIPS**  
1. Ask your teacher for a lion's roar.  
2. Ask your teacher for a lion's roar.  
3. Ask your teacher for a lion's roar.

**BRITISH RAILWAYS**  
**LIONS**  
**KING SIZE**  
**LION**



## Activity 3: Cause an Uproar/Let Out a Howl

Objective: Write a persuasive letter

As a class, start a letter-writing campaign (see book-specific suggestions below). Students may choose to write to their congressperson, their community, or their friends.

Review the elements of a persuasive letter with students. Remind them to use persuasive language and to back up their opinions with facts. (See the grade-level standards on page 3 of this guide.) Then, get writing!

### Mission: Lion Rescue

Help National Geographic spread the word about big cats. Visit [kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/big-cats](http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/big-cats) for more information.



### Mission: Wolf Rescue

Have students refer to the wolf range map on page 17.

Invite students to research the wolves that currently or previously lived in your area. (Or, invite your students to choose an area to research if you don't live within a wolf range.) Ask students to focus on:

- what type of wolf lives/lived in your area
- the current status of your wolf; if it no longer lives in your area, what happened?
- what can be done to bring the wolves back—and why it should or shouldn't be done?





***National Geographic Kids Mission: Lion Rescue  
All About Lions and How to Save Them***

Written by Ashlee Brown Blewett with National Geographic Explorer Daniel Raven-Ellison

Ages 10 and up • Grades 5 & up • 8-1/2 x 10-7/8

128 pages • Guided Reading Level: U

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