Name: _____

Super Climbing Ringtails

By Guy Belleranti

I step outside my tent in Arizona's Chiricahua National Monument. Darkness has arrived and I flick on my flashlight. Glowing eyes meet mine. Then I see the whole animal, including the white and black bands on its long tail. I blink and the animal's gone, but the memory remains. [illegible] time I've seen a ringtail. [illegible] water, such as canyons, caves, hollow trees, abandoned animal burrows, and empty buildings. Sometimes, ringtails even den in the attic of an occupied home!

Ringtails are excellent climbers. Their long tails provide balance as they zip up cliffs, trees, and even tall Saguaro cacti. They have retractable claws and can turn their hind feet 180 degrees for a good grip when climbing down.

Large ears give ringtails great hearing. And big dark eyes provide excellent vision in the dark. Both are important because they are primarily nocturnal animals. This means they are active at night. Most of their activity is searching for food. They eat fruit and berries, rodents, lizards, snakes, insects, small birds, and bird eggs.

Some early settlers and prospectors [illegible] animals. However, individuals do communicate with loud barks, high pitched calls, and piercing screams. They also communicate by marking territory with their scent.

Ringtail mothers give birth to a litter of one to four babies in a den. The infants are helpless and don't open their eyes until a month old. The mother provides most of the care, though fathers sometimes play with the older young. Ringtails are mature at 10 months.

Ringtails are ecologically important in several ways. They help control rodent populations and spread seeds from the fruit they eat. They are also a food source for larger predators like bobcats, coyotes, and great horned owls.

Super Teacher Worksheets
Preview
Please log in to download
the printable version of this worksheet.

Name: _____

Super Climbing Ringtails

By Guy Belleranti

1. The first paragraph of the article is an example of what type of writing?

a. fictional narrative **b.** personal narrative
c. persuasive writing **d.** character description

2. In which state would you be *least* likely to find a ringtail living naturally?

a. California **b.** Arizona

Preview
Please log in to download the printable version of this worksheet.

4. How did the ringtail get the nicknames "ringtail cat" and "miner's cat"?

_____

_____

_____

5. Is the statement true or false?

Ringtails are a kind of cat. _____

6. Why are ringtails ecologically important?

a. They help control rodent populations.
b. They are a food source for great horned owls.
c. They spread seeds from fruit they eat.
d. All of the above.

Name: _____

Super Climbing Ringtails

By Guy Belleranti

The following terms are vocabulary words from the article. Match the vocabulary word with its correct definition by writing the corresponding letter on the line.

1. _____ abandoned

5. _____ rodents

6. _____ prospectors

7. _____ coati

8. _____ solitary

9. _____ mature

10. _____ ecologically

a. having to do with a science that deals with living things and their environments

e. an animal related to the raccoon and ringtail

f. able to be drawn in

g. active at night

h. people who explore areas, often looking for materials such as gold or oil

i. living alone

j. fully grown

Preview
Please log in to download the printable version of this worksheet.

Name: _____

Super Climbing Ringtails

By Guy Belleranti

In the article "Super Climbing Ringtails," you learned that ringtails sometimes den in the attics of homes. On the lines below, write a fictional story about a person finding a ringtail in their attic. Be creative!

Preview
Please log in to download
the printable version of this worksheet.

ANSWER KEY

Super Climbing Ringtails

By Guy Belleranti

1. The first paragraph of the article is an example of what type of writing?

   a. fictional narrative **b. personal narrative**

   c. persuasive writing **d.** character description

2. In which state would you be *least* likely to find a ringtail living naturally?

   a. California **b.** Arizona

Preview
Please log in to download the printable version of this worksheet.

4. How did the ringtail get the nicknames "ringtail cat" and "miner's cat"?

   Early settlers and prospectors used ringtails to catch rats and mice, which is something cats are known for doing.

5. Is the statement true or false?

   Ringtails are a kind of cat. **false**

6. Why are ringtails ecologically important?

   a. They help control rodent populations.

   b. They are a food source for great horned owls.

   c. They spread seeds from fruit they eat.

   d. All of the above.

ANSWER KEY

Super Climbing Ringtails

By Guy Belleranti

The following terms are vocabulary words from the article. Match the vocabulary word with its correct definition by writing the corresponding letter on the line.

1. **b.** abandoned
5. **c.** rodents
6. **h.** prospectors
7. **e.** coati
8. **i.** solitary
9. **j.** mature
10. **a.** ecologically

a. having to do with a science that deals with living things and their environments

e. an animal related to the raccoon and ringtail

f. able to be drawn in

g. active at night

h. people who explore areas, often looking for materials such as gold or oil

i. living alone

j. fully grown

Preview
Please log in to download the printable version of this worksheet.