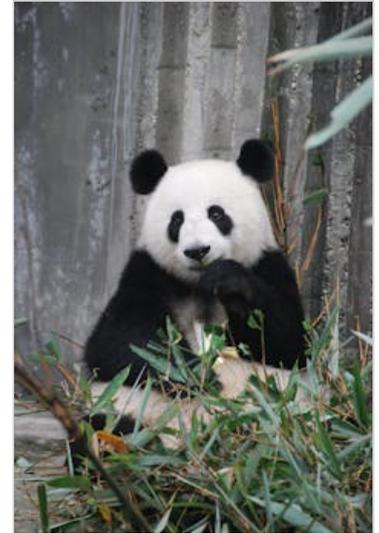


Giant Pandas - China's Treasures

ESL Reading Worksheet — Level F | tahricteaches.com

Giant pandas are one of the most beloved and **recognizable** animals on our planet today. These beautiful bears are famous for their black and white fur that makes them look so unique. Giant pandas live only in the mountain forests of central China, making them extremely **rare** creatures. They can weigh up to three hundred pounds and stand about five feet tall when fully grown. China considers giant pandas to be **national** treasures and works hard to protect them from harm.



Unlike most bears, giant pandas eat almost nothing but **bamboo** throughout their entire lives. An adult panda must eat up to eighty pounds of bamboo every single day to survive. They spend about twelve hours daily just eating because bamboo does not provide much **nutrition** or energy. Pandas have a special thumb-like bone that helps them grip bamboo stalks while eating their meals. Despite being classified as **carnivores**, pandas rarely eat meat and prefer their vegetarian bamboo diet instead.

Baby pandas are incredibly tiny and **vulnerable** when they are first born in the wild. Newborn pandas weigh only about four ounces, which is as small as a stick of butter. They are born pink, blind, and completely helpless, depending entirely on their mothers for survival. The mother panda holds her baby constantly for the first few months to keep it warm. Baby pandas start eating bamboo around six months old but stay with their mothers for two years.

Giant pandas were once **endangered** with fewer than one thousand left in the wild during the eighties. Conservation programs in China have worked for decades to protect panda **habitats** and breed more pandas. Thanks to these efforts, the panda population has slowly increased to over eighteen hundred today. Pandas born in zoos are sometimes released into the wild to help boost natural populations further. The giant panda has become a powerful **symbol** of wildlife conservation efforts around the world.

Zoos around the world pay China to borrow pandas for their visitors to see and admire. These panda loans help raise money and **awareness** for conservation programs back in China. Millions of people visit zoos specifically to see these adorable black and white bears in person. Pandas help educate people about the importance of protecting endangered species everywhere. By saving pandas, we also protect the forests and other animals that share their mountain homes.

A. Vocabulary

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1. recognizable _____ | a. easy to identify or remember |
| 2. rare _____ | b. knowledge and understanding of something |
| 3. national _____ | c. a tall, woody grass eaten by pandas |
| 4. bamboo _____ | d. animals that are meant to eat meat |
| 5. nutrition _____ | e. belonging to an entire country |
| 6. carnivores _____ | f. food value needed for health and growth |
| 7. vulnerable _____ | g. weak and easily hurt or harmed |
| 8. endangered _____ | h. not found very often; uncommon |
| 9. habitats _____ | i. natural homes where animals live |

10. awareness _____

j. at risk of dying out completely

B. True or False

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Giant pandas live in forests across Asia. _____ | 2. Pandas can weigh up to three hundred pounds. _____ | 3. Pandas eat about eighty pounds of bamboo daily. _____ |
| 4. Baby pandas are large and strong when born. _____ | 5. Pandas are classified as carnivores. _____ | 6. There were fewer than 1,000 pandas in the 1980s. _____ |
| 7. Panda populations have decreased recently. _____ | 8. Zoos pay China to borrow pandas. _____ | 9. Pandas spend about twelve hours eating each day. _____ |

C. Fill in the Blanks

Word Bank: recognizable, rare, bamboo, nutrition, vulnerable, endangered, habitats

1. Giant pandas are one of the most _____ animals on Earth.
2. These bears are extremely _____ and live only in China.
3. Pandas eat almost nothing but _____ throughout their lives.
4. Baby pandas are very _____ and helpless when first born.
5. Conservation programs work to protect panda _____ in the wild.

D. Comprehension Questions

1. Where do giant pandas live in the wild?
2. How much bamboo does an adult panda eat each day?
3. Why do pandas spend so many hours eating?
4. How small are baby pandas when they are born?
5. How have conservation programs helped panda populations?

E. Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think pandas are so popular around the world?
 2. Should zoos keep pandas, or should all pandas live in the wild?
 3. What other endangered animals do you think need more protection?
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Answer Key

A. Vocabulary: 1-a, 2-h, 3-e, 4-c, 5-f, 6-d, 7-g, 8-j, 9-i, 10-b

B. True/False: 1-F, 2-T, 3-T, 4-F, 5-T, 6-T, 7-F, 8-T, 9-T

C. Fill Blanks: 1-recognizable, 2-rare, 3-bamboo, 4-vulnerable, 5-habitats

D. Comprehension: 1. In the mountain forests of central China; 2. Up to 80 pounds; 3. Because bamboo does not provide much nutrition or energy; 4. About 4 ounces (as small as a stick of butter); 5. They protected habitats, bred more pandas, and increased population to over 1,800