



Grades 3–5

Theme:  
**STEM**

**LINK TO COMMON CORE  
READING STANDARD FOR  
INFORMATIONAL TEXT 4  
(Grades 3–5):**

Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to grade-appropriate topics or subject areas.

**OBJECTIVE:**

Students will read facts and information about animals, and learn what makes these animals dangerous.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:**

- *Dangerous Creature Records*
- Writing paper
- Pencils

**VITAL VOCABULARY:**

- Species
- Venom
- Predator
- Hostile

# DANGEROUS CREATURE RECORDS

## Before Reading



5 min

**1. Have students look at the cover of the book and read the title aloud. Ask:**

- Look at the seal next to the title. What do you think “Top 10” means? *(Possible answers: We will read records about 10 different animals; we will read about the 10 most dangerous animals.)*
- What animal do you see on the cover? *(crocodile or alligator)* Why do you think this photo was chosen for the cover? *(The animal looks dangerous. It has a very huge mouth with many sharp, large, pointy teeth.)*

**2. Have students read the back cover of the book. Ask:**

- How does the back cover make you want to read the book? *(It asks some fascinating questions and highlights interesting words.)* What specific animals will you learn about? *(ants, sharks, lizards, snakes, poisonous fish)*

## During Reading



25 min

**After reading the pages in each section, direct students to use the text and photographs to support their answers to your questions.**

**1. Read the introduction on pages 1–3. Say:**

- How does the author include humor at the beginning of the book? *(with a warning that the record-breakers may cause readers to run away and hide)*
- Look at the picture on page 2. Why do you think this crocodile’s eyes are on top of its head? Use clues in the picture to help you answer. *(Possible answers: so the crocodile can swim under water while it looks at things above water; so the crocodile can hide under water and sneak up on other animals)*
- How do animals protect themselves? *(They use claws, fangs, stingers, or spray poisons.)*
- How are the fiercest animals like people? *(They do not like fights. They just try to keep their homes and families safe.)*

**2. Read pages 4–9. Ask:**

- How does the book show important vocabulary? *(by bolding and italicizing words and by setting words in a different color, such as white)*
- Why do you think the author included some text in colored circles? *(to highlight important information or interesting facts)*

## During Reading (continued)

- Look at the picture on page 5. Why is there a ruler shown below the bird's foot? (*so the reader can understand exactly how long the sharp claws are*)
- Look at the picture on page 7. What is the king cobra doing? How do you know? (*It is eating another snake. A snake's tail is coming out of the king cobra's mouth.*)
- Why does the author compare the length of the king cobra to the length of a car? (*so readers can get a better sense of exactly how long the king cobra is*)

### 3. Read pages 10–13. Ask:

- Look at the picture on page 11. How are the colors and patterns on the snake useful to others? (*Bright colors and patterns make the snake noticeable to others, and warn them not to come near the snake.*)
- Look at the picture on page 12. What does it look like the spider is doing? (*Possible answer: holding down another animal and biting it to kill it*)
- Look at the photograph on page 13. Describe what the people are wearing. (*special headgear and gloves, suits that cover the rest of their bodies*) Why are they dressed that way? (*so they won't get stung by a swarm of bees*)

### 4. Read pages 14–20. Ask:

- Why are the Africanized bees called “killer bees”? (*The bees are hostile; they chase and attack people. Also, they don't just sting once—they keep stinging and injecting poison until the victim dies.*)
- Look at the picture on page 15. Describe what it happening in this picture. (*The Australian sea wasp has captured something in its tentacles.*) What do you think will happen to the creature it caught? Use details in the text to tell why you think this. (*Possible answer: The creature will die because the Australian sea wasp's tentacles are covered with poisonous stinging cells.*)
- Use the photograph and text on page 18 to tell why the Venus flytrap is considered a carnivore. (*Its leaves snap shut and trap insects to eat.*)

### Read pages 21–25. Ask:

- Compare the animals in the photographs on pages 22–24. What is the same about the animals? (*They all have sharp teeth.*) Why is each so dangerous? (*The shark has 3,000 teeth; the tiger has sharp claws and jaws; piranha attack in groups and start eating right away.*)

- What are some ways nature warns us about dangerous creatures? (*Some animals have bright colors or pointy edges.*)

### 5. Read pages 26–30. Ask:

- Look at the picture on page 26. Based on what you read in the text, what do you think is happening in the picture? (*Possible answer: A hunter is rubbing a dart on the frog's poisonous skin to make a poisonous dart for hunting.*)
- Look at the picture on page 28. What has the first fish done to make it look different from the second fish? Use details in the text to support your answer. (*It sucks up water to inflate its body. Its scales puff out into dangerous spines.*)

## After Reading



25 min

### CONNECT TO LANGUAGE ARTS: Write a Riddle

Have students page through the book to help them recall which creatures were featured. Tell students to use the following format to write a riddle about one of the animals: “I am a ferocious fish. I travel in schools when I attack my prey. I have razor-sharp teeth that fit together like puzzle pieces. What am I?” (*a piranha*) Encourage students to use vocabulary from the book in their riddles. Have students read their riddles aloud for the rest of the group to solve.

## wrap up



5 min

Have students tell what they learned about dangerous creatures. Discuss why it is important to know which creatures to avoid. **Ask:**

- Which creature did you think was the scariest? Why? (*Accept any reasonable answers.*)
- How did the photographs help you understand what you read about the animals? (*It helped to be able to see what each creature really looks like.*)