



Maggie's Activity Pack

Name _____

Date _____

Tiger Tales for the Future

Tigers are the largest cats in the world. About 100 years ago, tigers roamed the great wild areas of central Asia to the Pacific coast of Russia. We think there were about 100,000 tigers in the world then. But, the current estimate of tiger numbers is between 3,000 and 4,500 for the entire world. Now they are endangered.

What happened to the tigers? Tiger habitat has been destroyed as forests have been cut down and trees removed. The habitat destruction also affects the prey species, like deer and other animals that tigers need as food to survive. Tigers have been hunted for their skins. With the loss of habitat, loss of food, and the poaching of tigers you might think people will no longer be able to see tigers. But there is some good news.

Many organizations, like the Wildlife Conservation Society, have made the tiger a priority for protection. They understand that in order to protect tigers they need to know important information about the tiger. This means understanding a tiger's food, its habitat, and how people affect tigers. This is not easy because the range of the tiger goes across many countries from India to Vietnam, China, and Russia.

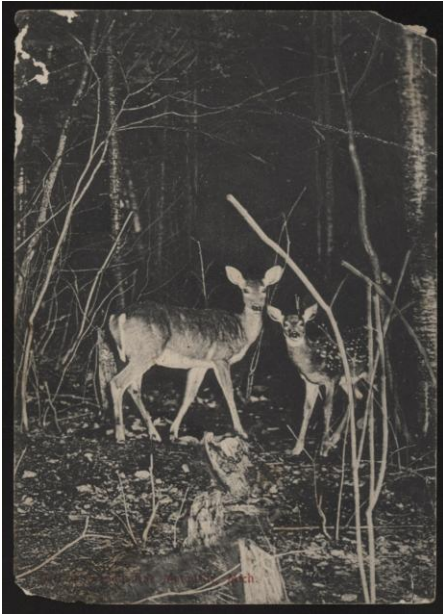
In India and Thailand, the Wildlife Conservation Society is having some success at protecting tigers. The number of tigers is on the rise. In India, scientists are working with the government and local communities to protect habitat. They are keeping poachers from tigers. An important part of the program protects deer and other species the tigers eat. When tigers have plenty of food, their numbers increase.

One important first step in protecting tigers is to understand how many tigers are in an area. The problem of doing this has been a great challenge. It is especially difficult for secretive animals like the tiger. But scientists have an old tool that has a new use – the camera.

For about 100 years, wildlife biologists have used camera traps. These are triggered to take a picture when an animal walks by it. But now, they camera traps have become even better. They can sense motion. Pictures are taken quickly. The camera can store many pictures. By studying these photos, biologists can better understand animals like tigers. They can tell when the same tiger is photographed more than once. By using this information, biologists use math formulas to estimate tiger population numbers. The math is the new breakthrough that is making a difference in finding out how many tigers are in an area. Scientists can then tell if the conservation programs are helping.

Math matters. Yes, it can be difficult for some of us, but what a great way to use formulas and numbers to restore one of the great wild cats on our planet Earth. New tools like camera traps and new math give us hope for endangered animals. They help us save tigers and other wild animals so they can roam free for everyone to see in the future.

Take a look at these two photos. The top one was taken a long time ago, perhaps in the 1930s. The bottom one was taken in 2013. Note the details you see in each photo. Then write about the differences.



What do you see in this photo?



What do you see in this photo?

How are these two photos different? What changes have been made in 80 years?

Dear Colleague,

This WAP was inspired by my husband's recent trip to India where he was lucky enough to see a tiger up close and personal. What an experience! It is one he hopes our grandchildren and their children will be fortunate enough to have, too, and the current tiger numbers give us hope! And **we hope** you will discuss the importance of new scientific tools. Improved camera traps along with integrating science and math can improve the chances of a species continued presence on Earth. Soon we will be all talking about Earth Day. This is one idea and activity you can use to help children think of the many ways we can save the habitat and animals of our planet for future generations.

We often have questions from colleagues about best ways to use our weekly activities in the classroom. We know many of you have pressing curricular mandates and that is why we offer our correlating goals to you each week. We hope you find creative ways to implement the weekly topics into your daily routine. We have mentioned that these WAPs can be wonderful activities for centers and know that many of you use them in your classrooms in this way. Friday afternoon is an inviting time to change up your routine. The WAPs are fantastic opportunities for sharing news and encouraging creative thought. We also suggest you duplicate a few activities, put them in Zip-Loc bags and have them ready for children who finish work early. They are meaningful ways to keep everyone in your class engaged and working toward achieving the goals set forth by national organizations.

Speaking of photographs, why not use them to your advantage in the classroom? Many of us struggle to keep our room looking neat and organized. When your room is in tip-top shape, take a few photos of areas that can become easily disheveled. Post the photos as a model to remind student helpers how the area should look. A picture is worth a thousand words and can save constant reminders!

Happy teaching,
Dr. Kathy

Answer Key:

Answers will vary. We hope you will ask children to share their observations and then add to their answers, if needed, based on their discussions. Please note that we have left the tiger photo in color. If you are duplicating the activity you may want to show the original color photo or you may simply ask children to ignore the color/black and white aspects when analyzing the photographs.

Goals:

Children will read a nonfiction article about tigers and the efforts to save them. The activity highlights new tools such as camera traps and mathematical formulas that aid wildlife biologists in counting and understanding tiger populations and behaviors. A follow-up activity uses photos from camera traps to encourage thought about technology changes and improvements that have taken place over the years. This activity is available on the emergent, primary and intermediate levels and correlates with Content Standard C, Life Science, and Content Standard F, Science in Personal and Social Perspectives of the National Science Standards.