

Learning Guide



Lemurs

We hope you enjoyed learning all about lemurs and the importance of protecting them. Extend your learning with this print-ready Learning Guide!



What's in this Learning Guide?

Get Set to Listen:

Check your knowledge before and after listening to the episode by determining if statements are TRUE or FALSE.

Vocabulary

Discussion Questions

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3-8.3

Writing Prompts and Extension Projects

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.2; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.3; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.4; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.7; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.8

Lemurs vs. Monkeys - Venn diagram and project ideas

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.5; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.1

Lemur “Stink Fight” Science

NGSS 3-LS3-2, 3-LS4-3, 4-LS1-2, MS-LS1-4; SL.3-4.4; 4-LS1-2 NM

Saving Species, Near and Far

NGSS 3-LS4-3, 3-LS4-4, 5-ESS3-1, MS-LS2-4; CCSS ELA W.3-5.2, W.3-5.7; SL.3-5.4; National Geography Standards 14 & 16; 3-LS4-3 NM; 3-LS4-4 NM; 5-ESS3-1 NM;

Helping People & Lemurs - project and research resources

NGSS: 3-LS4-3, 3-LS4-4, 5-ESS3-1, MS-LS2-1, MS-LS2-5; CCSS ELA: W.3-5.1-2, W.3-5.7, SL.3-5.1-4; National Geography Standards 14 & 16; MS-LS2-5 NM

Amazing Ancient Animal Migrations

Additional Resources and Book & Film List



The Children's Hour
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<https://www.childrenshour.org/lemurs/>



Get Set to Listen

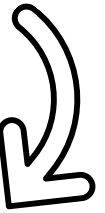
1. Before listening!

Read each statement and write TRUE or FALSE based on what you already know.



2. After listening!

Based on what the experts said in the episode, write TRUE or FALSE.



Before Listening	TRUE or FALSE?	After Listening
	1. Lemurs are the original primates on Earth. If you go back 65 million years, humans' ancestors were lemurs.	
	2. Lemurs are very social animals and often interact with many types of animals, including humans.	
	3. Scientists think there are about 100 different species of lemurs in the wild.	
	4. Lemurs are the most endangered group of vertebrates in the world today.	
	5. Lemurs are believed to have reached Madagascar by stowing away on a ship sometime in the 1700s.	
	6. Lemurs fling stinky smells at each other when fighting over females or flirting with them.	
	7. Lemurs use their tails as an extra hand to help them climb trees.	

What did you learn?



Get Set to Listen

Answer key

1. TRUE
2. FALSE. Lemurs are very social with other lemurs, but they aren't interested in socializing with humans.
3. TRUE
4. TRUE
5. FALSE. Lemurs are believed to have reached Madagascar on a floating mat of vegetation sometime in their 55-million-year evolution.
6. TRUE
7. FALSE: Lemurs use their specialized hands to climb trees and their tails for balance. Unlike their monkey cousins, they cannot grip with their tails.



Vocabulary

lemur	A small primate with big eyes and a long tail that lives in the forests of Madagascar.
primate	A type of mammal that includes humans, monkeys, apes, and lemurs.
endangered	When a kind of animal or plant is at risk of disappearing forever.
non-invasive research	A way of studying animals or people without touching or harming them. Scientists observe, listen, or collect clues like footprints, photos, or droppings instead of using surgery or capture.
vertebrates	Animals with spines.
habitat	The natural home or environment where an animal or plant lives.
conservation	The protection and care of nature and wildlife so they can continue to live and grow.



Discussion Questions

1. What do you already know about lemurs?
2. Where do lemurs live, and what makes their home special?
3. What are some ways lemurs use their tails, hands, or voices?
4. Why do you think lemurs can only be found in Madagascar?
5. How does the forest help lemurs survive?
6. What might happen to lemurs if their habitat is destroyed?
7. How do lemurs help keep their ecosystem healthy?
8. How are lemurs similar to or different from monkeys or humans?
9. What can we learn from the way lemurs live and work together?
10. If you could observe lemurs in the wild, what would you want to study or discover?
11. How might music, art, or storytelling help people care more about lemurs?



Group Discussion Strategies

Think Pair Share:

1. Individually, student writes down their answer to a question.
2. Students pair up and tell each other their answers.
3. Teacher calls for volunteers to share with the whole class their answer (and/or their partner's answer). Teacher notes key words/phrases on board.

Round Robin:

1. Teacher poses one question (written on top of a large page) to students, who are assembled into small groups of 3 or 4.
2. Students take turns brainstorming the answers. The recorder of the group writes down all answers.
3. The leader reads the group's ideas to the entire class. Teacher moderates.



Writing Prompts

Narrative Prompts

1. Imagine you wake up one morning and find that you've turned into a lemur! Describe your day in the forest of Madagascar.
2. Write a story about a lemur family trying to find a new home after a storm destroys their forest.
3. Create a tale about a lemur who becomes friends with a human and teaches them about rainforest life.

Extensions:

- Draw a comic strip or picture book version of your story.
- Create sound effects or background music to match the action in your story.
- Perform your story as a short skit or puppet show for classmates.

Informative/Explanatory Prompts

1. Explain where lemurs live, what they eat, and how they survive in the wild.
2. Write a report comparing lemurs to other primates, like monkeys or apes.
3. Explain why lemurs are endangered and what people are doing to protect them.

Extensions:

- Create a "Lemur Fact Poster" with labeled diagrams and fun facts.
- Make a mini field guide about different lemur species.
- Record a short podcast or video teaching others about lemurs.

Opinion/Persuasive Prompts

1. Do you think people should do more to protect lemurs? Why or why not?
2. Should zoos have lemurs? Explain your opinion with reasons.
3. Why is it important to protect the rainforests where lemurs live?
4. What can kids do to help endangered animals like lemurs?

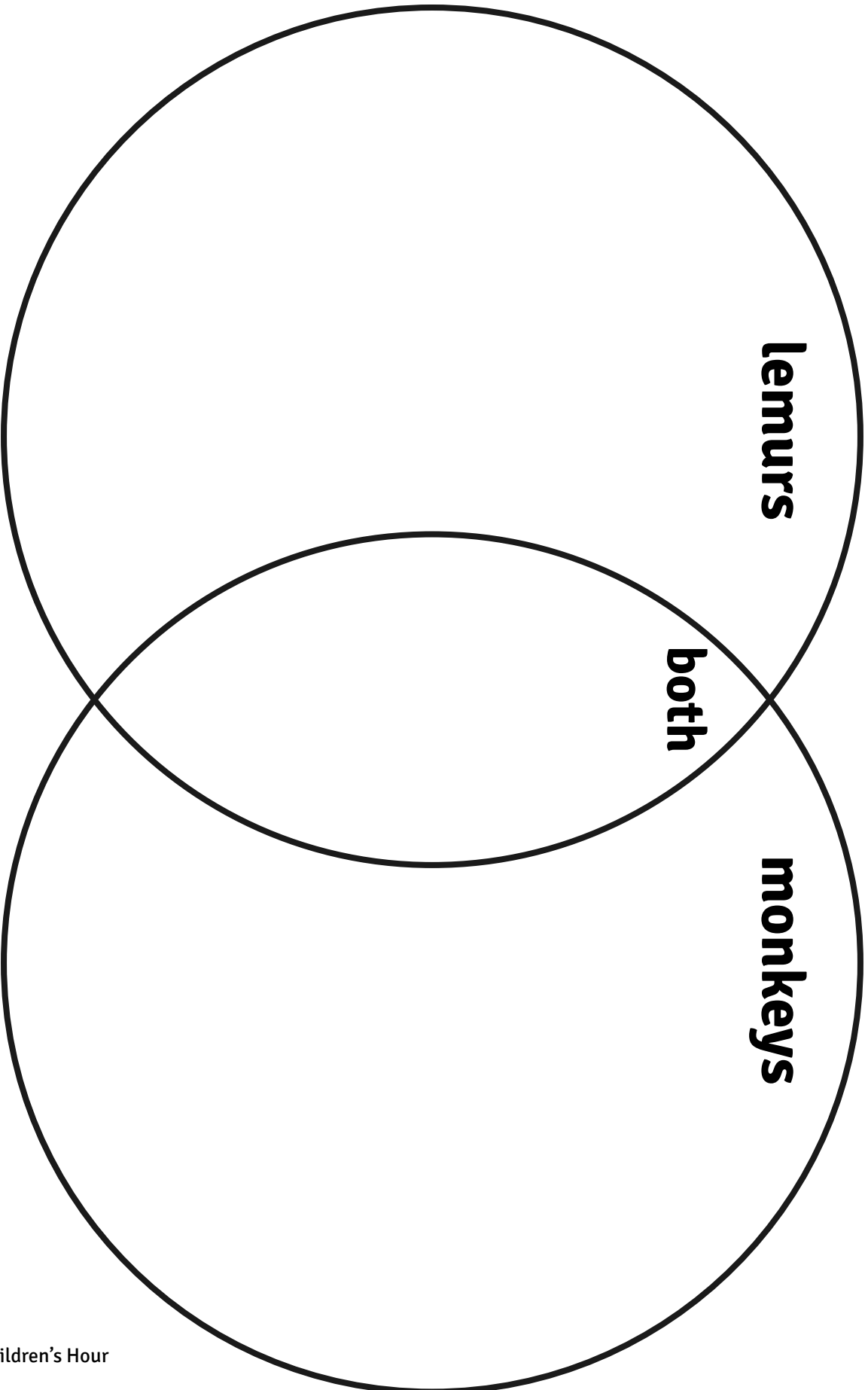
Extensions:

- Write a letter to a zoo, conservation group, or government leader sharing your opinion about protecting lemurs.
- Design a poster or social media campaign to raise awareness about lemurs.
- Hold a class debate on whether animals like lemurs should live in the wild or in zoos.
- Compose a short song or poem about saving lemurs and share it with your class.



Lemurs vs. Monkeys

Name _____

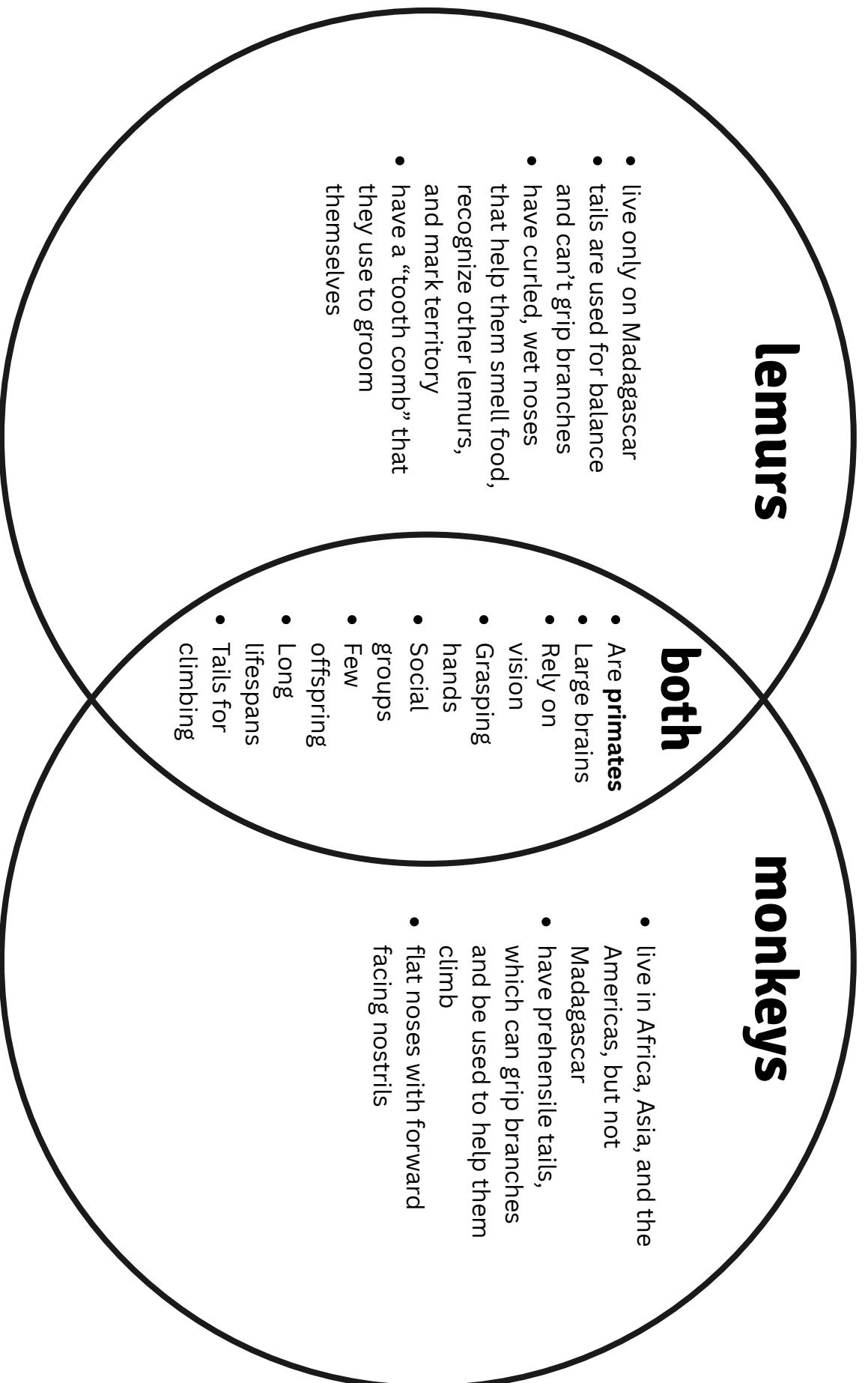


Use the following to help you fill in the Venn diagram:

- [Part 1: What are lemurs?](#)
- [Living Primates](#) article from the American Museum of Natural History



Lemurs vs. Monkeys - Teacher's Guide



Extensions

- Make a diagram comparing monkeys and lemurs.
- Compare lemurs with other primates, including humans. Compare different types of lemurs with each other, with other kinds of animals, including marsupials and raccoons, which they are often assumed to be related to.
- How do lemurs' specific adaptations make them successful in their environment? What would happen if monkeys or other primates were introduced to Madagascar? Write an essay debating whether monkeys would outcompete lemurs on Madagascar, citing specific adaptations that make them superior competitors for food and defense against predators.



Lemur “Stink Fight” Science

Male ring-tailed lemurs use scent from glands on their wrists and shoulders to mark their tails. When competing, they wave their scented tails at rivals — a “stink fight”! These displays help determine dominance without physical fighting. It’s a way to communicate strength, territory, and confidence.

Materials

- Strips of colored paper or fabric (“tails”)
- Markers or stickers with different scents (lavender, vanilla, cinnamon, citrus — or use scented markers)

Listen

- [Part 2: The Science of a Lemur “Stink Fight”](#)

Discuss

How do animals communicate without words?

What might a “stink fight” be?

Watch

a [short video about lemur stink fights](#)

Have your own lemur stink fight!

Decorate a paper “lemur tail.”

Then assign each team a different scent (marker, oil, or scratch-and-sniff sticker).

Walk around the room waving your “tail” and try to find others with the same scent — representing lemurs identifying their troop members.

Discuss

How did you recognize your group’s scent?

Why might scent be important for animals?

What can humans learn from how lemurs communicate peacefully?

What are other examples of animal communication?

Extensions

- Create a short comic, skit, or paragraph called “My Lemur Stink Fight!” showing what happens when two lemurs compete — using scientific facts and humor.
- Research scent glands or chemical communication in other animals (cats, ants, wolves).
- Design a “lemur behavior” poster comparing vocal, visual, and scent communication.
- Write a news report titled “Lemurs Battle with Smelly Tactics!”





Saving Species, Near and Far

Faye Goodwin from the Duke Lemur Center says the best way to start protecting nature is by looking right in our own backyard. Use this project guide to help you get started!

Discuss

- What kinds of animals live near your home or school?
- Why might some of them need help?

Listen/Watch

- [Part 3: How to Help Endangered Lemurs](#)
- [Science Bulletins: Lemurs of Madagascar--Surviving on an Island of Change](#)

Then brainstorm other threatened or endangered species.

Discuss

- What makes a species threatened or endangered?
- How do humans affect habitats—positively or negatively?
- How can protecting one species help an entire ecosystem?

Research

Choose one threatened or endangered species to learn more about, including:

- Where it lives
- Why it's endangered
- Why it is important to protect it
- What people are doing to help
- What you could do to help

Share

Present your findings as a **poster**, **brochure**, **slide**, or **mini-report**, including:

- Why you chose this species
- How you would save them
- What your community could do to make a difference



Upload your ideas to our Instagram [@tchradio](#), TikTok [@thechildrenshourradio](#), and [Facebook page](#), and check out what others have observed!

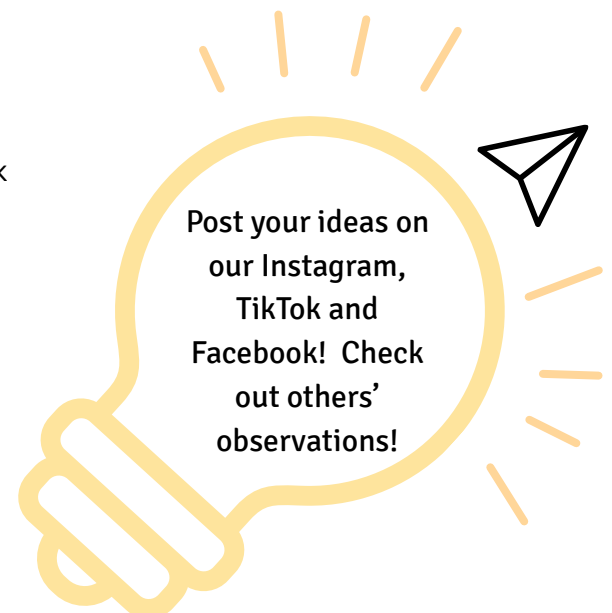


Mail your ideas to:
The Children's Hour
PO Box 70236
Albuquerque, NM 87197



Record a Voice Message

This might be used on The Children's Hour!



Post your ideas on our Instagram, TikTok and Facebook! Check out others' observations!



Helping People & Lemurs

Listen

- [Part 3: How to Help Endangered Lemurs](#)

Watch

- [Lemurs of Madagascar from AMNH](#)
- [Looking Back, Looking Ahead: 35 Years of Conservation video](#) from Duke Lemur Center (start at 5:28).

Discuss

- *What do you notice about lemurs' habitat?*
- *Why do you think lemurs live only in Madagascar?*

Discuss briefly how forests are home to both people and animals.

Research

Use the “People and Lemurs: Research Resources” guide to make a list of what both groups need to live and thrive.

Discuss

- *How do people and lemurs rely on the same environment?*
- *What happens when forests are cut down or polluted?*
- *How might helping one also help the other?*

Work individually or in small groups to answer:

What could be done to help both the people of Madagascar and lemurs?

- Write a short paragraph or persuasive letter.
- Draw a poster or comic showing their idea (e.g., tree planting, eco-tourism, sustainable farming).

Reflect

How can helping people also help animals?

Extensions

- Research sustainable farming or reforestation methods in Madagascar.
- Create “Shared Forest” murals showing humans and lemurs living in harmony.
- Write a story or poem from a lemur’s point of view about life in the changing forest.
- Compare Madagascar to your own community—how do humans affect local wildlife?



People & Lemurs: Research Resources

These resources highlight key organizations, websites, and studies that explore the connection between human well-being and lemur conservation in Madagascar.

Key Organizations & Websites

- [World Bank – Madagascar Overview](#): Information on poverty, infrastructure, and development projects.
- [Duke Lemur Center – Madagascar Conservation Programs](#): Combines wildlife conservation with community support.
- [Lemur Conservation Network](#): A global network of groups working to protect lemurs and support Malagasy communities.
- [Wilder Institute](#): Focused on conservation and community-based solutions.
- [Centre ValBio \(Stony Brook University\)](#): Field research and education center connecting lemur research with human development.

Research, Journals, and Data Resources

- Madagascar Conservation & Development: Open-access journal focused on conservation and human-environment relationships.
- Primate Conservation: Research on primate behavior, distribution, and conservation in Madagascar.
- [UNDP – Human Development Reports: Data on health, education, and living standards for Madagascar](#)
- [Global Economy – Human Development Index: Economic and social indicators](#)
- [BTI 2024 Madagascar Country Report: Analysis of poverty, governance, and inequality](#)

Classroom Ideas & Activities

- Compare Needs: Make a chart showing 'People's Needs in Madagascar' vs. 'Lemurs' Needs' using facts from these resources.
- Case Study Research: Assign students a conservation site like [Beza Mahafaly](#) or [Mandena](#) to research human and lemur perspectives.
- Data Investigation: Compare human development data with lemur habitat loss or deforestation rates.
- Creative Writing: Write persuasive letters suggesting ways to support both local people and lemur populations.
- Virtual Guest Sessions: Watch or contact conservationists working in Madagascar for firsthand perspectives.



Amazing Ancient Animal Migrations

How did lemurs end up on Madagascar? Scientists believe they floated there on a vegetation mat sometime in their 55-million-year evolution!

Listen

- [Part 4: Why Do Lemurs Only Live in Madagascar?](#)

Amazingly, lemurs aren't the only animals to have traveled to new lands on floating vegetation mats!

Check out *Science Friday*'s segment [Ancient Iguanas Floated 5,000 Miles Across the Pacific](#) to learn more.

You can also [map the journey of marine animal migrations](#) and do the engineering activity, [“Can Animals Sail Across the Seas?”](#)

Watch

[this video](#) about the arrival and evolution of lemurs on the island of Madagascar.





Additional Resources

[How Did Lemurs Get to Madagascar? The Surprising Journey of These Unique Primates](#)

This article explains it concisely and offers links to several related articles and resources.

[How Are Lemurs and Madagascar Unique?](#)

Check out this article from the Lemur Conservation Network.

[Duke Lemur Center](#)

A global leader in lemur research, care, and conservation—and the organization where this week's guest, Faye Goodwin, works! A wealth of articles about all things lemur-related.

A few favorites:

- [Why Study Lemurs?](#)
- [Fossils Rewrite the Story of Lemur Origins](#)
- [Fossil Feature: Megaladapis](#) (the extinct giant lemur mentioned on the show)
- [All In the Family: Learning Lemur Classifications](#)
- [How Lemurs Are Laying the Groundwork for Interstellar Travel](#)

[Living Primates](#)

Learn what most living primates, including humans and lemurs, have in common in this article from the American Museum of Natural History.

[Adaptations of Lemurs](#) article from Sciencing.com

[National Geographic Kids Madagascar](#) article

Videos

[When Giant Lemurs Ruled Madagascar](#)

Discover the evolutionary story of the giant lemurs that once lived on Madagascar.

[Science Bulletins: Lemurs of Madagascar--Surviving on an Island of Change](#)

This American Museum of Natural History film follows scientists in Madagascar studying how lemurs adapt to changing forests and human impact.

[Overview: Madagascar Conservation Programs](#)

[Discover Madagascar: Africa's Island Apart](#)

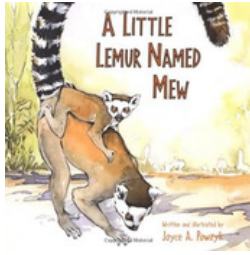
Most of Madagascar's wildlife exists nowhere else. Guide Rija Ratotonirinia shares how responsible tourism helps protect its rare species and forests.

[The Wild Wonders of Madagascar: A virtual field trip to the world's 4th largest island](#)

This recorded interview from WWF Wild Classroom is 45 minutes long.



Book List

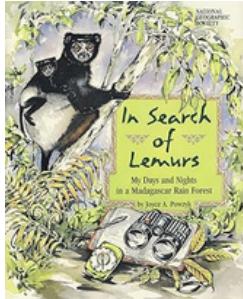


A Little Lemur Named Mew

by Joyce Ann Powzyk

Follow a young ring-tailed lemur and his troop as they explore Madagascar's unique forests.

ages 8+

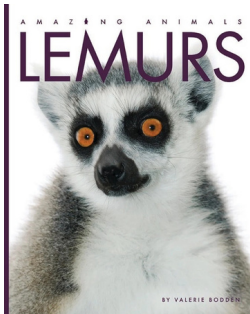


In Search of Lemurs

by Joyce Ann Powzyk

A naturalist shares her illustrated account of studying lemurs and other unique animals in Madagascar.

ages 8-12

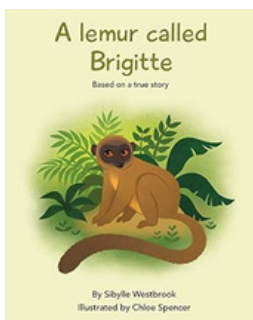


Amazing Animals: Lemurs

by Valerie Bodden

An introduction to lemurs—the leaping primates of Madagascar and the Comoros—with a folklore tale about their origins. [Available on Epic!](#)

ages 5-7

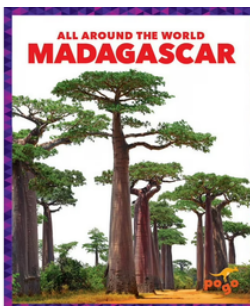


A Lemur Called Brigitte

by Sibylle Westbrook, illustrated by Chloe Spencer

Brigitte, a brown lemur from Madagascar, loses her forest and is captured by humans. Based on a true story, this tale explores conservation and the bond between animals and people.

ages 6-8



All Around the World: Madagascar

by Kristine Spanier

This book introduces Madagascar's unique geography, climate, culture, and resources with vivid photos, clear text, and questions to inspire curiosity. [Available on Epic!](#)

ages 8-10