

The Creature Vanishes

培生
英语阅读

消失的动物

The Creature Vanishes

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9



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Making Footprints

Follow these steps to make footprints never seen before!

You will need

- plaster of Paris
- water
- big spoon
- container for mixing
- plastic wrap or waxed paper
- soft clay

1. Place the clay on a sheet of plastic wrap or waxed paper. Press it into a thick slab.
2. Use your fist and fingers to shape a footprint down into the clay. Make it look like a creature stepped in the clay.
3. Mix a cup of water with two cups of plaster of Paris. Stir. Make enough to fill your footprint.
4. Spoon the plaster mixture into your footprint.
5. Wait an hour for the plaster to dry completely. Then peel away the clay. You will have a cast or model of your footprint.
6. Find an outdoor area with soft dirt or mud. Press your plaster cast into the ground to make your footprints.

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For Frances and Charles

Chapter 1



What Was That?

The day of the big field trip had finally arrived. It was a cool spring day with blue skies and bright sunshine. The school Ecology Club planned to spend the day exploring the forests and streams of nearby Big Mountain Park.

The school van stopped in the main parking lot. Luke Williams hurried to help unload the club's equipment when suddenly he heard a rustling sound in the bushes. He quickly looked up and **caught sight of** a tiny reddish-brown animal.



“Look, a chipmunk!” he yelled, as the small furry animal **scooted away**.

“We’ll see a lot of those little fellows,” said Mrs. Delgado. “The park is a good place for them to live.” Mrs. Delgado was a teacher and also the advisor for the Ecology Club, sometimes called EcoKids for short.

“That’s why we’re here, Mrs. D!” said Steve Alvarez. Steve and Luke had asked Mrs. Delgado if they could bring the school’s video camera. They were hoping to film some animals and their habitats, or living places.

Another project the club planned to do was to test the water in the Flint River. In Big Mountain Park the river was just a stream, much smaller than the river it became as it flowed through River City.

Mr. Baxter, the park **naturalist** and ranger, helped Karen Harper and Wendy Asato set up the testing equipment. “We’ll use pH paper to check the pH level of the water,” Mr. Baxter explained. “The pH measures certain chemicals in the water. It can tell us whether or not the water is healthy for plants and animals.”

As Mr. Baxter watched, Wendy **dipped** a small, clear glass bottle into the river and filled it with water. “Now dip the pH paper,” he said, handing her a small pink strip. “It will change color.”



Wendy took the **strip** of special paper and dipped it carefully in the water. When she took it out again, she looked to see what color it was.

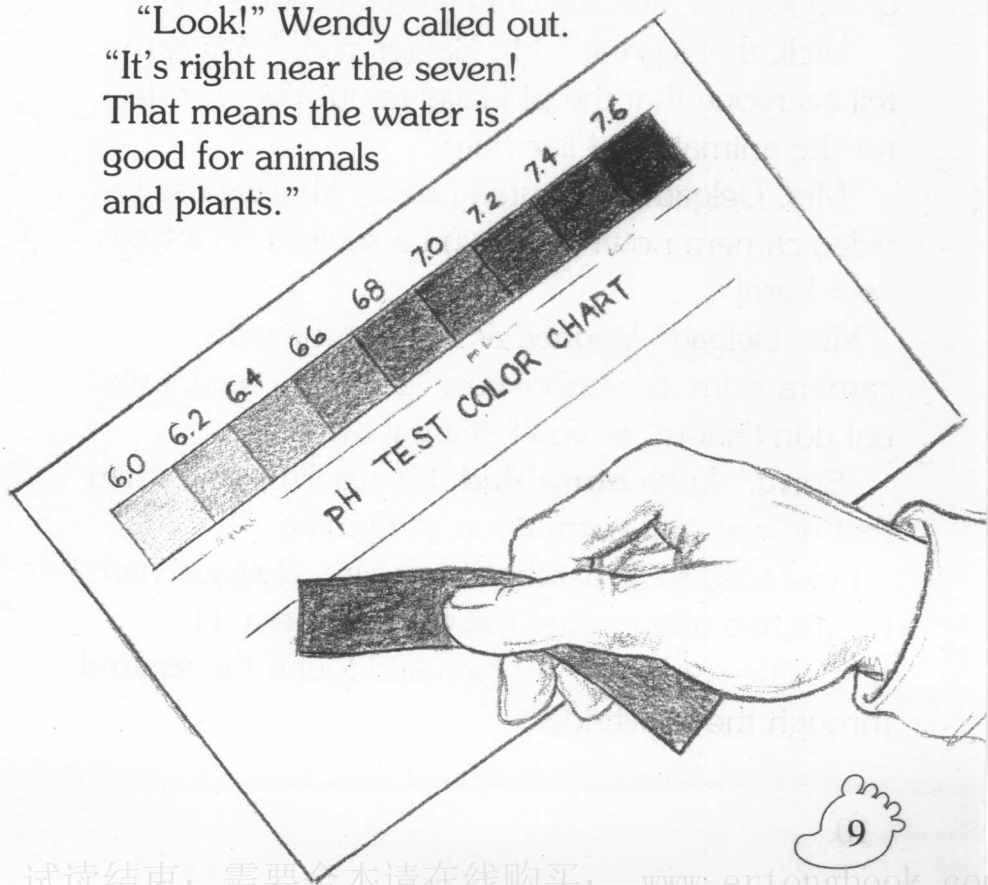


“Let’s match it to the colors on the pH color **chart**,” said Mr. Baxter. “We’re looking for a high pH, somewhere around seven. That’s normal water. A low pH is **acidic**, meaning the water has a lot of acid in it. That is not so healthy. Acidic water can kill plants and harm or kill the animals that live in the water, such as fish and frogs.”

“What would make the water acidic?” Karen wanted to know.

“Good question,” Mr. Baxter told her. “Different things can change the pH. Pollution from someone dumping waste into the river could lower the pH. If there’s smoke or other pollution in the air when it rains, the rain can carry those chemicals into the river water. It could even be something natural, such as an **underground volcano**, but that would be very unusual around here.”

“Look!” Wendy called out. “It’s right near the seven! That means the water is good for animals and plants.”



Karen opened her Nature **Log** notebook. She wrote down the date and place of the experiment and noted the result. She was always careful to record everything.

“That’s a good piece of news to put on the club’s **Web site**, Karen,” Mrs. Delgado said.

Mr. Baxter turned around. “The EcoKids have a Web site?” he asked

Karen nodded. “Mrs. Delgado is helping us. We’re calling it The River City **Almanac**. We’re going to post all kinds of news about River City.”

“Well, that’s great!” Mr. Baxter said. “You can tell everyone that the pH level in our river is safe for the animals that live here.”

“Mrs. Delgado!” shouted Luke. “May we use the video camera now? We found a squirrel on a tree over here!”

Mrs. Delgado laughed as she got the video camera from the school bus. “Sure you may, Luke, but don’t shout, or you’ll scare it away!”

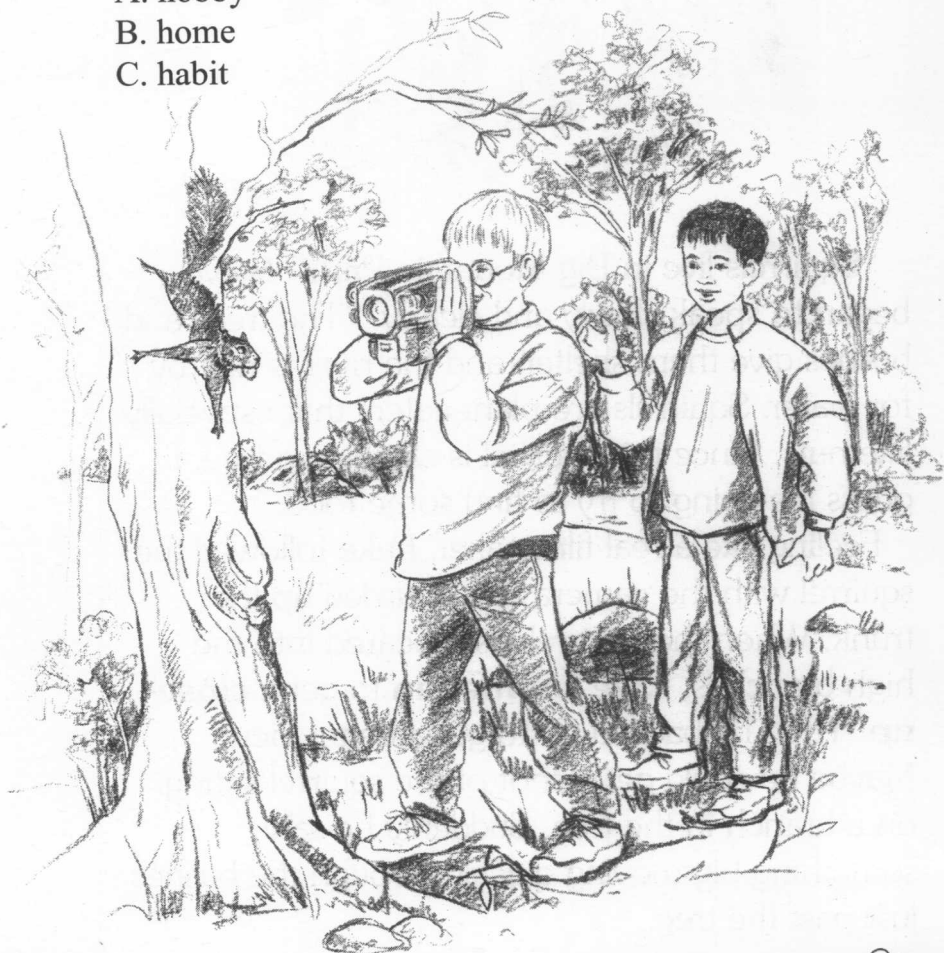
“Sorry,” Luke **mumbled**. He was just so excited that he was in a hurry to do everything.

Luke tried to remember what Mrs. Delgado had taught him about using the video camera. He raised the camera to his face and found the squirrel through the viewfinder.

The squirrel darted over to a tall tree, clinging to the bark with its claws. Luke followed its movements with the video camera. Steve was going to narrate the video, so he stood nearby and talked about the animal and its **habitat**.

habitat

- A. hobby
- B. home
- C. habit



Key: B



“Squirrels live in Big Mountain Park,” Steve began to speak slowly and clearly. “The trees and bushes give them shelter, and the river is nearby for water. Squirrels are plant eaters that especially like nuts. Since this squirrel is climbing a tree, I guess it’s going to try to find some food.”

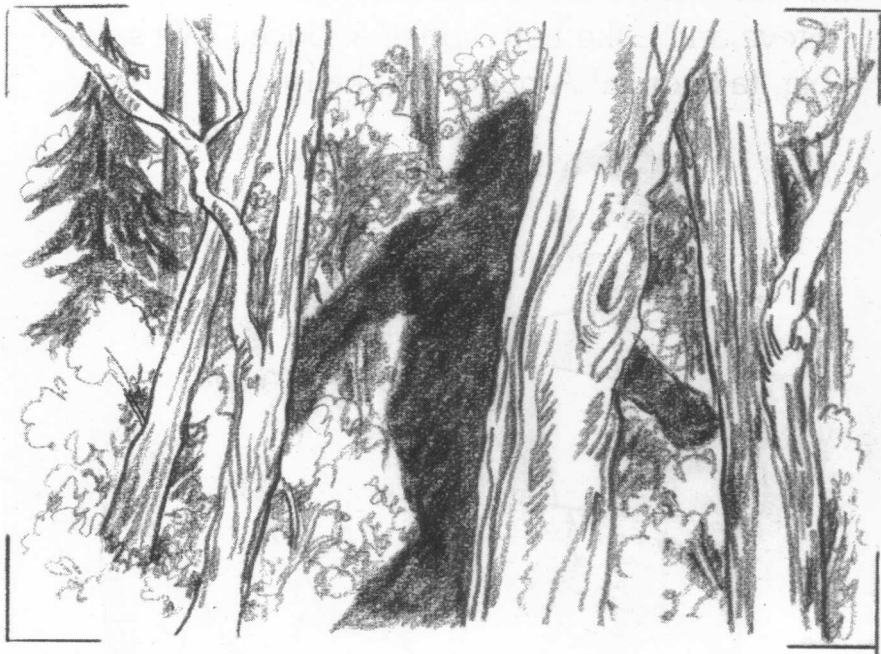
Feeling like a real filmmaker, Luke followed the squirrel with the camera as it scurried up the trunk. When the squirrel disappeared into the high branches, Luke **zoomed in** to get a **close-up**. Then he backed up to get a better view. Maybe he could get a shot of the squirrel sitting on a branch in the tree. Suddenly he saw something big moving quickly through the bushes just past the tree.

“Steve!” Luke **gasp**ed.

“I’m right here,” said Steve. He was standing next to Luke.

“What’s that?” asked Luke. He kept his eye on the viewfinder and pointed the camera toward the clump of bushes where he’d seen the movement.

For a split second, Luke and Steve both had a clear sighting of a tall, furry figure. Then it was gone. What had they seen?



What do you think Luke and his friends saw in Big Mountain Park?

Chapter 2

Signs of Bigfoot

“Wow!” shouted Steve, **losing** his usual **calm**. “Did you see that? I’ve never seen anything like that before! It must be some kind of gorilla!”

“It’s right here in Big Mountain Park!” added Luke excitedly.

“What’s going on?” asked Mrs. Delgado. She had heard Luke and Steve talking.

Steve and Luke both spoke at once. “We saw a big, tall gorilla! A huge, big, hairy . . .”





“Whoa, calm down!” said Mrs. Delgado.

Mr. Baxter, Wendy, and Karen came over to find out what the excitement was all about.

“I was **videotaping** the squirrel,” Luke began, “and I saw something moving way over there.” He pointed to the bushes.

“I saw it, too,” Steve added. “It looked like a big, tall gorilla.”

“Gorillas usually walk on all fours,” Wendy pointed out. “Did it walk on four legs or two?”

“It was walking like a person,” Luke said, “but it was a lot bigger than a person.”