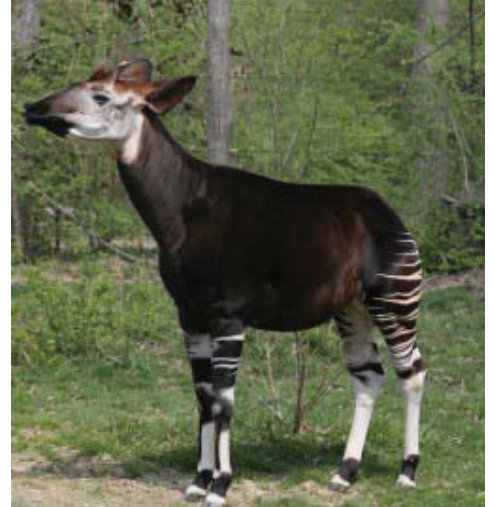


Name: _____

Okapi: Half Giraffe, Half Zebra

By Mikki Sadil

Have you ever seen an animal that looked like it was made from parts of two other animals? That's not as creepy as it sounds! There really is a rainforest animal, known as the okapi (Oh-COP-ee), that looks like it came from two different animals, the giraffe and the zebra.



The okapi resembles a giraffe because he has a long neck and a head shaped like the giraffe's, with the same large, upright ears. The males even have two small horns in the middle of their foreheads. They have longer front legs than back ones, and both legs move together on each side of the body when they walk, instead of each leg moving separately. Okapis are not as tall as their giraffe cousins, but they can stretch their necks far enough to reach branches 10 feet above the ground.

The okapi's hindquarters and all four legs have brown and white stripes, much like the zebra. These stripes act as camouflage in the forest, and make the okapis hard to see among all the trees and foliage. This camouflage protects them from the rainforest leopard, their main predator. The rainforest is a beautiful place, but it is also dangerous for the animals that have natural predators living in the same forest, so camouflage is a good thing to have.

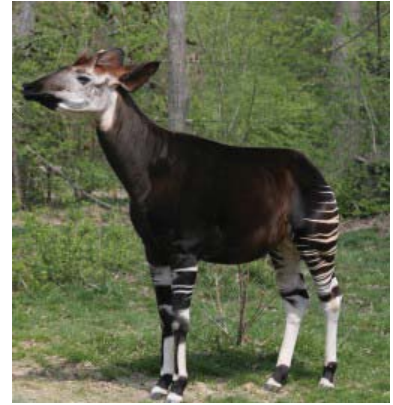
Okapi are herbivores, which means they eat plant life, such as tree leaves, buds, grass, ferns, and fruit. (That doesn't sound as good as pizza and ice cream, does it?) Their tongues are dark purple, 14 to 18 inches long, long enough to clean their eyes and ears! Would you want a tongue that long?

The only natural habitat in the world for the okapi is the Okapi Wildlife Reserve in the Ituri Rainforest in Central Africa. The okapi were not discovered there until the year 1900. While this may seem like a long time ago, it was actually the last large mammal to be discovered. Since then, new animals have been discovered all over the world, but none have been large mammals like the okapi. Even today, many people have never heard of this unusual creature.

Name: _____

Okapi: Half Giraffe, Half Zebra

By Mikki Sadil



1. Where do wild okapis live?
 - a. in the rainforests of South America
 - b. in deserts of Africa
 - c. on the plains of Australia
 - d. in the rainforests of Africa

2. Besides eating, what do okapis use their long tongues for?

3. What is the okapi's main predator?

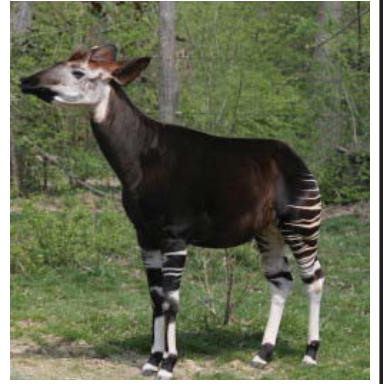
4. When were okapis first discovered?
 - a. about 250 years ago
 - b. about 200 years ago
 - c. about 100 years ago
 - d. about 50 years ago

5. Which fact about okapis is true?
 - a. Male okapis have horns on their foreheads.
 - b. Okapis are taller than giraffes.
 - c. The tongue of an okapi is bright red.
 - d. Okapis have longer back legs than front legs.

6. What specific things would an okapi eat?

Name: _____

Okapi: Half Giraffe, Half Zebra



Before Reading

Look at the picture of an okapi to the right. What questions do you have about this animal?

Question 1: _____

Question 2: _____

Question 3: _____

After Reading

Now read the article. If your questions were answered with information from the article, write the answers below. If they were not answered, write "no answer" on the line.

Answer 1: _____

Answer 2: _____

Answer 3: _____

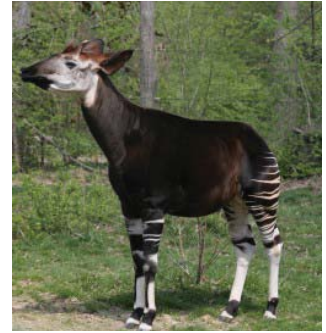
If your questions were not answered with information in the article, where else might you look for answers? List a *specific* book or website.

Name: _____

Okapi: Half Giraffe, Half Zebra

By Mikki Sadil

The scrambled words below are vocabulary words from the article. Unscramble each word and write it on the line. Please be sure each word is spelled correctly.



1. _____

t r o n r a f i e s

hint: jungle

2. _____

d s u b

hint: parts of plants that grow into flowers

3. _____

p e l p u r

hint: color made when you mix red and blue together

4. _____

e n f e r f d i t

hint: not the same

5. _____

v e c o d e d i s r

hint: found for the first time

6. _____

g i a f o l e

hint: plant leaves

7. _____

p a r l e o d

hint: spotted cat

ANSWER KEY

Okapi: Half Giraffe, Half Zebra

By Mikki Sadil



1. Where do wild okapis live? **d**
 - a. in the rainforests of South America
 - b. in deserts of Africa
 - c. on the plains of Australia
 - d. **in the rainforests of Africa**

2. Besides eating, what do okapis use their long tongues for?
cleaning their ears and eyes

3. What is the okapi's main predator?
rainforest leopard

4. When were okapis first discovered? **c**
 - a. about 250 years ago
 - b. about 200 years ago
 - c. **about 100 years ago**
 - d. about 50 years ago

5. Which fact about okapis is true? **a**
 - a. **Male okapis have horns on their foreheads.**
 - b. Okapis are taller than giraffes.
 - c. The tongue of an okapi is bright red.
 - d. Okapis have longer back legs than front legs.

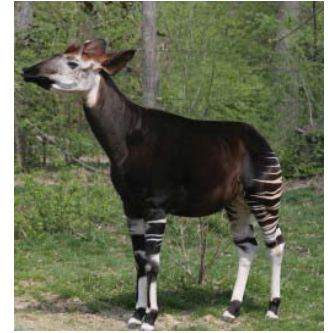
6. What specific things would an okapi eat?
tree leaves, buds, grass, ferns, and fruit

Name: _____

Okapi: Half Giraffe, Half Zebra

By Mikki Sadil

The scrambled words below are vocabulary words from the article. Unscramble each word and write it on the line. Please be sure each word is spelled correctly.



1. rainforest

t r o n r a f i e s

hint: jungle

2. buds

d s u b

hint: parts of plants that grow into flowers

3. purple

p e l p u r

hint: color made when you mix red and blue together

4. different

e n f e r f d i t

hint: not the same

5. discovered

v e c o d e d i s r

hint: found for the first time

6. foliage

g i a f o l e

hint: plant leaves

7. leopard

p a r l e o d

hint: spotted cat