

The Lion Queens of India

by Jan Reynolds

About the Book

Genre: Juvenile Nonfiction

Format: Hardcover, \$19.95
32 pages, 10" x 8"

ISBN: 9781643790510

Reading Level: Grade 4

Interest Level: Grades K-5

Guided Reading Level: R

Accelerated Reader® Level/Points:
N/A

Lexile™ Measure: N/A

*Reading level based on the ATOS Readability Formula

Themes: Animal/Biodiversity/Plant Adaptations, Animals, Asian/Asian American Interest, Breaking Gender Barriers, Collaboration, Courage, Cultural Diversity, Empathy/Compassion, Environment/Nature, Geography, Human Impact On Environment/Environmental Sustainability, India, Nonfiction, Occupations, Photographic Illustrations, Responsibility

Resources on the web:

leeandlow.com/books/the-lion-queens-of-india

SYNOPSIS

In the far west of India, in Gir National Park, dwells one of the rarest big cats on Earth: the Asiatic lion. Known for its distinctive belly flap and the bushy tassel on its tail, the Asiatic lion once roamed from the Mediterranean Sea to the Bay of Bengal. But human hunting and expansion into their territory eroded the lions' numbers, until only twelve remained alive.

Now more than six hundred lions stalk the forest and savannahs of Gir—thanks in part to the work of the “Lion Queens,” a team of female rangers who specialize in caring for the Asiatic lions. Join Rashila and her friends on a journey around the park as they visit the lions in their habitats, monitor the web of life that encompasses all of the animals, and work with local villagers to preserve harmony between the human and animal populations. Readers will discover not only the many factors that influence the lions' lives, but what they can do to help ensure the lions' survival. Illustrated throughout with compelling photographs, *The Lion Queens of India* is an inspiring portrait of the lives of these female rangers and animal conservation efforts across the world.

All guided reading level placements may vary and are subject to revision. Teachers may adjust the assigned levels in accordance with their own evaluations.

BACKGROUND

Author's Note from Jan Reynolds

"I first met Rashila Vadher in her house, where she wore a colorful, traditional Indian sari—a floor-length cloth wrapped over a short blouse. She told me she was very busy, but if she could get permission and time, she would take me into the Gir sanctuary to track some lions. I had traveled to India in hopes of meeting some of the Lion Queens, but I never dreamed I would meet Rashila herself—the very first woman to become a "Forest Guard," or ranger, in Gir.

A couple days later, I hopped on a motorcycle behind Rashila, now dressed in her uniform, and we took off on the dusty trail into the forest. She taught me about the Gir sanctuary, the monsoon cycle, how to track lions, and all the animals of the sanctuary: crocodiles, peacocks, leopards, monkeys, and so much more. The Gir sanctuary is a dry, deciduous forest, 545 square miles (1412 square kilometers) in size, with no set physical boundaries—it is simply surrounded by local farms and villages. The Gir forest became a reserve in 1913 to save the last remaining Asiatic lions. In 1965, it became a wildlife sanctuary, and in 1975, the central part of the sanctuary was declared a national park. The sanctuary is now full of rich biological diversity, including thirty-eight species of mammals, thirty-seven species of reptiles, more than three hundred species of birds, and more than two thousand species of insects. I was struck by Rashila's knowledge of the diverse wildlife and depended on her to keep me safe while we moved through the sanctuary.

I could see that Rashila loved her job and was very humble about how well she performed her work. She was quick to tell me she succeeded at being accepted as the first female Forest Guard because the veterinarian at the animal hospital saw her determination and skill and decided to train her as a tranquilizing expert. The male Forest Guards then called Rashila whenever an animal was injured or in trouble, and she gained their respect with her accuracy and calm. Rashila told me the support of this veterinarian made a big difference in her life, because before that point, as a woman, she had continually been asked to take a desk job.

Rashila has had a one hundred percent success rate with her rescues, which number more than a thousand, and she has become the head of the rescue department for the Gujarat Forest Department, which includes the Gir sanctuary. Because of her success, more women have become Lion Queens, and they are pleased their work is helping the lion population increase.

Still, as Rashila made clear to me during my visit to Gir, more education of the local people and more space for the lions themselves will be necessary to maintain a healthy population of Asiatic lions. Moving beyond Gir, the story of the Asiatic lion teaches us the need to protect not only endangered species but all species of plants and animals in order for Earth to thrive. If you can support the preservation of the wild lands and natural parks in your area, and advocate for creating more, you'll support all the great diversity of life on our amazing planet, including these wonderful Asiatic lions."

Asiatic Lions

For more information about Asiatic lions, consult National Geographic's and the World Wildlife Fund's profile pages (<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/a/asiatic-lion/>) (https://www.wwfindia.org/about_wwf/priority_species/threatened_species/asiatic_lion/). The Asiatic lion is a subspecies that split from African lions approximately 100,000 years ago and lived across Asia and the Middle East. Because they are nearly extinct, Asiatic lions need to be protected. They are slightly smaller than African lions and appear in a variety of colors, from sandy to grey, sometimes with a silvery sheen in their fur.

BEFORE READING

Prereading Focus Questions

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 5 and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)
(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

Before introducing this book to students, you may wish to develop background knowledge and promote anticipation by posing questions such as the following:

- What do you know about lions? Where do they live? What do they eat?
- What do you know about endangered species? Which species are endangered? What are some of the reasons behind why animals become endangered? How do people protect animals that are endangered?
- What is an animal sanctuary? What do you think they do there?
- What do you think a forest ranger does? What could be some of their responsibilities?

Exploring the Book

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strand 1; Craft & Structure, Strand 5; and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)
(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

- **Book Title Exploration:** Talk about the title of the book, *The Lion Queens of India*. Then ask students what they think this book will most likely be about and whom the book might be about. What do they think might happen? What information do they think they might learn? What makes them think that?
- **Read Jan Reynolds's Biography:** Read about Jan Reynolds on the jacket back flap as well as on her website (<http://janreynolds.com/>). How do you think Jan Reynolds gets inspired? What do you think it's like to be a journalist and photographer?
- Encourage students to stop and jot in their reading notebooks during the read-aloud when they: learn new information, see a powerful image, have an emotional reaction or an idea, have a question, or hear new words.
- Have students quickly write a feeling in their notebooks during reading. After reading, ask students why they wrote down that feeling and have them write a journal entry about it.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

Have students read to find out:

- how does the title fit the theme of the story?
- who is Rashila and how does she help the Asiatic lions?
- why sanctuaries are critical in protecting animals
- how the rangers in the Gir Sanctuary work together to rescue animals and protect the Asiatic lions
- what role human communities play in keeping the lions safe
- how Asiatic lions can be saved from extinction and why that's beneficial to our planet

Encourage students to consider why the author, Jan Reynolds, would want to share this story with young people.

VOCABULARY

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 4)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

The story contains several content-specific and academic words and phrases that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary below.

Encourage a variety of strategies to support students' vocabulary acquisition: look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, create a specific action for each word, list synonyms and antonyms, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word. (Many of the Spanish words can be found in the book glossary, but there are also some that are not included. Students could be encouraged to create a log of these words—they will not be listed here.)

Content Specific

India, Asiatic lions, African lions, savannah, Europe, Asia, Gir Forest, sanctuary, rangers, motorbike, poachers, troughs, windmills, pride, coalition, rescue, tranquilizing gun, veterinarians, well, carnivores, lionesses, nilgai, spotted deer, web of life, extinction, livestock, overgrazed, degraded, livestock

Academic

courageous, habitats, extinct, maintain, patrol, threatened, communities, sustain

AFTER READING

Discussion Questions

After students have read the book, use these or similar questions to generate discussion, enhance comprehension, and develop appreciation for the content. Encourage students to refer to passages and/or illustrations in the book to support their responses. **To build skills in close reading of a text, students should cite textual evidence with their answers.**

Literal Comprehension

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. What is the symbol of India?
2. What do lions represent in Indian culture?
3. What are the lions in India called? What do they look like?
4. Where did lions once live? What happened to them?
5. What was the Gir Forest made into? What's special about it?
6. What did Rashila become? Why is this special?
7. What is Rashila's nickname among the other guards?
8. What do the forest rangers do? What are some of their responsibilities?
9. What does Rashila do every day? How does she figure out where the lions are?
10. What is a group of two to six lionesses and their cubs called? How would you describe them?
11. What is a coalition?
12. What happens when a lion is hurt? What do the rangers do?
13. How many animals has Rashila rescued?
14. What are carnivores? How would you describe them?
15. What do lionesses and lions hunt for? How are they different?
16. What is the web of life?
17. How was Gir's web interrupted in the early twentieth century? What happened?
18. Due to the growing population, what does the sanctuary need?
19. How do the rangers work with the community to help them understand the animals?
20. What else do the rangers want to do to protect the lions?

Extension/Higher Level Thinking

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 2 and 3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4 and 6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. What does the title *The Lion Queens of India* mean to you after reading the book? Why do you think the author chose this particular title?
2. Why do lions represent courage, power and strength? After reading more about lions in *The Lion Queens of India*, did your perception of lions change? Why or why not?
3. Why is the Gir sanctuary critical to Asiatic lions' survival? How would their lives have been different if the Gir sanctuary did not exist? Do you know of any other sanctuaries?
4. Why do you think Rashila is called the "Lion Queen"? How does this nickname suit her work?
5. What impact did Rashila have as the first forest ranger? How did she pave the way for other women who wanted to become rangers as well?
6. What did you learn from Rashila's daily life as a ranger? How does her work inspire you moving forward? What can you do differently after reading about Rashila and her dedication to the sanctuary and helping animals?
7. How did the interruption of Gir's web of life affect the lions? How is this web of life crucial to not just the lions at the sanctuary but all animals?
8. How did Rashila work with the surrounding community to promote awareness about the sanctuary and the lions' survival? How is this critical to the lions' lives and the future of their species?
9. What other animals do you know about that are near extinction? How do you think scientists and rangers, like Rashila, keep them alive?
10. Explore the structure of this text. Does the story describe events chronologically, as comparison, cause and effect, or offer problems and then solutions? Why do you think the author structured the text the way she did? How does this story compare to other texts you have read?

Reader's Response

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4–6)

Use the following questions and writing activities to help students practice active reading and personalize their responses to the book. **Suggest that students respond in reader's response journals, essays, or oral discussion.** You may also want to set aside time for students to share and discuss their written work.

1. What is one big thought you have after reading this book? Think about Rashila's dedication to the lions and the Gir sanctuary. What is your takeaway from this book? What would you tell a friend about this book?
2. What do you think is Jan Reynolds's message to the reader? Think about possible motivations behind Jan Reynolds's intentions for writing the book. What do you think she wanted to tell her readers?

3. Have students make a text-to-self connection. What kinds of connections did you make from this book to your own life? What do Rashila's experiences, thoughts, and feelings mean to you?
4. Have students make a text-to-text connection. Did you think of any other books while you read *The Lion Queens of India*? Why did you make those connections?
5. Have students make a text-to-world connection. What kind of connections did you make between this book and what you have seen in the world, such as online, on television, or in a newspaper? Why did this book make you think of that?
6. What does caring for animals mean to students after reading? After reading *The Lion Queens of India*, how did students' perspectives change about what it takes to maintain and preserve an endangered species?
7. What does community mean to you after reading this book? How did Rashila's emphasis on working with people in the community surrounding the sanctuary help the lions? How can this model be used around the world?
8. Why are endangered species and sanctuaries important to learn about? How can we help endangered species in the future?

ELL Teaching Activities

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4–6)
(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

These strategies might be helpful to use with students who are English Language Learners.

1. Assign ELL students to partner-read the story with strong English readers/speakers. Students can alternate reading between pages, repeat passages after one another, or listen to the more fluent reader.
2. Have each student write three questions about the story. Then let students pair up and discuss the answers to the questions.
3. Depending on students' level of English proficiency, after the first reading:
 - Review the illustrations in order and have students summarize what is happening on each page, first orally, then in writing.
 - Have students work in pairs to retell either the plot of the story or key details. Then ask students to write a short summary, synopsis, or opinion about what they have read.
4. Have students give a short talk about Rashila and the importance of her work as a ranger in the Gir sanctuary.
5. The book contains several content-specific and academic words that may be unfamiliar to students, and several words are printed in bold. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary. Expose English Language Learners to multiple vocabulary strategies. Have students make predictions about word meanings, look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, list synonyms and antonyms, create an action for

each word, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.

Social and Emotional Learning

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1-3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4-6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1-3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-2 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4-6)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 6)

Social and emotional learning involves being aware of and regulating emotions for healthy development. In addition to understanding one's own feelings, strong socio-emotional development allows individuals to develop empathy for others and to establish and maintain relationships.

Use the following prompts to help students study the socio-emotional aspects of this book.

1. How does Rashila demonstrate problem-solving in *The Lion Queens of India*? What were some of the obstacles that she came across and how did she generate solutions? How is Rashila inspiring in what she does for a living and how she confronts different issues?
2. How does Rashila's job pose difficult challenges and how would you feel about them?
3. Choose an emotion that interests you: happiness, sadness, fear, anxiety, frustration, hope, perseverance and so on. Illustrate or act out what that emotion looks like in *The Lion Queens of India*.

INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES

(Introduction to the Standards, page 7: Students who are college and career ready must be able to build strong content knowledge, value evidence, and use technology and digital media strategically and capably)

Use some of the following activities to help students integrate their reading experiences with other curriculum areas. These can also be used for extension activities, for advanced readers, and for building a home-school connection.

English/Language Arts

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1-3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4-6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7-9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

- **Have students read other Lee & Low titles about animal conservation and preservation.** These books include *Parrots Over Puerto Rico* ([leeandlow.com/books/parrots-over-puerto-rico](https://www.leeandlow.com/books/parrots-over-puerto-rico)) and *Everglades Forever: Restoring America's Great Wetland* ([leeandlow.com/books/everglades-forever](https://www.leeandlow.com/books/everglades-forever)). What do these areas of the world have in common? What are their differences? How do people work together to preserve the wildlife and environment? What are the different obstacles they face to make sure that animals and the ecosystem are preserved? Have students write an essay about their findings.
- **Conduct a Jan Reynolds author study with her other Lee & Low titles including the *Vanishing Cultures* series, *Celebrate! Connections Among Cultures*, *Only the Mountains Do Not Move*, and *Cycle of Rice, Cycle of Life*.** Make connections among the

texts. What themes do Jan Reynolds's books have in common? How are the topics similar? How are they different? What do you think Jan Reynolds's message is to her readers across all her books?

- **How was reading a picture book different from reading a newspaper article about the Gir sanctuary?** Have students read the article, "Protecting Asiatic Lions in the Gir Forest." Then, students can create a Venn Diagram with the headings, "Picture Book Nonfiction: *The Lion Queens of India*" and "Expository Nonfiction: 'Protecting Asiatic Lions in the Gir Forest.'" (<https://www.zsl.org/conservation/regions/asia/protecting-asiatic-lions-in-the-gir-forest>). Students can compare and contrast the different formats of the texts and the information they learned in both.
- **Tell students to imagine they will be interviewing Rashila for a local newspaper or talk show.** Ask students to develop a list of five interview questions they want to ask. What do they want to learn about her daily life, the Gir sanctuary, her interactions with lions, and more? Lead a class discussion, creating a combined list of questions and then narrowing that list down to ten questions.
- **Come up with questions to interview the author, Jan Reynolds.** What was her process behind creating *The Lion Queens of India*? What was her inspiration for writing her story about Rashila? Read the Author's Note with students and have them discuss what they learned and how it made them think about the book differently. Why did she write this book for young readers? Consider reaching out to Jan Reynolds for a virtual author visit (<http://janreynolds.com/>).

Social Studies/Geography

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9)
(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Have students research the geography of India.** What is the climate like? What physical features does India have? What kinds of plants and animals live there? What makes India unique from surrounding countries? What are India's resources and most popular exports? Students can present their findings with photographs in a visual presentation format of their choosing. For a whole unit on teaching India, refer to PBS' "The Story of India" unit ([pbs.org/thestoryofindia/teachers/lessons/](https://www.pbs.org/thestoryofindia/teachers/lessons/)) for more information.
- **Encourage students to learn more about Gir National Park and the Gir sanctuary.** Where are they both located in India? What is the geography like in these regions in India? What are other animals that live in the park and sanctuary? How does the environment and geography help them to live there? How are the Gir National Park and Gir Sanctuary essential to their surrounding communities? For more information, consult Gujarat's website (<https://forests.gujarat.gov.in/gir-nat-park.htm>).
- **The Lion Queens have taken to reaching out to local villages to educate people about the Asiatic lions, in efforts to create a coexisting environment between the two species.** Research and discuss with students about a community in the US that has done

similarly. What species was endangered? How did people help protect the species? How has a relationship been fostered between the animal species and humans?

Science/STEM

(2-LS4-1 Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity: Make observations of plants and animals to compare the diversity of life in different habitats; 3-LS4-4 Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity: Make a claim about the merit of a solution to a problem caused when the environment changes and the types of plants and animals that live there may change; MS-LS2-5 Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy, and Dynamics: Evaluate competing design solutions for maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem services).

- **Encourage students to research a species that is endangered or threatened in your state or area of the country.** What does this species eat? What are its predators? How does this species care for its young? What impact have humans had on this species? What is its natural habitat like? What is being done, if anything, to restore the population? Have students brainstorm with a partner, small group or whole class about ways to help this particular species and create signs to hang bringing people's attention to this species.
- **Prepare students to conduct a "day in the life" study of a ranger.** The World Wildlife Fund has a page dedicated to rangers and their duties (https://tigers.panda.org/news_and_stories/stories/what_is_a_ranger.cfm). Using what they learned from Rashila's responsibilities in *The Lion Queens of India*, have students investigate what other rangers do. How do rangers work with different animals? Can rangers specialize in working with specific animals? How do rangers work with communities? Students can present their findings in a graphic organizer indicating the different tasks that rangers need to complete on a daily basis.
- **Have students research different animal sanctuaries in their own region.** Are there particular animal sanctuaries in their communities? What species do they help protect? Why were they created? Who helps maintain them? Consider contacting employees of the sanctuary for students to interview. What would students want to learn about operating a sanctuary? Consult the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries for more information (<https://www.sanctuaryfederation.org/>).
- **Have students discuss the importance of a food chain. How does a normal food chain work?** Why was the food chain in the Gir forest interrupted? How did the low numbers of Asiatic lions affect the land and other animals in the forest? Why is having a balanced food chain so important? Further, research and discuss a traditional North American food chain (ex: wolf, deer, vegetation). How has an American food chain been disturbed, and how has it affected the land and other animals? Have there been any efforts to help near-extinct animal populations in the US too?
- **Inspire students to select an animal species of their choice that is endangered and conduct a research project.** Some guiding questions can include: What does this species eat? What are its predators? How does this species travel? Where do they live? What impact have humans had on this species? Why are they endangered? Why did students pick their particular animal to do a research project on? Students can present their findings with photographs and other visual elements of their choosing to a partner, small group, or whole class. The World Wildlife Fund lists all endangered species (https://www.worldwildlife.org/species/directory?direction=desc&sort=extinction_status).

- **Conduct more research on the web of life (food chains) and how different ecosystems and food webs are interconnected.** Project Learning Tree has several lesson plans dedicated to teaching students about the web of life and different strategies, videos and resources for learning about ecosystems (<https://www.plt.org/stem-strategies/web-of-life/>). Have students connect their findings back to *The Lion Queens of India* and the web of life in the Gir forest. What else did they learn and how can they relate their new knowledge to life in the Gir sanctuary? Students can also think about the following questions: How does a normal food chain work? Why was the food chain in the Gir Forest interrupted in the twentieth century? How did the low numbers of Asiatic lions affect the land and other animals in the forest? Why is having a balanced food chain so important?
- **Have students research animal hunting, particularly that of the Asiatic lion.** Why did it become so popular? Why has it been so difficult to stop? What other species are currently at risk of extinction due to excessive hunting?

Art & Music

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

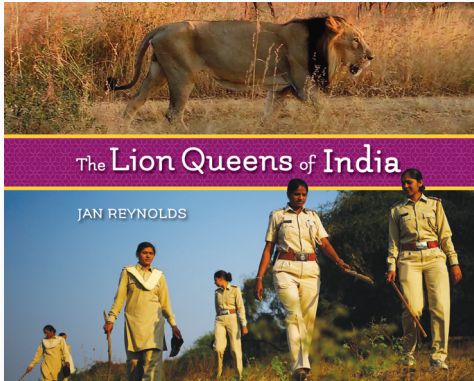
- **EJan Reynolds chose to use photographs for *The Lion Queens of India*.** How does this technique help tell the story of Rashila and the rangers? Have students examine the book. How would this story have been different if it was illustrated? Have students reflect on the process of taking photographs. What goes into the process of taking a photograph? How do you choose what to photograph? How does it impact the reading of the story?
- **Have students create an artistic representation of a lion.** Students can choose an artistic medium that they prefer. What did they select to put in their art piece? What do they want to show people about lions? What's important to convey about lions and their importance in our world? Have students share their artwork with a partner, small group or whole class.

School-Home Connection

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

- **Encourage students and their families to participate in Wildlife Watch, the National Wildlife Federation's national nature-watching program.** Students and families share the details of the wildlife they see in their communities to help National Wildlife Federation track the health and behavior of species worldwide (www.nwf.org/Wildlife/WildlifeConservation/Citizen-Science.aspx).
- **The rangers working with the Asiatic lions demonstrate a lot of persistence and commitment.** Ask students to interview their caregivers about a time they faced a significant obstacle. How did they overcome it? What made them persist in reaching for their goal? What advice do they have for someone who must tackle a challenge? Why is persistence important?



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jan Reynolds, is an award-winning author and photographer whose work has appeared in numerous publications, including *National Geographic*, *The New York Times*, and *Outside* magazine. All seven books in her *Vanishing Cultures* series of photo-essays for children were recognized as Notable Social Studies Trade Books for Young People, and she is also the author of *Celebrate! Connections Among Cultures*; *Cycle of Rice*, *Cycle of Life*; and *Only the Mountains Do Not Move*. Reynolds holds the world record for women's high altitude skiing, was part of the first expedition to circumnavigate Mount Everest, and performed a solo crossing of the Himalayas. She lives with her family in Stowe, Vermont. Please visit her on the web at janreynolds.com.

REVIEWS

"Young readers will be inspired by these women who show an unwavering commitment to preserving the wildlife, no matter what it takes." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"A book like this can inspire inquiry projects in classrooms or simply be enjoyed for its content.." —*Booklist*

"**VERDICT:** A rare, positive look at saving a species from extinction aimed at younger readers. A useful resource for young children interested in big cats and suitable for classroom units." —*School Library Journal*

Ordering Information

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