



LION ACTIVITIES AND LESSON PLAN

4th - 6th Grade Class

To help children learn about lions and their plight — and why lions matter — Born Free USA has put together this lesson plan for 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students. We use interesting facts and engaging in-class activities to get kids thinking about the king of the jungle, and how they can make a difference just by being aware of the importance of lions to our planet.

Teach Kids About Lions with this “True or False” Game

Ask the children to keep track of how many answers they get right. Then, with a show of hands for the most right answers, declare them “king of the jungle” or “queen of the jungle.”

SIZE:

- > *True or False:* Lions can weigh up to 500 pounds. *True* >> Lions weigh from 350–500 pounds.
- > *True or False:* Lions are the biggest cats. *False* >> The tiger is the biggest cat — but not by much. Lions can be a bit taller than tigers, but don't weigh as much (so they're not as big).
- > *True or False:* Lions make great pets. *False* >> While lions may be called “big cats,” they are not like our domestic cats with whom we share our homes. Not only are lions 30 times bigger than house cats, they are truly wild animals who can be dangerous. Lions are not able to happily live in confined areas.

(NEXT)

DAY TO DAY:

- > *True or False:* Lions spend most of their days hunting. *False* >> Lions spend most of their days sleeping. Have students guess how many hours lions sleep each day. (The answer: 16-20 hours per day.) Ask students: "Can you imagine sleeping that much? You would only have four hours to eat, hang with friends, and come to school. Do any of you notice your pet cats sleeping that much?"
- > *True or False:* Lions are good swimmers. *True* >> Unlike most pet cats, lions are good swimmers and seem to enjoy the water.
- > *True or False:* Lions live for around 35 years. *False* >> Lions live for around 14 years.
- > *True or False:* The male lion does most of the hunting for food, while the female lion stays back to protect the pride. (A group of lions is called a "pride.") *False* >> The female lion does 80-90% of the hunting while the male lion stays back to guard the pride.
- > *True or False:* A lion can run up to 50 mph. *True* >> But, only in short bursts.
- > *True or False:* A male lion's roar can be heard up to five miles away. *True*.

HOME:

- > *True or False:* A lion's home is in Asia. *False* >> Lions live in Africa. If you have a map in the classroom, ask the students to point out Africa.
- > *True or False:* Lions live in the jungle. *False* >> Even though the lion is often called "king of the jungle," a lion's homeland is made up of desert and grassland in Africa.
- > *True or False:* Lions claim a home territory of up to 10 square miles. *False* >> Lions claim up to 100 square miles for their home territory!
- > *True or False:* Only male lions grow manes. *True* >> A male lion's mane will begin to grow at 18 months of age and will continue to grow until he is five years old.
- > *True or False:* Swahili is a language in Africa, and in Swahili, the word for lion is "simba." *True*.



A LIONESS STRETCHING ON A TREE

FUTURE:

- > *True or False:* Lions are in trouble. There are fewer than 32,000 remaining in the wild in Africa. *True* >> That's why lions need our help! 32,000 lions could fit in the seats of a medium-sized sports stadium... That's not very many lions left in their wild homes.
- > *True or False:* It is legal to kill a lion and to keep the head as a "trophy" to hang on someone's wall. *True* >> Sadly, lions are losing their homeland to human development and losing their lives to "trophy" hunting, which is still legal. And, unfortunately, the United States is one of the world's largest importers of lion "trophies" and parts of their bodies.
- > *True or False:* Each one of you can help lions. *True!* >> Just by learning about lions and sharing what you've learned with your family and friends, you help lions. The more people learn about lions, the more they'll want to help save them. Lions are listed as "endangered" and "threatened" under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, so they need all of our help. Another great way to help lions is to draw a picture of a lion and share it. (See below.)

Now, Have Kids Fill in the Blanks!

Now that the children have heard some facts about lions, see how much they remember with this fill-in-the blank story. You can either read it aloud and have them call out their answers, or hand out the attached form for each child to fill in the blanks himself/herself.



PHOTO: KEITH WILLETTE

2 LION CUBS PLAYING

Lions are called “king of the jungle,” but they live in (Africa) in grasslands or deserts. They are big cats that can weigh up to 500 pounds, but there is one cat that is bigger: the (tiger). The one thing that lions spend most of their day doing is (sleeping). They can sleep up to 20 hours per day... Talk about a cat nap! But, they do NOT make good:

- ballerinas
- airline pilots
- pets
- football players
- all of the above.

Swahili is a language in Africa and the word “lion” is actually (simba). If a lion is out hunting, that animal will likely be the (female) lion while the (male) lion stays back to guard his (pride). But, lions are in trouble. They’re considered endangered and threatened. However, I promise to help them by sharing what I’ve learned today. I think lions are _____ !

Play a Born Free Song & Slide Show: See if the kids will sing the chorus

If you have access to internet in your classroom, before the kids make their artwork, this simple slide show (under three minutes) shows photographs of lions in the wild and plays the “Born Free” song. This will help them see what lions look like and learn the Born Free name, which is the wildlife organization that is helping lions (https://youtu.be/Rb2Awn_dYTt).



PHOTO: BORN FREE USA / ZIBBY WILDER

(NEXT)

Lion Art Activities

a) DRAW A LION - Print out blank drawing pages, included on the next page of this packet.

- > If some of the kids are feeling stuck drawing a “freehand” lion picture, there is also a step-by-step of “How to Draw a Lion” that you can print and pass out to those who would like a bit more direction.
- > Let students know that, after they are done with their artwork, you’ll send it to Born Free USA: a wildlife group that helps lions. (Scan to info@bornfreeusa.org or mail to: Born Free USA/ Lion drawings P.O. Box 32160 Washington, D.C. 20007.) Their artwork will be displayed on the Born Free USA website to help other students and people learn about and appreciate lions, and to inspire people to help save them.
- > Artwork will be displayed on Born Free USA’s “Year of the Lion” page: www.bornfreeusa.org/yearofthelion.

b) MAKE A LION NOTE HOLDER

Materials: Yellow and orange construction paper, black markers, scissors, glue, and two clothes pins per child

1. Out of the yellow construction paper, have the kids cut a circle (about four inches for the lion’s head/mane), a smaller oval (about an inch for the lion’s face), and one even smaller circle, cut in half (for the ears). Draw a lion face on the oval.
2. Next, cut the orange paper into about 15–20 strips: each under a half an inch tall and three inches long. To make the lion’s mane, the kids will coil each of these thin strips up. Glue each coil onto the large yellow circle. Now, glue the oval (face) on top of the coiled-paper mane and the two small half circles at the top for the ears.
3. Now, turn it over. On the back of the yellow circle, glue the two clothes pins to the back, with the grabby part of the pin facing up (so it can hold a note) and the bottom of the pins even, so the lion can stand up.
4. Have kids write a note to their mom, dad, or whomever they’d like to give the lion note holder to. Or, they can keep it for themselves and write a note to save lions and not to forget their homework!

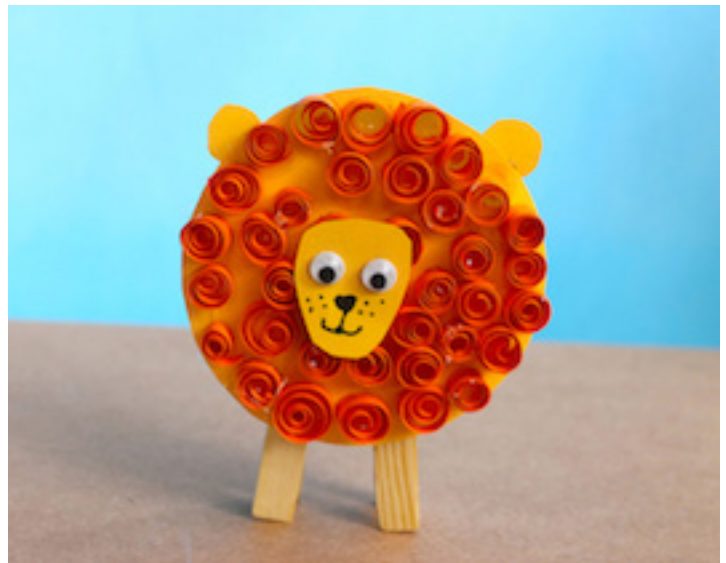


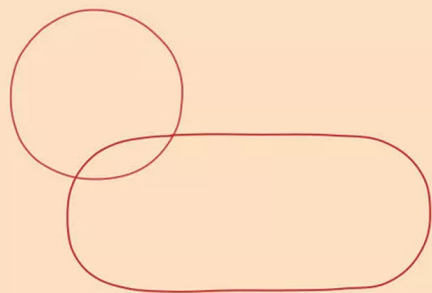
PHOTO: KIDSPOT AUSTRALIA



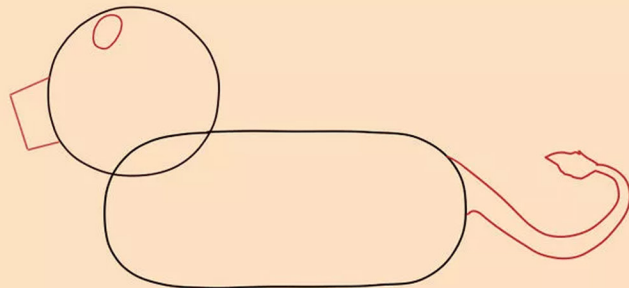


Learn more at www.bornfreeusa.org/yearofthelion

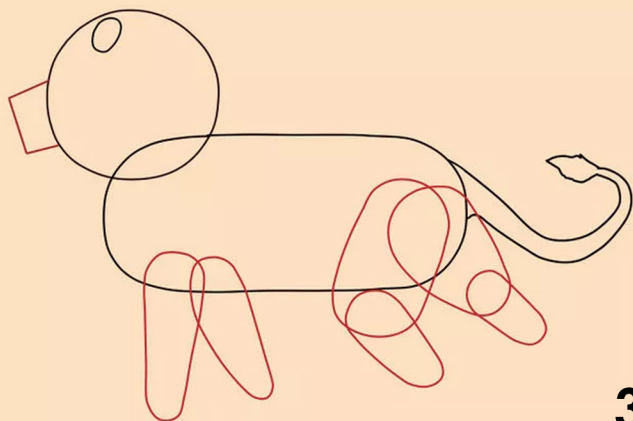
HOW TO DRAW A LION



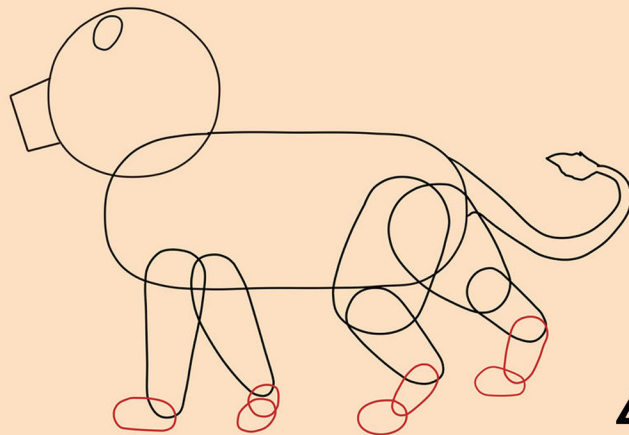
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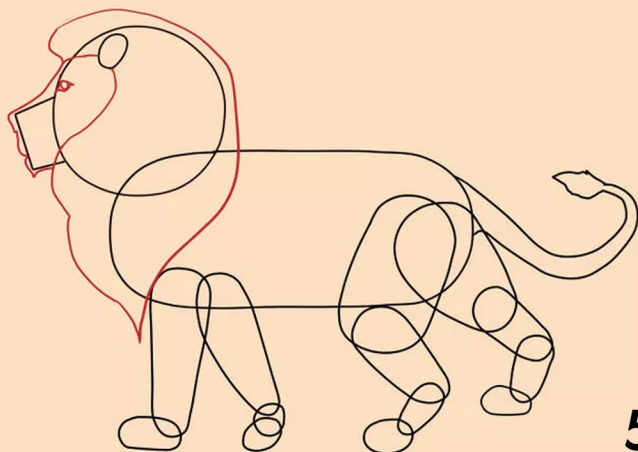
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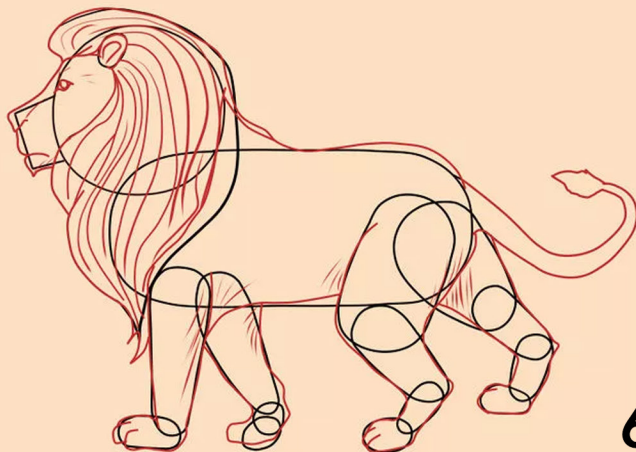
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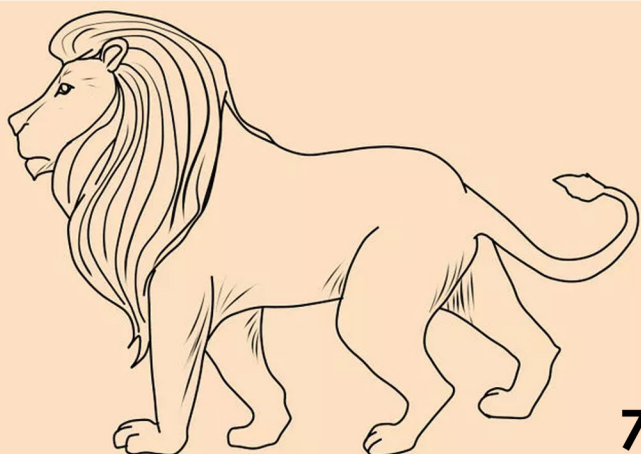
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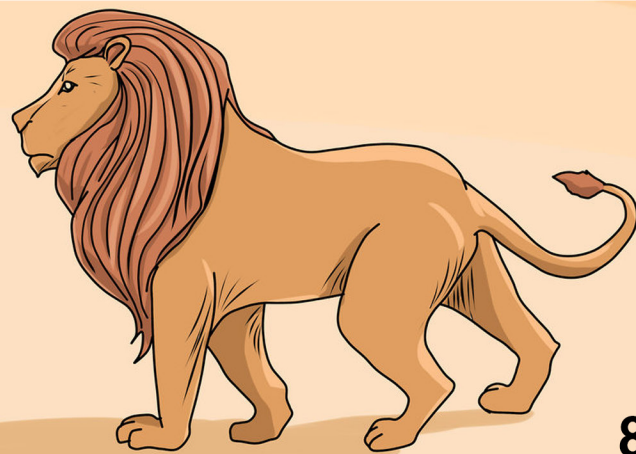
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6



7



8

FILL IN THE BLANKS OR CHECK THE BOXES:

Lions are called “king of the jungle,” but they live in _____ in grasslands or deserts. They are big cats that can weigh up to 500 pounds, but there is one cat that is bigger: the _____. The one thing that lions spend most of their day doing is _____. They can sleep up to 20 hours per day... Talk about a cat nap!

But, they do NOT make good: ballerinas

airline pilots

pets

football players

all of the above.

Swahili is a language in Africa and the word “lion” is actually _____. If a lion is out hunting, that animal will likely be the _____ lion while the _____ lion stays back to guard his _____. But, lions are in trouble. They’re considered endangered and threatened. However, I promise to help them by sharing what I’ve learned today. I think lions are _____!

My name is: _____