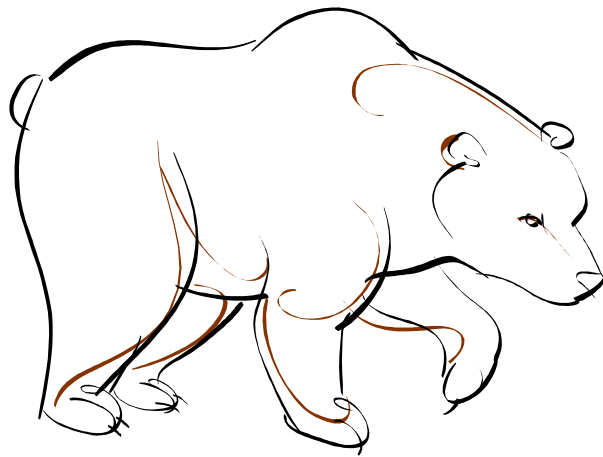


# **BEAR AWARENESS Teacher Packet**

## **At the ABQ BioPark Zoo**

**Teacher Resource Guide  
2012**



# BEARS

Fossil records and historical data indicate that at one time there may have been hundreds of bear *species* worldwide, on all continents except Antarctica and Australia. Today, eight bear *species* remain in North and South America, Europe, and Asia: **brown bears, American black bears, Asiatic black bears, panda bears, polar bears, sun bears, sloth bears, and spectacled bears.** Within these *species* there are also several *subspecies* or varieties of bears.



Bears usually have heavy bodies supporting a large, hairy head. Their thick fur covers loose skin. They have small eyes and can see in color. Small, rounded ears stick straight up, but a bear's hearing is only fair. Bears do have a keen sense of smell. They have short, powerful limbs with large feet. A bear often stands upright to see or smell scents carried by the wind – not to be *aggressive*. They rarely walk on their hind legs. A bear's foot has five toes, and each toe ends with a long, heavy claw. The strong claws are used to dig up roots, turn over large boulders, and tear into rotting timber looking for ants, termites, and other food. For much of the year a lot of bears are *herbivores* (plant-eaters). Few are only *carnivores* (meat-eaters). Most bears eat both meat and plants. This is called *omnivore*. Bears, like humans, walk putting their entire foot sole on the ground with each step, and their heel strikes down first – this is called *plantigrade*. Most other mammals, like cats or dogs, walk and run on their toes – this is called *digitigrade*. Combining this *gait* with their large feet and short legs sometimes makes a bear look slow and *ungainly*. However, bears are extremely *agile* and can move quickly, running at speeds well over 30 miles an hour.

Bears live alone; they never gather in groups except during the summer *mating season* when a pair may be together for a month and when raising cubs. The *solitary* female gives birth to one to four cubs during the winter. Cubs grow rapidly but remain with their mother for one or two years. Most bears often spend much of their winter sleeping, a state that some call *hibernation*. Other scientists maintain that bears do not truly hibernate because their body temperature does not drop greatly and some become active on mild days.

# BEARS at the BioPark Zoo



Many years ago the Zoo kept Sun Bears on exhibit, but now currently houses two polar bears, Koluk and Kiska. These brother bears were born in Utah in 1997. Polar bears can live up to 30 years in the wild, so these bears could live even longer due to the great care zoo animals receive.

## FUN FACTS:

- Koluk and Kiska's diet consists of horsemeat, polar bear chow (it's like dog food), apples, carrots, sweet potatoes and trout. If there are any leftovers from the seals and sea lions, they are treated with herring. They each eat about 15 pounds of food daily.
- How can polar bears live in a desert? Koluk and Kiska have adapted to our climate. Their summer diets are adjusted to keep them leaner so they have less blubber. Like people they do get hot in the summer, but when they do, they have a large pool of water for them to swim in and an area of their enclosure is air conditioned!
- Our animal keepers have worked with the polar bears to do special behaviors. For instance, Koluk can open his mouth with a hand signal like sign language. This allows the keepers to look in his mouth and check his teeth. He learned this behavior through a training process called *operant conditioning*. In the beginning he would get a fish as a reward when he opened his mouth. At the same time, the keeper would make a hand signal and when Koluk opened his mouth for the fish, the keeper gave him the fish and clicked a clicker. Eventually Koluk got the idea that the hand signal meant for him to open his mouth. And the clicking noise after opening his mouth meant, "Yes, that is the right behavior and I am going to give you a treat."

# **POLAR BEAR OBSERVATION SHEET and SCAVANGER HUNT**

This activity can be used as a student directed activity that promotes learning through observation and research.

## **Student Directions:**

1. Observe the polar bears at the Polar Bear exhibit.
2. Record the following on the chart: size, interesting characteristics, range, habitat, food and status (common, threatened, endangered or extinct).
3. Find the answers for the questions around the Polar Bear exhibit.
4. Show that you are Bear Aware and share what you found with others.
5. Good luck and enjoy!

## ***POLAR BEAR OBSERVATION***

<b>SIZE</b>	<b>INTERESTING CHARACTERISTICS</b>	<b>RANGE</b>	<b>HABITAT</b>	<b>FOOD</b>	<b>STATUS</b>

## **What were the Polar Bears doing during your visit?**

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## ***POLAR BEAR SCAVANGER HUNT***

1. What is the current polar bear population? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What other animals live in the Arctic? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Do polar bears hibernate? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do polar bears have predators? \_\_\_\_\_  
If so, what are they? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What year did polar bear hunting become restricted? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What is a polar bears favorite prey? \_\_\_\_\_
7. How many miles has a polar bear been known to swim without rest? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# BEARS in New Mexico

The black bear is New Mexico's state mammal. They are the smallest of all bears living in North America. Although they are called black bears, they are not always black. In New Mexico, you are more likely to see a black bear that is brown than a black bear that is black.

Many years ago, grizzly bears also used to live in New Mexico's higher *mountainous* areas until the 1930's, but due to being hunted to *extirpation*, they no longer live in New Mexico. Today, one can find black bears throughout the state, usually in *mountainous* regions.



## DID YOU KNOW?

Smokey Bear is a New Mexican. Here is his story...

One spring day in 1950 in the Capitan Mountains within the Lincoln County Forest an operator spotted smoke and discovered a major forest fire. Forest Rangers, army soldiers, fire crews & volunteers from all over the state came to fight the fire. During a lull in the fire, a lonely bear cub was seen to be wandering near the fireline. The firefighters left him alone thinking the mother bear would come for him.

Several firefighters and soldiers were caught directly in the path of the fire storm. Fortunately, as fire burned past them they were able to get to safety. The lonely cub also had been in the path of the fire storm. He did not fare as well. He found refuge from the fire by climbing up a tree. Although his climb saved his life, the tree had been completely charred and the bear cub was badly burned on the paws and hind legs. When the cub was removed from the tree, a rancher who was helping the firefighters agreed to take the cub home. The cub was then flown to Santa Fe and received veterinary care to treat his burns. They were treated and bandaged.

The news about the little bear spread throughout New Mexico and soon the entire country knew about him. Letters poured in about the little bear's progress. The State Game Warden wrote an official letter to the Chief of the Forest Service, presenting the cub with the understanding that the small bear would be dedicated to a publicity program of fire prevention and conservation. He was then sent to live in the National Zoo in Washington, DC where he became the living symbol of Smokey Bear. He lived there for 26 years until his death in 1976. Smokey's remains were returned by the government to Capitan, New Mexico, and buried at what is now the Smokey Bear Historical Park.

**FUN FACTS:** Smokey was almost known as 'Hot Foot Teddy'. Smokey the Bear is only his nickname, his real name is Smokey. The Smokey Bear Wildfire Prevention campaign is the longest running public service advertising campaign in U.S. History.

# BEARS and Humans



Bears are generally very wild, secretive animals that will run from humans.

Sometimes during times of *drought* and food shortages in the wild, bears may wander into the cities looking for something to eat. It is only when they become food *conditioned*, used to eating human food or *associate* people with

food do they become *nuisances*. This usually happens when people carelessly leave garbage, pet food, or bird feeders out where bears can smell and eat them. Compost can also attract bears. Have you seen TV stories of bears coming down from the mountains and ending up in someone's backyard? If a bear loses its fear of humans, often it ends up losing its life. Is that the bear's fault? What could be done to prevent this kind of situation?

Bears, like most animals, must share their *habitat* with humans. People enter bear *habitat* to camp, hike, ride horses, bird watch, fish, hunt, ski and snowmobile, cut timber, graze cows and sheep, and operate mines in the same forests where bears live. As people build houses and roads, the roads cut off bear travel *routes* and break up *territories*. Because of the easy access to the bear's *territory*, this makes it easier for people to destroy natural *food sources*. By breaking up the land and *environment*, bears are cut off from other areas they might travel to live or search for food. This is called *habitat fragmentation* – basically cutting up their homelands into smaller pieces. *Habitat loss* – especially to roads and other human *development* – is the biggest problem that bears face. Do you think a bear knows how to safely cross the road?

There is hope. Scientists study bears to understand how bears use their *habitat* and how they react to humans. This allows them to find out what things humans can do to help *prevent* bad situations, for bears and people.

# Activity: BEAR FEAR

Adapted from *WILD About Bears, An Educator's Guide to New Mexico's Black Bears* – NM Game & Fish

**Objectives** – Students will be able to:

- Recognize that lack of understanding or misinformation often leads to fear.
- Realize that many things need not be feared, but rather understood and respected.
- Be aware of the need to question their information sources.
- Discussions about what impact carelessness can have on bears.
- Describe how to prevent unnecessary problems with bears.

## **Materials**

- Spray bottle, Matches, Loud fan, CD/Tape Player, Recording of animal sounds
- DVD/Videos, magazine articles, and books that depict bears accurately and inaccurately. (ie: Sensationalized stories from: *Field & Stream*, *Outdoor Life*, *Man In the Wilderness*; and Anthropomorphic stories like: *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, *The Jungle Book*, and *Pooh Bear*)
- DVD/Video that shows bears behaving naturally and in sensationalized ways.
- Handouts or discussion of accurate information about bears.

## **Procedure**

1. Allow students five minutes to write down or on board all the words they associate with:  
a. bears, b. grizzly bear, c. polar bear, d. black bear, e. panda bear, f. teddy bear.
2. Allow students five minutes to write down or on board a description of a black bear. Ask them to use words that will help one hear, see, feel, and smell a bear. Ask students not to worry about grammar, sentence structure, etc.
3. Share the description and discuss where these ideas came from.
4. Simulate an experience that can invite momentary fear based on inadequate information:  
a. Quickly Blacken room.  
b. Start loud fan to cover up other noise.  
c. Play tape/cd with loud animal noises (such as bear growls, coyote or wolf howls)  
d. Squirt students with water.
5. Allow five minutes to write down or on board a description of how they felt during this experience.
6. In a guided discussion, ask if the students felt uneasy, uncomfortable, momentary fear, anger, confusion. What are other things that make them feel the same way? (ie: lightning, water, snakes, spiders, bats, etc.) Why? Then discuss why you conducted the simulation. (To allow students to feel what it is like when you don't understand what is going on.)
7. Repeat the simulation, except this time tell students beforehand what will happen.
8. Discuss their thoughts and feelings during this simulation and why they are different.
9. Have students refer back to their bear descriptions.
10. Provide the students with various kinds of misinformation about bears and anthropomorphic representations. Discuss the source and the nature of the misinformation and what impacts this misinformation might have.
11. Then provide accurate information using available sources. Emphasize bears need to be respected, not feared. They naturally shy away from humans, but carelessness can cause bears to lose that fear.
12. Ask the students to write down or on board new descriptions based on what they now know. Discuss how people's attitudes and knowledge can affect their actions.

# Vocabulary

**agile** - marked by ready ability to move with quick easy grace

**aggression** - 1 : a forceful action or procedure (as an unprovoked attack) especially when intended to dominate or master 2. hostile, injurious, or destructive behavior or outlook

**aggressive** - 1 a : tending toward or exhibiting aggression <aggressive behavior> b : marked by combative readiness

**associate** - to join or connect together

**carnivore** - an animal that eats only meat

**conditioned** - a: to adapt, modify, or mold b : to modify so that an act or response previously associated with one stimulus becomes associated with another

**development** - a developed tract of land; *especially* : one with houses or buildings built on it

**digitigrade** - animals that walk and run on their toes

**drought** - a period of dryness without rain especially when prolonged; *specifically* : one that causes extensive damage to plants or prevents their successful growth

**environment** - 1. surroundings 2 : the surrounding conditions or forces that influence or modify: as the whole complex of factors (as soil, climate, and living things) that influence the form and the ability to survive of a plant or animal or ecological community

**extirpation** - to destroy completely: wipe out

**food source** - where ones food comes from

**gait** - a manner of moving on foot; *also*: a particular style of such movement

**habitat** - the place or type of place where a plant or animal naturally or normally lives or grows

**habitat fragmentation** - to cut up or divide where an animal naturally or normally lives

**habitat loss** - to lose where an animal naturally or normally lives; *also*: alter or eliminate the conditions needed for plants and animals to survive.

**herbivore** - an animal that eats only plants

**hibernation** - to pass the winter in a sleeping or resting state

**mating season** - a time when animals come together to find a mate

**mountainous** - having many mountains

**nuisance** - an annoying or troublesome person, thing, or way of doing something

**omnivore** - an animal that eats both meat and plants

**operant conditioning** - conditioning in which the desired behavior (as bar-pressing by a rat) or increasingly closer approximations to it are followed by a reinforcement (as delivery of food) that is needed, pleasant, or desired

**plantigrade** - walking by putting the entire foot sole on the ground with each step, with the heel striking down first

**prevent** - to keep from happening

**route** - road or course of travel

**solitary** - all alone

**species** - 1 : a class of things of the same kind and with the same name : kind, sort

2 : a category of living things that ranks below a genus, is made up of related individuals able to produce fertile offspring, and is identified by a two-part scientific name

**subspecies** - a category in biological classification that ranks just below a species and includes a physically recognizable and geographically separate group of individuals whose members can breed successfully with members of other subspecies of the same species where their ranges overlap

**territory** - an area that is occupied and defended by an animal or group of animals

**ungainly** - clumsy or awkward



# American Black Bear

## (*Ursus americanus*)

**Habitat:** Forested areas from sea level to over 8,000 feet.

**Diet:** Omnivore. They eat fruits, berries, nuts, roots, grasses, insects, fawns, carrion, fish and rodents.

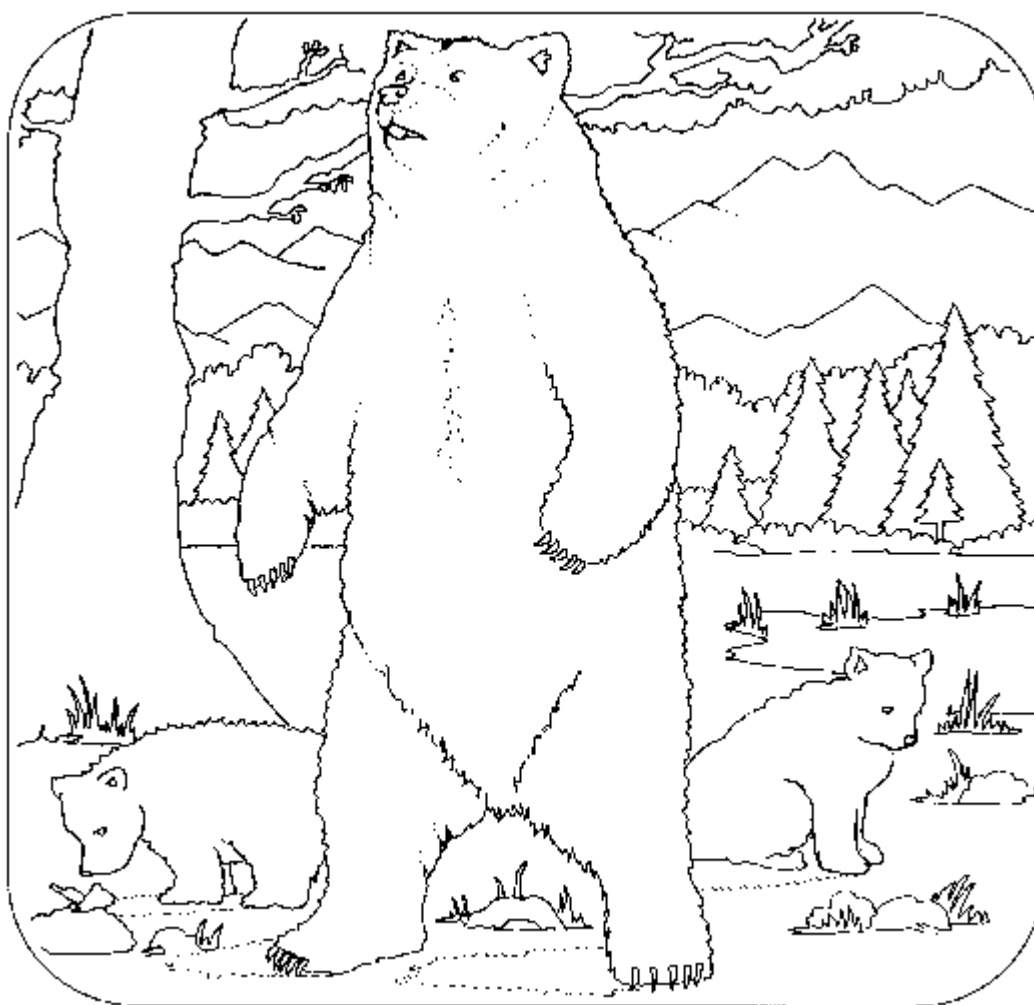
**Size:** 4 to 6 feet long, 130-450 pounds

*size relative to a 6 ft man*

**Average life span in the wild:** 20 years

**Conservation Status:** Black bears are common through most of their range.

The Florida black bear, a subspecies, is listed as threatened in the state of Florida. Poaching of American black bears for their gallbladders in the Asian medicinal market is becoming an increasing threat.



Black bears often stand up on their hind legs to see, hear, and smell better – NOT to attack. They are also great climbers and can run up to 35 mph.

**Fun Fact:** Black bears are not always black. They can be brown, cinnamon, red, blonde, silver-blue and sometimes white! The white bears are a subspecies, called Kermode, of coastal British Columbia. They're also known as 'spirit bear'.

# Polar Bear

## (*Ursus maritimus*)

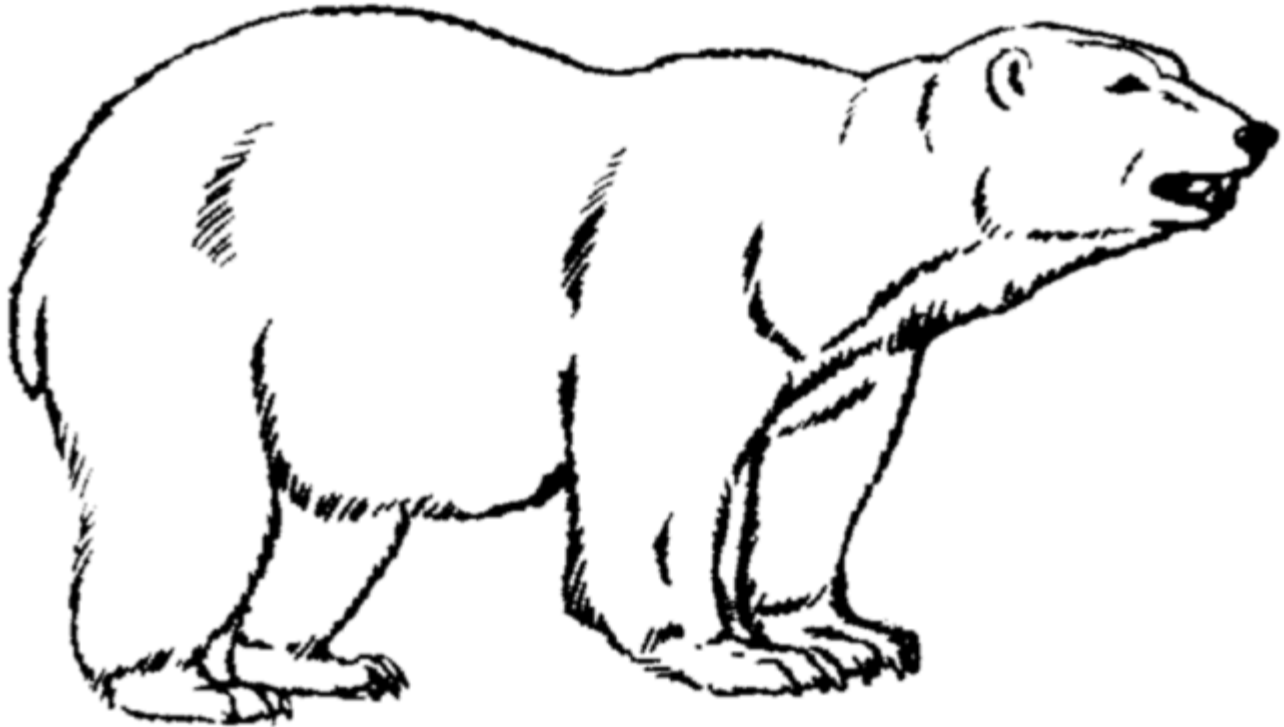
**Habitat:** Arctic region, at sea on ice floes and inland during the summer.

**Diet:** Carnivore. Polar bears feed mainly on seals, but they may also eat young walrus and carrion.

**Size:** 8 to 11 feet long, 450-1700 pounds *size relative to a 6 ft man*

**Average life span in the wild:** 25 to 30 years

**Conservation Status:** Polar bears are listed as Appendix II in CITES. They are protected worldwide by the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Chemicals from oil spills threaten polar bear food supplies, and development for oil and gas resources threatens their habitat. Recent studies also suggest that increased Arctic temperatures may cause ice floes to develop later and break up earlier in the year, decreasing the length of time Polar bears have to feed at sea.



Polar bears' fur and thick layer of insulating fat allow them to maintain a normal body temperature when the outside temperature drops to  $-37^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

### Fun Facts:

- › Under their fur, polar bears have black skin and their fur is clear in color, not white.
- › Hunting: A polar bear can break through 3 feet of ice to catch its prey. Since its nose is black, a polar bear will cover its nose as it creeps along the ice so it will go unnoticed. A polar bear can kill a 3,000 pound walrus.
- › Polar bears don't hibernate. Females will dig into snow drifts to give birth.

# Brown Bear

## (*Ursus arctos*)

**Habitat:** Dense forests, subalpine meadows and arctic tundra.

**Diet:** Omnivore. Their diet varies with the seasons and habitat. They feed on grasses, roots, fruits, berries, insects, fish, carrion and other mammals.

**Size:** 5 to 9.5 feet long, 200-850 pounds *size relative to a 6 ft man*

**Average life span in the wild:** 25 years

**Conservation Status:** Brown bears are listed as threatened in the United States. Their major threat is habitat loss due to deforestation and development. Poaching is also a problem.



The Grizzly Bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*) is a subspecies of Brown bear. Another subspecies is the Kodiak bear (*Ursus arctos middendorffi*) of the Afognak & Shuyak Islands in Alaska.

### Fun Facts:

- › The hump on Brown bears back is really a large muscle that allows them to dig and use their paws as a striking force.
- › Some Brown bears are trained 'actors'. They have performed specific behaviors for various movies like Dr. Doolittle and commercials for Pepsi, Gatorade, Rice Krispies Treats, and Kinkos.

# Speckled Bear

## (*Tremarctos ornatus*)

**Habitat:** Variety of forested areas, typically cloud forests, in the Andes Mountains from 500-14,000 feet.

**Diet:** Omnivore. They eat fruit, flowers, rodents and insects.

**Size:** 5 to 6 feet long, 150-340 pounds *size relative to a 6 ft man*

**Average life span in the wild:** Up to 25 years

**Conservation Status:** The Spectacled bear is listed as Appendix I in CITES. There are thought to be only a few thousand left in the wild. Habitat destruction and poaching are the two biggest threats to its survival.



Speckled bears' face, neck, and chest markings are like human fingerprints, unique to each bear.

### Fun Facts:

- › Spectacled bears are nocturnal. They may spend the day sleeping in a self made nest in a tree.
- › Spectacled bears play a vital role in their habitat by scattering seeds through their droppings.

# Sun Bear

## (*Helarctos malayanus*)

**Habitat:** Lowland tropical rainforests

**Diet:** Omnivore. They eat birds, small mammals, termites, plants and bee nests.

**Size:** 4 to 5 feet long, 60-150 pounds.

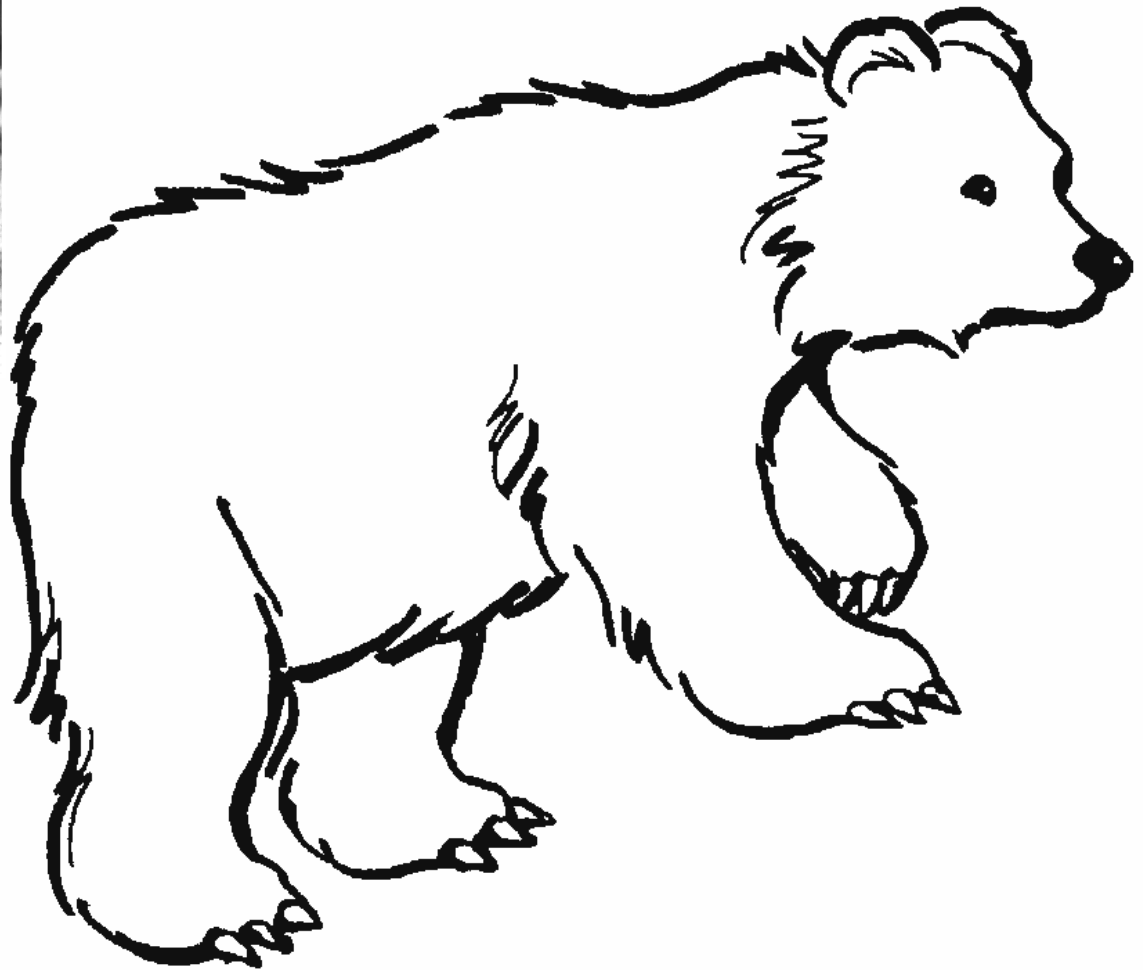
The sun bear is the smallest bear.

*size relative to a 6 ft man*



**Average life span in the wild:** Up to 25 years

**Conservation Status:** Sun bears are listed as Appendix I in CITES. They are threatened by habitat loss, poaching for fur and trade in the Asian medicinal market. The cubs are also traded as pets.



Sun bears are excellent climbers and have very little fur on the soles of their feet. It is thought that this helps them to better climb trees.

### Fun Facts:

- › Sun bears are sometimes called 'dog bears'. They have very long tongues to get honey from bee nests, giving them their other nickname, 'honey bear.'
- › Despite their name, sun bears are nocturnal.
- › Sun bears have extremely long claws, exceeding 4 inches in length!

# Sloth Bear

## (*Melursus ursinus*)

**Habitat:** Grasslands and forests at low altitudes.

**Diet:** Omnivore. Sloth bears mostly feed on termites, but they also eat fruit, eggs, honeycombs and carrion.

**Size:** 5 to 6 feet long, 120-310 pounds

*size relative to a 6 ft man*



**Average life span in the wild:** Up to 40 years

**Conservation Status:** Sloth bears are listed as Appendix I in CITES. Habitat loss and poaching are severe threats.



There are 15 words hiding in this puzzle describing sloth bears. See if you can find the hidden words.

SLOTH BEAR  
SHAGGY  
MAMMAL  
OMNIVORE  
CLAWS  
CREAM SNOUT  
TERMITES  
HONEYCOMB  
FRUIT  
FLOWERS  
SOUTH ASIA  
LOWLANDS  
NOCTURNAL  
CUB  
DEN

L	A	W	C	H	O	N	E	Y	C	O	M	B	G	B
O	D	E	G	G	N	D	T	H	W	C	K	U	T	S
W	E	D	C	K	H	E	B	M	A	M	M	A	L	X
L	S	V	Z	L	G	N	E	M	I	L	H	T	Y	V
A	Q	T	E	A	A	X	H	F	L	O	W	E	R	S
N	W	Y	R	N	S	W	T	L	N	M	E	U	I	T
D	O	G	U	R	M	U	S	L	F	N	R	M	W	E
S	G	G	N	U	T	L	E	R	M	I	S	Q	L	R
E	B	A	O	T	F	S	U	G	E	V	Y	O	K	M
D	Y	H	I	C	R	I	N	H	N	O	F	J	O	I
O	B	S	L	O	T	H	B	E	A	R	B	R	L	T
E	N	C	H	N	E	W	T	U	P	E	S	B	M	E
C	U	B	H	I	S	A	I	S	A	H	T	U	O	S
J	S	R	S	T	L	N	E	Q	J	X	V	B	W	H
C	R	E	A	M	S	N	O	U	T	I	Z	Y	G	K

### Fun Facts:

- › Sloth bears long shaggy coat often makes them look somewhat disheveled.
- › Sloth bears are the only bears that carry their young on their back.
- › Sloth bears do not have upper incisors (their two front teeth). This allows them to suck out termites or ants from their mounds through the gap in their front teeth. To do so they close their nostrils and use their lips like a vacuum nozzle.

# Asiatic Black Bear

## (*Ursus thibetanus*)

**Habitat:** Heavily forested areas on hills and mountains in moist tropical forests.

**Diet:** Omnivore. They eat insects, small mammals and birds, carrion, bee nests, fruits and nuts.

**Size:** 4 to 6 feet long, 250-450 pounds

*size relative to a 6 ft man*

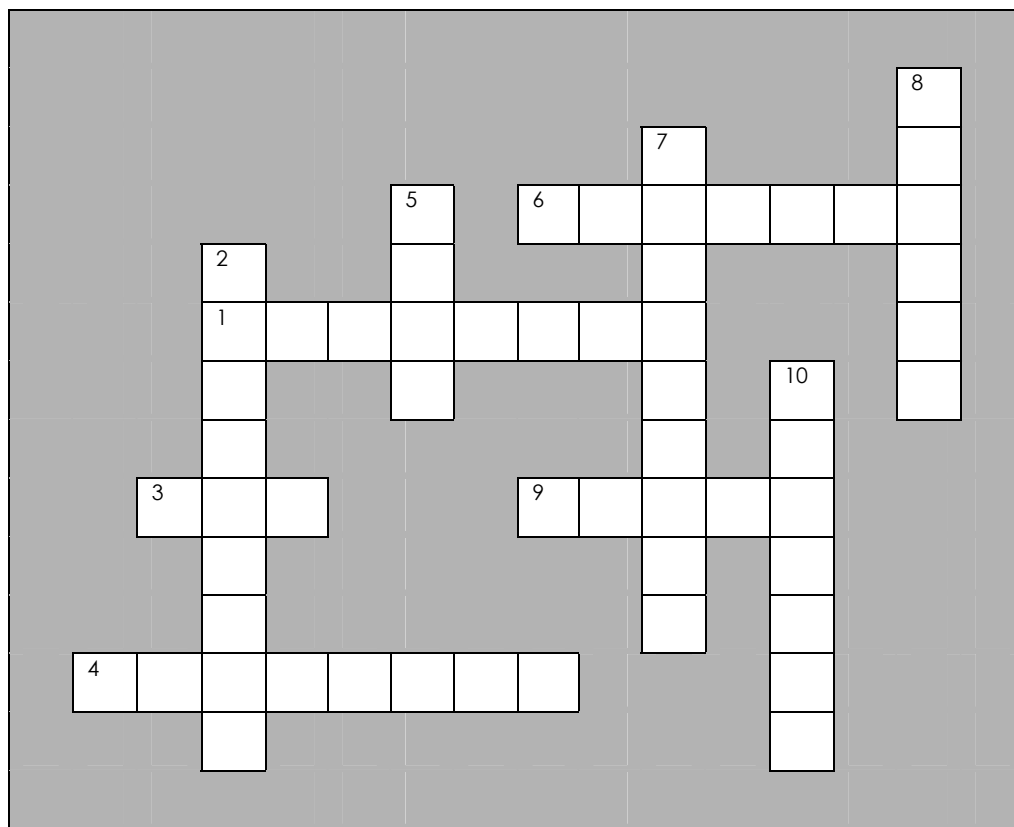


**Average life span in the wild:** Up to 25 years

**Conservation Status:** Asiatic black bears are listed as Appendix I in CITES. Their habitats are highly isolated and subject to human encroachment. Asiatic black bears are heavily poached for their organs to be sold in Asian medicinal markets.



### ASIATIC BLACK BEAR CROSSWORD



#### Across

1. An animal that eats both meat and plants.

3. A baby bear.

4. When an animal is hunted illegally.

6. Like most bears, the Asiatic black bear is an excellent \_\_\_\_\_.

9. Bears use these to help climb trees and dig for food.

#### Down

2. When an animal sleeps all day and wakes up at night.

5. The continent where these bears live.

7. Only pregnant females dig dens to do this.

8. A place with many trees.

10. One of this bears food sources.

#### **Fun Facts:**

- ▶ Asiatic black bears have a distinct, 'V' shaped patch of cream-colored fur on their chest.
- ▶ The Asiatic black bear is the American black bear's closet cousin.
- ▶ Asiatic black bears are primarily nocturnal.

# Giant Panda

## (*Helarctos malayanus*)

**Habitat:** Coniferous and bamboo forests, 3,000 – 11,000 feet.

**Diet:** Omnivore. Giant pandas feed almost exclusively on bamboo, but they may also eat flowers, grasses and carrion.

**Size:** 4 to 6 feet long, 200-300 pounds.

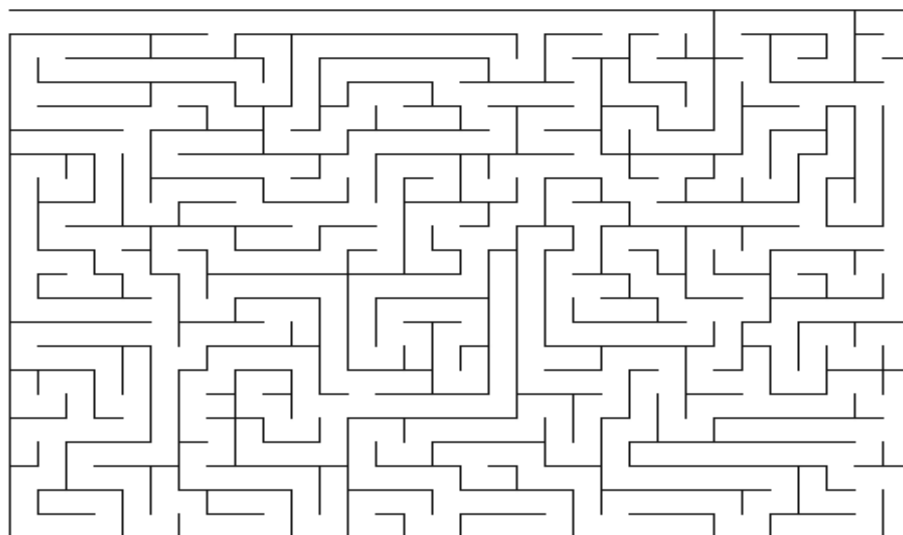
*size relative to a 6 ft man*

**Average life span in the wild:** 20 years

**Conservation Status:** Giant pandas are extremely endangered. They are only found in very fragmented and isolated habitat "islands." Deforestation and poaching threaten the remaining populations.



Pandas like to eat bamboo.  
Can you help the Panda find  
his way to his food?



Bamboo



### Fun Facts:

- › Scientists no longer believe that giant pandas are more like raccoons than bears. It is a member of the bear family, which scientists call *Usidae*.
- › Because a giant panda's digestive system cannot completely digest the nutrients in bamboo, it has to eat a lot of food to stay healthy – up to 33 pounds per day. They may eat for 16 hours each day!
- › Giant pandas do not hibernate even though they live in cold climates.
- › There are only about 1,000 giant pandas left in the wild.



# Where in the World?

Bears live all around the world.

Color the part of the world in which each bear lives.

**American Black Bear** (red)

**Brown Bear** (brown)

**Speckled Bear** (blue)

**Sun Bear** (orange)

**Sloth Bear** (green)

**Polar Bear** (yellow)

**Asiatic Black Bear** (black)

**Giant Panda** (purple)



# Activity: MAPPING

Bears can travel great distances to search for food, look for mates, hibernate and/or give birth. Often this distance can be up to 100 miles or more. To see how far 100 miles is, try this:

1. Find your hometown on the map below. Using the Scale of Miles near the bottom of the map, measure 100 miles and cut a string or a thin piece of paper to this length.
2. Put one end of the string or paper at your town and mark 100 miles. Keep moving the string until you have made a circle around your town, 100 miles in every direction.



Look at the circle you have made. Pretend you are a bear who is going to travel 100 miles away. Where might you find yourself? Maybe in another state? Within your circle, look to see where you think is the best place for a bear?

# Activity: BEAR STORIES

Humans and bears have shared the land and have been telling stories about bears since long before written language. Each story is unique and usually specific to the part of the world in which the bear lives. Or are they?

Read the following stories. The first is a bear story from Scandinavia and the other is a Native American story of the Iroquois tribe.

## WHY BEARS HAVE STUMPY TAILS

A Scandinavian folk tale

Long ago, bears used to have long, bushy tails, much like foxes. One winter day, a bear met a fox who was carrying a string of fish. "Where did you get those fish?" asked the bear.

Actually, the fox had stolen the fish. Not wanting to admit to theft, he quickly made up a story, saying, "I caught them in that pond over there. There are many more, if you would like to catch some. Come with me, I'll show you how it is done."

When they reached the pond, which was frozen, the fox pointed to a small hole in the ice. "All you have to do is sit down and put your tail through the hole. When you feel it sting, it means a fish is nibbling at your tail. Do not pull your tail out of the ice, however. Wait until you feel many stings, and then pull your tail out, and you will have a string of fish like mine."

Thanking the fox for the lesson, the bear sat down on the ice, and put his tail through the hole, as he had been told to do. After a while, his tail began to sting. "I must have a fish on my tail," he thought, but remembering the fox's words, he did not pull his tail out of the ice. A bit later, his tail hurt again, but he still sat without pulling it out. Finally, he could stand it no longer. He pulled - but his tail was frozen into place in the pond ice. He pulled harder and harder, until his frozen tail snapped off! The long, beautiful tail stayed in the pond, and he was left with a little stump. From that day to this, all bears have had very short tails.

Scandinavia is a region in northern Europe that includes at a minimum Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. Finland is often considered a Scandinavian country. Iceland and the Faroe Islands are sometimes also included.

- Look on a map to find these locations.
- What kind of bear do you think this story is about?

The following story is from the Iroquois tribe of the northeastern United States and southeastern Canada.

## HOW BEAR LOST HIS TAIL

### An Iroquois Tale

Back in the old days, Bear had a tail which was his proudest possession. It was long and black and glossy and Bear used to wave it around just so that people would look at it.

Fox saw this. Fox, as everyone knows, is a trickster and likes nothing better than fooling others. So it was that he decided to play a trick on Bear.

It was the time of year when Hatho, the Spirit of Frost, had swept across the land, covering the lakes with ice and pounding on the trees with his big hammer. Fox made a hole in the ice, right near a place where Bear liked to walk. By the time Bear came by, all around Fox, in a big circle, were big trout and fat perch. Just as Bear was about to ask Fox what he was doing, Fox twitched his tail which he had sticking through that hole in the ice and pulled out a huge trout.

"Greetings, Brother," said Fox. "How are you this fine day?"

"Greetings," answered Bear, looking at the big circle of fat fish. "I am well, Brother. But what are you doing?"

"I am fishing," answered Fox. "Would you like to try?"

# BEAR STORIES continued

"Oh, yes," said Bear, as he started to lumber over to Fox's fishing hole.

But Fox stopped him. "Wait, Brother," he said, "This place will not be good. As you can see, I have already caught all the fish. Let us make you a new fishing spot where you can catch many big trout."

Bear agreed and so he followed Fox to the new place, a place where, as Fox knew very well, the lake was too shallow to catch the winter fish--which always stay in the deepest water when Hatha has covered their ponds. Bear watched as Fox made the hole in the ice, already tasting the fine fish he would soon catch. "Now," Fox said, "you must do just as I tell you. Clear your mind of all thoughts of fish. Do not even think of a song or the fish will hear you. Turn your back to the hole and place your tail inside it. Soon a fish will come and grab your tail and you can pull him out."

"But how will I know if a fish has grabbed my tail if my back is turned?" asked Bear.

"I will hide over here where the fish cannot see me," said Fox. "When a fish grabs your tail, I will shout. Then you must pull as hard as you can to catch your fish. But you must be very patient. Do not move at all until I tell you."

Bear nodded, "I will do exactly as you say." He sat down next to the hole, placed his long beautiful black tail in the icy water and turned his back.

Fox watched for a time to make sure that Bear was doing as he was told and then, very quietly, sneaked back to his own house and went to bed. The next morning he woke up and thought of Bear. "I wonder if he is still there," Fox said to himself. "I'll just go and check."

So Fox went back to the ice covered pond and what do you think he saw? He saw what looked like a little white hill in the middle of the ice. It had snowed during the night and covered Bear, who had fallen asleep while waiting for Fox to tell him to pull his tail and catch a fish. And Bear was snoring. His snores were so loud that the ice was shaking. It was so funny that Fox rolled with laughter. But when he was through laughing, he decided the time had come to wake up poor Bear. He crept very close to Bear's ear, took a deep breath, and then shouted: "Now, Bear!!!"

Bear woke up with a start and pulled his long tail hard as he could. But his tail had been caught in the ice which had frozen over during the night and as he pulled, it broke off -- Whack! -- just like that. Bear turned around to look at the fish he had caught and instead saw his long lovely tail caught in the ice.

"Ohhh," he moaned, "ohhh, Fox. I will get you for this." But Fox, even though he was laughing fit to kill was still faster than Bear and he leaped aside and was gone.

So it is that even to this day Bears have short tails and no love at all for Fox. And if you ever hear a bear moaning, it is probably because he remembers the trick Fox played on him long ago and he is mourning for his lost tail.

- Look on a map and find the location of this tribe.
- What kind of bear do you think this story is about?

Even though these stories come from different sides of the world, one can see that bears, no matter where, are important in many different cultures. Do you have a bear story to share?

## The word 'BEAR' in different languages:

Italian – Orso

French – Ours

Danish – Bjørne

Spanish – Oso

Finnish – Karhut

Latin – Ursus

Lithuanian – Lokys

Slovenian – Medvedi

Japanese - Kuma

Bosnian – Medvjed

Indonesian – Beruang

Chinese – Xiong

Keres (\*NM Pueblo) – Qwaya

Iroquois (\*Onondaga) - Ohkwari

\*Note: Not all NM Pueblos speak Keres.

\*Note: There are different bands of the Iroquois tribe, Onondaga is one.

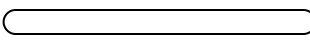
# Activity: MAKE A BEAR MASK

This pattern can be adjusted to make different species of bears by changing the color of the paper the pattern is copied onto.

## **Materials**

- Scissors, glue stick, thin rubber bands (two for each mask) or string, single hole punch, crayons/markers (optional)

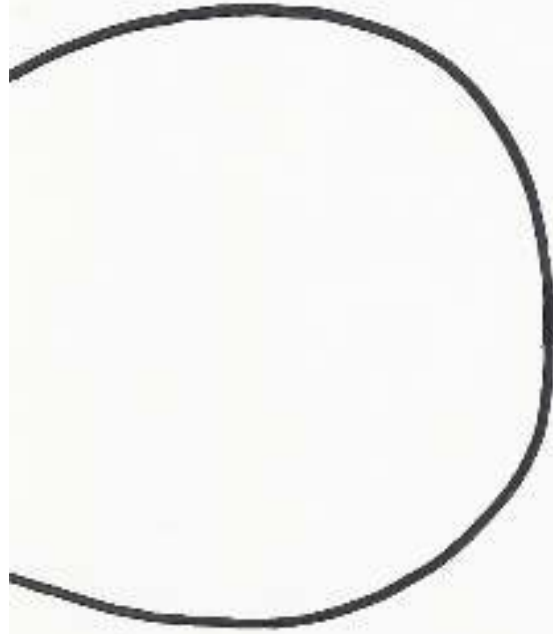
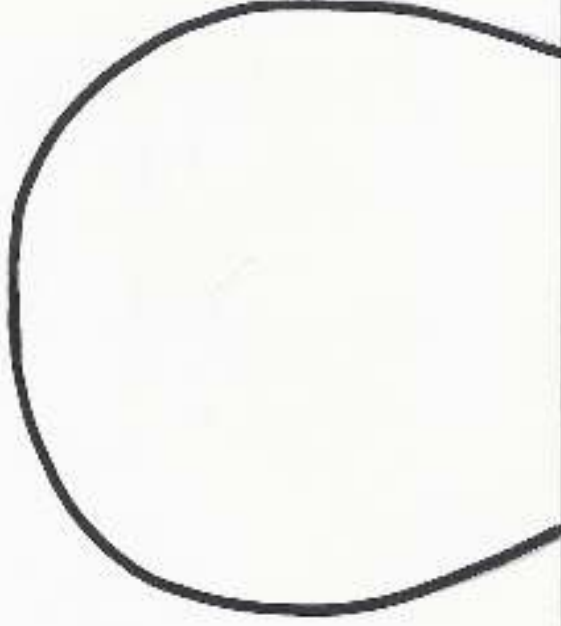
## **Procedure**

1. Using the patterns provided make copies on appropriate colored paper to match the bear you are creating.
2. Give each student a copy of the face, snout, and ears.
3. Have the students cut out the patterns on the solid lines only.
4. Once completely cut out, take the snout and fold on the dotted lines. This will create a 3-D snout.
5. Have students cut out eye holes on their face mask. Some students may need help with this part.
6. On the snout, glue A to B. This will form the snout.
7. On the snout spread glue onto C, D, & E and attach to the face mask over the nose opening.
8. Glue the ears onto the face mask
9. Punch holes below the ears and string through the rubber bands (squeeze rubber band together to form , push through the hole and attach by taking one end of the rubber band and looping it through the open end and pull to cinch down.
10. Wrap the rubber bands around each of the student's ears to hold the mask in place.
11. OR measure two lengths of string, tie onto each hole and tie string together around back of head to hold mask in place.

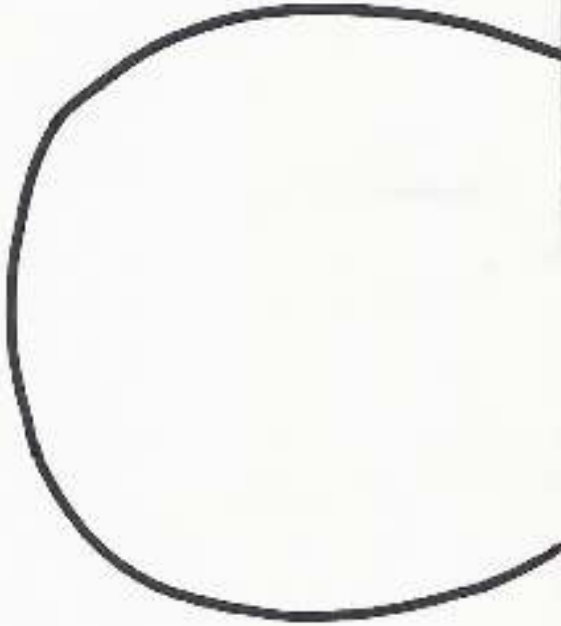
Encourage students who have completed their masks to assist others.



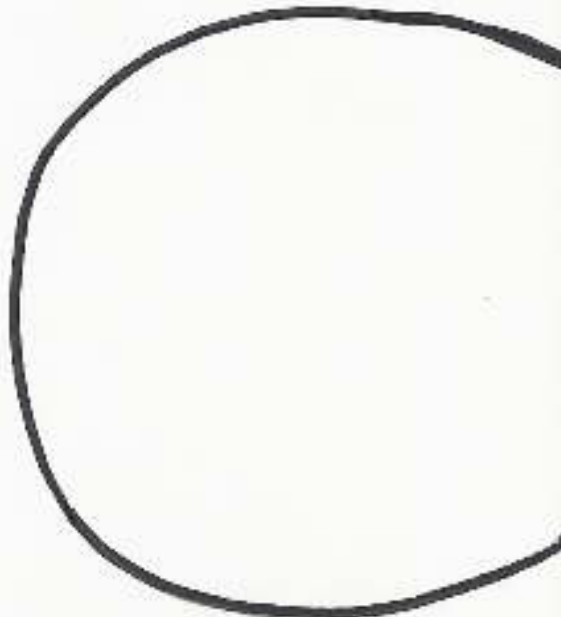
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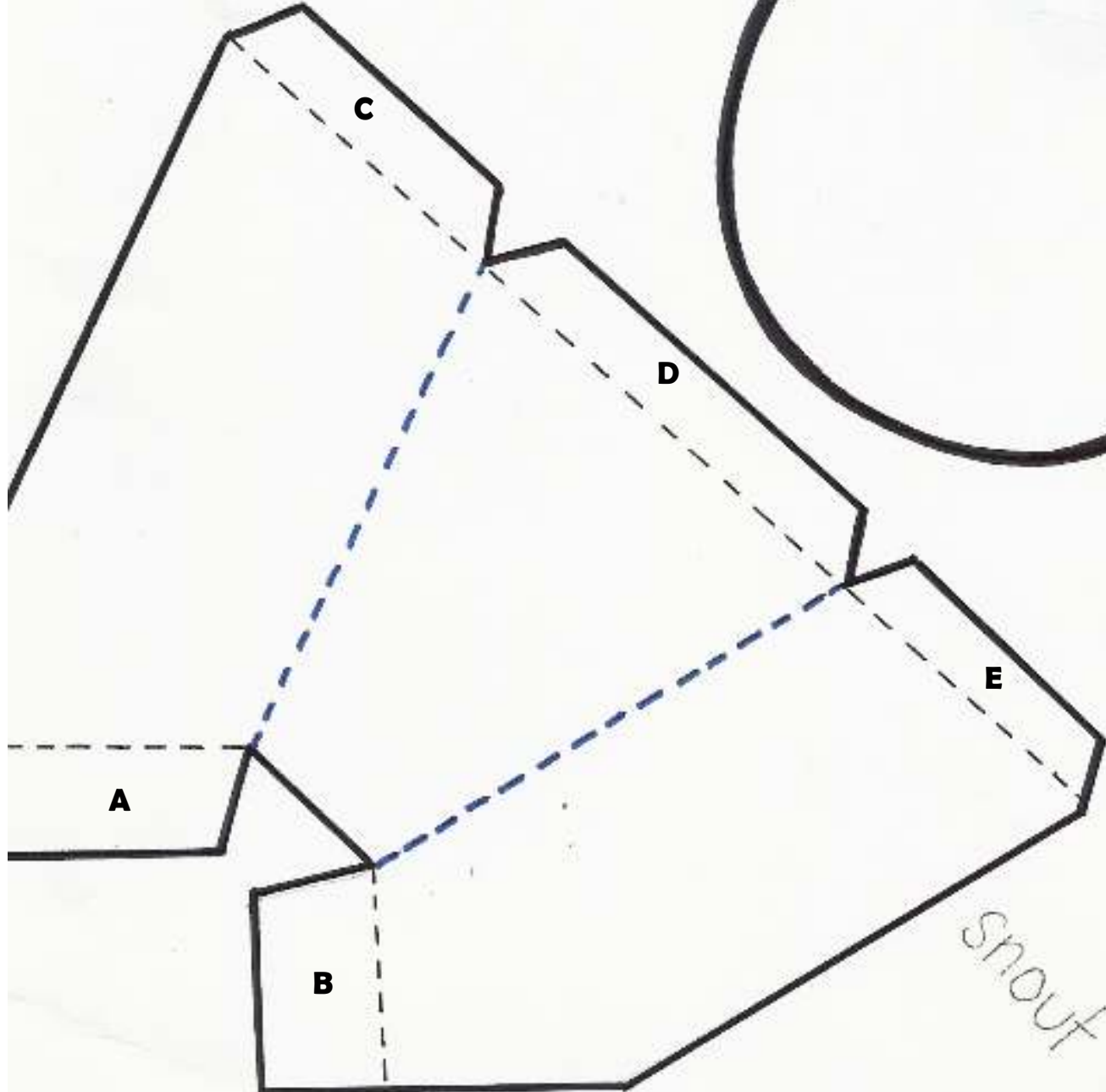
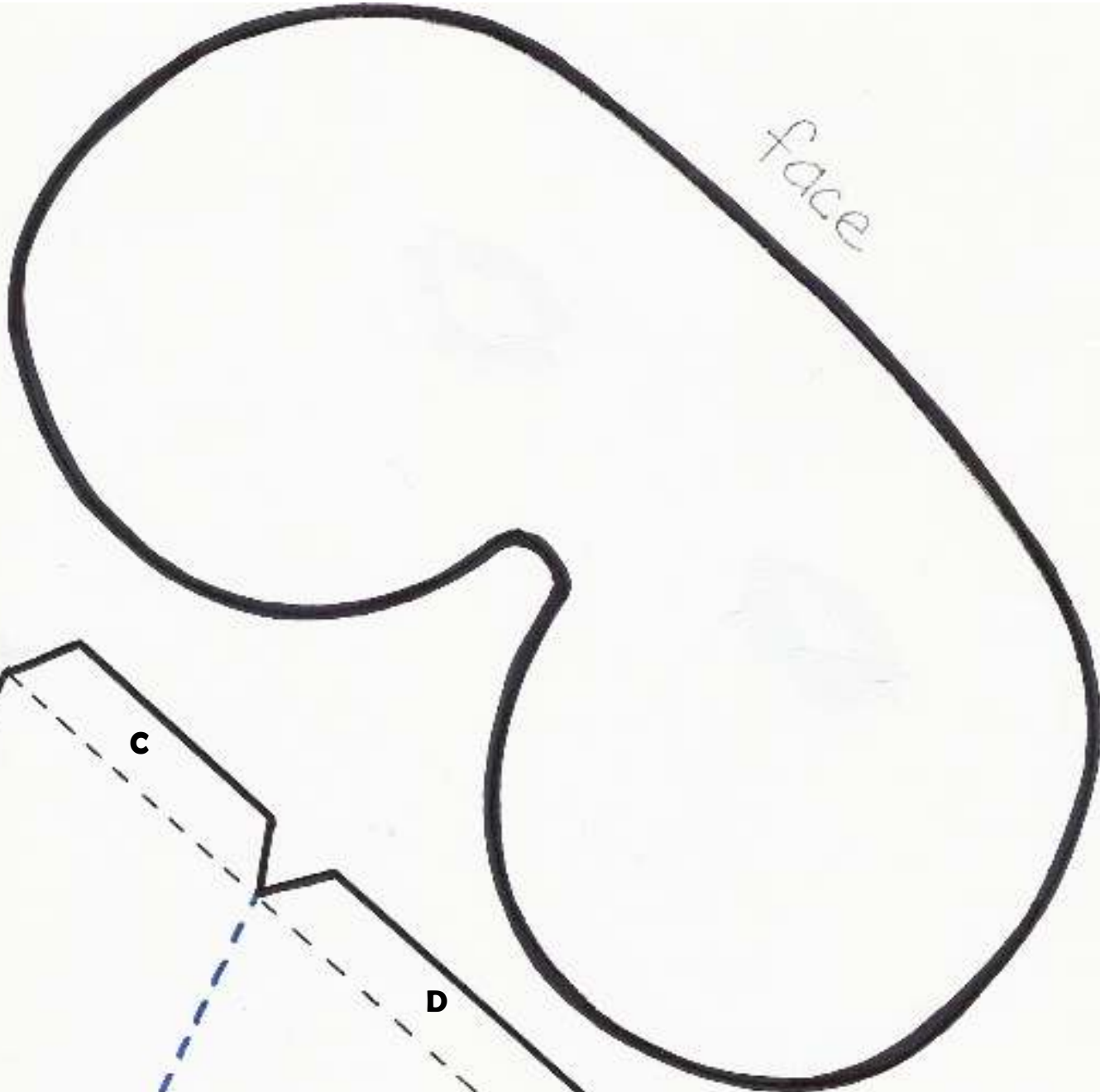


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