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# Lions, Lions, Lions

by Laura Lodge

Printable text • Modelling slides • Photocopiable text and questions • pages 28 to 31

Lions are one of the most recognisable wild animals and one that children will often name first when asked. This text summarises some information about lions in an easy-to-understand report format with clear subheadings. The children will probably already know a few basic facts about lions, but this interesting text should engage them and make them want to find out more. This unit is linked to [Unit 2](#), which features a fictional lion. After completing both units, you may wish to compare the two texts.

## 1 Get ready

Discuss the **Key vocabulary** identified in the **Language toolkit** and then complete the vocabulary and phonics activities as desired. Please note that the selected vocabulary is a guide. Depending on the needs of your cohort, additional vocabulary discussion may be beneficial before, during and after reading. Next, display the text (pages 28 to 29) so the children can see the title and any illustrations, and encourage the children to discuss the following questions before reading.

- 1 What type of text is this? How do you know?**  
*An information text/non-fiction. Answers will vary regarding 'How do you know?' (e.g. I know this because it tells us facts about lions. Some children may refer to the subheadings; these will be discussed in First steps).*
- 2 What do you already know about lions?**  
*Answers will vary, though it is likely that discussion will focus on basic facts about lions (e.g. they have manes; they live in Africa; they roar).*
- 3 Have you read any other books about lions?**  
*Answers will vary but should link to other texts the children have read. You may wish to encourage the children to think about both non-fiction and fiction.*
- 4 What is one new thing you would like to find out about lions from this text?**  
*Answers will vary. Try to come back to this question during Explore on page 25. At that point, you could ask the children whether the text taught them any of the new things they were hoping to find out.*

### Language toolkit

**Key vocabulary**

conserve	declining	extinction
ferocious	skilled	vulnerable

**Vocabulary discussion questions**

- What is the difference between a **ferocious** lion and a friendly one?
- Which animals are at risk of **extinction**? What can we do to **conserve** them?
- What are you **skilled** at?

**Vocabulary activities**

- Encourage the children to pretend to be **ferocious** lions.
- Use one of the vocabulary activities on page 15 to investigate some of the key words above.

**Phonics**

Decoding support words	acacia, communicate, ferocious, national, noticeable, scavengers
High frequency words	Decodable: about, by, day, old, very Tricky: called, people, there
Common exception words	every, grass, many, most, old, only, our, people, who, whole, wild

**Phonics activity**

How many words can the children spot that have the split digraph 'a-e'?

## 2 First steps

Read the text together and then encourage the children to discuss the following questions.

- 1 What was your favourite fact you learnt about lions from the text? Why?**  
*Answers will vary. Ensure the children explain their opinions using the text.*
- 2 [Point to the first subheading.] What is this called?**  
*It is a subheading. The children may call it a title or a heading instead. Ask the children to point to each subheading in turn. You could point out the main text heading to highlight the difference.*
- 3 The first subheading is about how lions behave. What information does this section give us?**  
*Answers will vary but should be found within this section only. Encourage the children to use their own words (e.g. what lions do; who they live with; what their families are like; what their babies are called).*
- 4 In which section would I find information about the food that lions like best?**  
*In the What do lions eat? section.*
- 5 Did you like the text? Why? Why not?**  
*Answers will vary but encourage the children to explain their answers (e.g. I liked it because it told me lots of new facts).*

## 3 Explore

- Compare the text to another example of a non-fiction text about lions (you may want to use the **Reading list** suggestions). Discuss the similarities and differences. Are there any features the children could add to make the unit text more engaging or useful (e.g. illustrations, diagrams, tables, photographs, glossary)? The children could work together in groups to improve sections of the text and present these to the class.
- Watch a video clip of lions. Together, compare this with the text – does it match? If it is different, discuss what they might want to find out more about and which section of the text they could add this to.
- Discuss where else lions live apart from in the wild (try to elicit zoos/animal sanctuaries). Have the children ever been to a zoo? What are the children's feelings about zoos? Discuss their opinions together.

## 4 Skills focus

See pages 26 to 27

Use the information from the **Skills guide** and the relevant **Skills graphic** to introduce the skill of retrieval.

- 1** Model the skill using the **Unit 1 Modelling slides** and the **Modelling retrieval** guidance on page 26.
- 2** The children can then attempt the **Retrieval** questions on page 30.
- 3** Finally, the **Mix it up!** questions on page 31 offer practice in a range of comprehension skills.

Answers and marking guidance for all questions are included on pages 26 to 27.

## 5 Where next?

- Speaking and listening task:** Model using the text to draw an illustration of a pride of lions in their natural habitat. The children could work independently or in pairs to draw their own illustrations, using only the information in the text. They could then verbally compare their drawings with each other, as well as looking at further illustrations of lions, discussing their similarities and differences.
- Writing task:** The children could create their own 'Look after the lions' posters to encourage conservation and avoid extinction. They could also find out about other animals that are vulnerable to extinction.

### Reading list

- Fiction**
  - ▶ *How to be a Lion* by Ed Vere
  - ▶ *There's a Lion in My Cornflakes* by Michelle Robinson (Linked text: [Unit 2](#))
- Class reads**
  - ▶ *We're Going on a Lion Hunt* by David Axtell
- Non-fiction**
  - ▶ *National Geographic Kids Readers: Lions* by Laura Marsh
- Poetry**
  - ▶ *The Bad Child's Book of Beasts* by Hilaire Belloc
  - ▶ *National Geographic Book of Animal Poetry* by J. Patrick Lewis
- Films**
  - ▶ *The Wild* (Walt Disney Pictures, 2006)
- TV series**
  - ▶ *The Zoo* (BBC, 2017– )



Modelling retrieval

See Unit 1 Modelling slides

Use the Skills guide (see pages 16 to 17) and the downloadable Skills graphic to support your modelling.

1 What two other names can a lion be called? Tick two.

- Panthera leo ☒
- king of the jungle ☐
- king of the beasts ☒
- Leo the lion ☐

Read the question together and ask the children how many pieces of information we're looking for (two). Model identifying the key words in the question and the possible answers and scanning the text for them. Explain that comprehension questions usually follow the sequence of the story, so this answer is likely to be found towards the start of the text as this is the first question. You could use 'Fastest finger first' (see page 17) to show exactly where the answer can be found. Some children may attempt to use their own knowledge. If so, ask them to point to the information in the text. Finally, model following the instruction to 'tick two' by model ticking two options.

2 From how far away can a lion's roar be heard?

from up to 5 miles away

Read the question together and model identifying the key words (e.g. how far, roar, heard) and scanning for them in the text. If the children answer '10' or '15', which occur in the previous sentence, read the previous sentence aloud and ask the children what it is about. Continue by reading the relevant sentence. Think aloud: *Is this sentence about roaring? Does it tell us the answer?* Ask the children to point to the correct answer. If the children answer '5', remind them that the question asks 'how far', not how many. If they answer '5 miles', encourage them to use the text to expand their answer.

3 This text tells us what lions look like. What are lions known for apart from their fur, teeth and claws?

(furry) tufts at the end of their tails

Read the question together and model identifying the key words. Point out that the question is focusing on what lions look like. Think aloud: *What section could we look in to find the answer to this question?* Discuss what 'known for' means. Some children may answer 'tail'. If so, ask them to read the sentence aloud. Think aloud: *What does it say about the tail? What is special about it?* The children may also answer 'mane'. If so, reread the text together, scanning for the words 'known for'. Remind the children that when we retrieve information, we take it straight from the text.

4 How do lions hunt their prey?

The females work together.

Read the question together and model identifying the key words (e.g. how, prey). Discuss what 'prey' means. Think aloud: *What section could we look in to find the answer to this question?* Model finding the section **What do lions eat?** Some children may answer 'they work together' without referencing the female lions. If so, model writing this answer and then ask the children to read the whole sentence again to check whether you are missing any details. Remind them that we need to include all the relevant information from the text (e.g. the females work together, not all lions).

Retrieval questions mark scheme

See page 30

Answer	Guidance
1 their roar	Some children may use 'tufts' from later in the text. This should not be accepted. Remind the children to use the locator (the second sentence) to help them. <b>Award 1 mark for any reference to their roar.</b>

Answer	Guidance
2 to communicate	Some children may use their knowledge to infer scaring something; this should not be accepted as the text does not say this. <b>Award 1 mark for any reference to using roaring to communicate. Also accept 'talk', 'warn' or other plausible synonyms.</b>
3 It gets darker.	Some children may answer 'gets longer' but this should not be accepted as it is extrinsic knowledge. <b>Award 1 mark for any reference to the mane getting darker. Also accept a reference to the mane changing colour.</b>
4 Africa <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> India <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Some children may tick only one country. If so, encourage them to go back and check what the question asks for. <b>Award 1 mark for both correct answers ticked.</b>
5 meat/medium-sized animals/zebras/wildebeest/buffaloes/dead animals	Some children may answer 'animals' – this should not be accepted as it is a vague response that can be guessed rather than using the text. If so, encourage the children to be more specific and use the text to help them. The children may use 'carnivore' or 'scavenger'; if so, this vocabulary needs to be clarified with them. <b>Award 1 mark for 2 or more correct answers.</b>

Mix it up! questions mark scheme

See page 31

Answer	Guidance
1 scared because they don't have their family to look after them	Some children may link their answer to their own feelings – accept this response but discuss it to clarify their understanding of the text. <b>Award 1 mark for a plausible emotion and 1 mark for an explanation linked to the text. Skill: Inference.</b>
2 They are a cub. <input type="text"/> They join up with other males. <input type="text"/> They look for a new pride together. <input type="text"/> They have to leave their pride. <input type="text"/>	Some children may benefit from finding, highlighting and numbering each event in the text before filling in the answer boxes. They could also order the events as a group or physically, using strips of paper. <b>Award 1 mark for the correct numbers in all boxes. Skill: Sequencing.</b>
3 about 12 years old	Some children may answer by referring to the lion in captivity who lived until she was 25. If so, point out that this question asks when lions 'usually' live to, meaning lions in the wild. <b>Award 1 mark for any reference to 12 years old. Skill: Retrieval.</b>
4 grasslands	Some children may answer by referring to acacia trees. If so, point out that the text says the trees grow in the grasslands where the lions live. <b>Award 1 mark for any reference to grassland(s). Skill: Word meaning.</b>
5 No – because they are beautiful animals. OR Yes – because their numbers are declining.	Ideally, reasons will come solely from the text (e.g. references to conservation or people). However, use of some extrinsic knowledge is to be expected. <b>Award 1 mark for a plausible answer and justification. Skill: Prediction.</b>



## Lions, Lions, Lions, by Laura Lodge

This is a text about the king of the beasts: the lion. It tells the reader lots of facts about how lions live.

Lions (*Panthera leo*) are the second biggest members of the 'big cat' family. Often called the kings of the beasts, they are known for their ferocious roar. Sadly, the number of lions in the world is declining and they are vulnerable to extinction.

### How do lions behave?

Lions live in prides, which are groups of between 10 and 15 lions. They communicate by roaring and their roars can be heard up to 5 miles away! When a lion is born, it is called a cub. Female cubs will stay with the same pride their whole lives, but male cubs are forced to leave when they are about 2 years old. They then form their own pride of males, who look for a bigger pride to join. Lions spend most of their day sleeping – sometimes for up to 20 hours. They usually live until they are about 12 years old in the wild but a lion called Zenda lived in captivity until she was 25!

### What do lions look like?

Lions are known for their sandy fur, sharp teeth and claws, and furry tufts at the ends of their tails. Males are noticeable due to their long manes, which get darker as a lion gets older. The length of an adult lion can be up to 3.5m from nose to tail and they can weigh up to 250kg!

### Where do lions live?

Lions live in grasslands (or savannahs) that have acacia trees for shade. Thousands of years ago, lions lived in many parts of the world. However, they now only live in some parts of Africa and West India. Many live in protected areas such as national parks where people are working to conserve their numbers.

### What do lions eat?

Lions are carnivores, which means they eat meat. They are skilled hunters and the females work together to catch medium-sized animals such as zebras, buffaloes and wildebeest. They can run up to 81km per hour, which is very helpful for catching their dinner! They are also scavengers, which means they eat animals that have already died, either from illness or by being killed by other predators. Did you know that lions need to eat up to 7kg of meat every day?





Retrieval

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1 Look at the second sentence. What are lions known for?

\_\_\_\_\_

1 mark

2 Look at the section **How do lions behave?**. Why do lions roar?

\_\_\_\_\_

1 mark

3 Look at the section **What do lions look like?**. What happens to its mane as a lion gets older?

\_\_\_\_\_

1 mark

4 Look at the section **Where do lions live?**. Which parts of the world do lions live in now? Tick **two**.

Africa ☐

America ☐

India ☐

England ☐

1 mark

5 What do lions eat? Give **two** things.

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

1 mark

Mix it up!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1 Look at the section **How do lions behave?**. How do you think the male lions feel when they are forced to leave? Why?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2 marks

2 Male lions have a different life to female lions. Number the events to show the order in which they happen in a male lion's life. One has been done for you.

They are a cub.

1

They join up with other males.

They look for a new pride together.

They have to leave their pride.

1 mark

3 Look at the section **How do lions behave?**. What age do lions usually live to?

\_\_\_\_\_

1 mark

4 Look at the section **Where do lions live?**. What is another word for *savannahs*?

\_\_\_\_\_

1 mark

5 Do you think lions will go extinct? Tick **one**.

Yes

☐

No

☐

Why?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1 mark