

Ask®

Can We Be Friends?

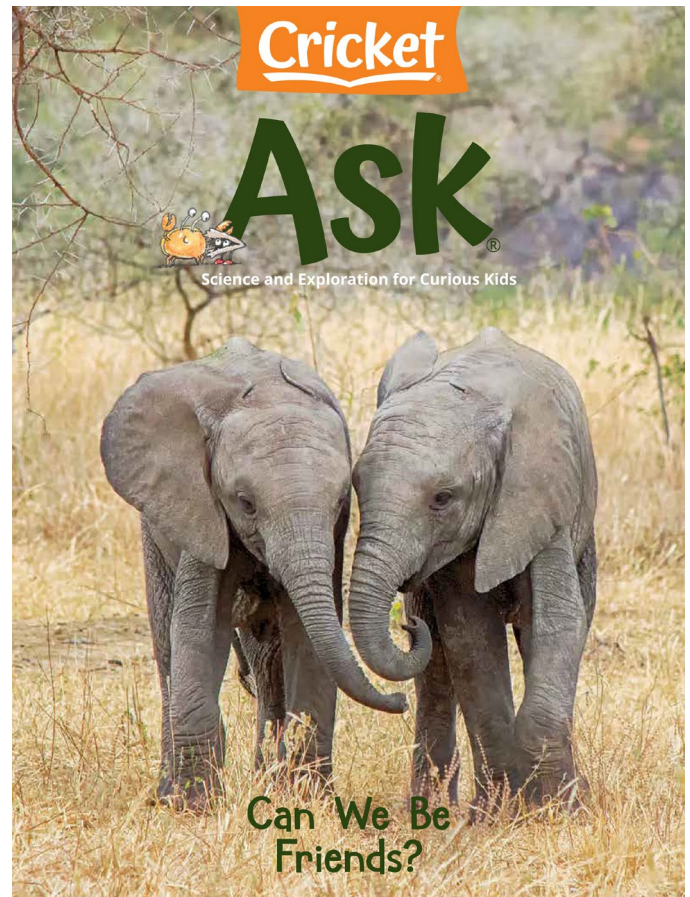
Most people would agree that strong friendships are an essential part of emotional well-being. This month's issue of ASK contains high-interest articles and stories that examine friendship in the human and the animal worlds.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

Why is friendship an important part of life?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn how scientists are studying the plausibility of friendship in the animal world.
- Students will learn the key elements of a good joke.
- Students will learn how peer pressure can be a negative influence.
- Students will collect evidence from a scientific text to support a given claim.
- Students will construct explanations.
- Students will examine the problem-and-solution relationship.
- Students will acknowledge the benefits and disadvantages of living in a group.
- Students will plan, practice, and perform a comedy show.
- Students will write narratives to develop imagined experiences.



In addition to supplemental materials focused on core STEM skills, this flexible teaching tool offers vocabulary-building activities, questions for discussion, and cross-curricular activities.

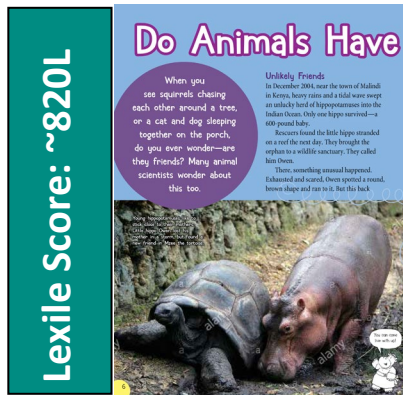
SELECTIONS

- **Do Animals Have Friends?**
Expository Nonfiction, ~820L
- **How to Tell a Joke**
Expository Nonfiction, ~580L
- **They Made Me Do It and I'm Sorry**
Contemporary Realistic Fiction, ~510L

Do Animals Have Friends?

pp. 6–11, Expository Nonfiction

Is friendship simply a human idea, or can animals in the wild also experience the dynamics of such a relationship? This article invites students to join expert scientists in studying this intriguing question.



RESOURCES

Collecting Evidence: Wild About Friendship

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn how scientists are studying the plausibility of friendship in the animal world.
- Students will collect evidence from a scientific text to support a given claim.
- Students will acknowledge the benefits and disadvantages of living in a group.

KEY VOCABULARY

sanctuary (p. 6) a place where someone or something is protected or given shelter

companions (p. 7) persons or animals you spend time with or enjoy being with

squabble (p. 9) to argue loudly about things that are not important

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: Why is friendship an important part of life?

Pose the question, “What are the characteristics of a good friend?” Give the class three minutes to write. Encourage students to share their responses and generate a master list on the board. Next, have them consider if it is possible for wild animals to have friends. Does the answer change when thinking about domestic animals? Facilitate a discussion and distribute the article.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Post and discuss the three vocabulary words and definitions. Have students Think-Pair-Share with a partner. Give them the following brainstorming directives, one at a time:

1. Discuss why animals might live in a **sanctuary**.
2. List characters in books or movies who are **companions**.
3. Brainstorm a list of things friends might **squabble** over?

Circle the words as they appear in the text.

READ & DISCUSS

Read the article aloud with the class. Have students reread the article with a partner to answer the questions below. Discuss responses.

1. Why do scientists hesitate to use the word *friendship* when talking about wild animals?
2. Why do vulnerable wild animals sometimes form a connection with a different species?
3. Why can it be dangerous for animals to leave their group?
4. How is sharing part of the animal world?
5. What friendly actions are performed by both humans and animals?

SKILL FOCUS: Collecting Evidence

INSTRUCT: This article presents the reader with detailed information about the friendly behaviors of social animals. Present the *Collecting Evidence: Wild About Friendship* graphic organizer, and tell students that they will be reviewing the article and highlighting sentences that provide evidence to support each of the claims listed. After they have collected evidence addressing all of the statements, they will record the information on the organizer. Remind them to cite information and details using page numbers.

ASSESS: Reconvene and discuss answers. Have students compare animal friendship to human friendship.

EXTEND

Science Have students reread the purple textbox on page 8. Remind students that animals that live in groups, such as elephants, are called social animals. Using information from the article and other sources, have students list the advantages and disadvantages animals experience by living in a group. Further challenge the class to list as many specific animal group names as they can. (Ex: elephants/herd; wolves/pack, etc.)

Wild About Friendship

Collecting Evidence Gather supporting evidence from the article to support each claim. Note the evidence and the article page it appears on. Then answer the question to explain how the evidence indicates friendship.

Claim: Animals have favorite group members.

Supporting evidence (p. _____)

How does this indicate a friendship?

Claim: Animals share.

Supporting evidence (p. _____)

How does this indicate a friendship?

Claim: Animals fight and make up.

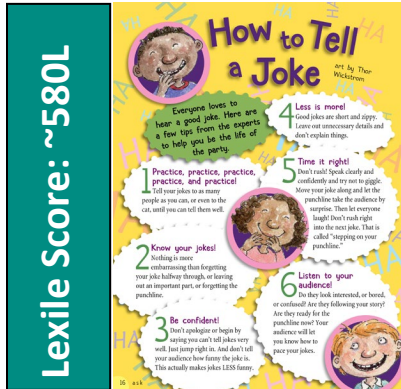
Supporting evidence (p. _____)

How does this indicate a friendship?

How to Tell a Joke

pp. 16–17, Expository Nonfiction

Whether goofy or clever, a good joke can lift your spirits and brighten your day. Readers will learn strategies for successful joke-telling and discover the mistakes that make jokes fall flat.



RESOURCES

Constructing Explanations: The Joke's on You

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn the key elements of a good joke.
- Students will construct explanations.
- Students will plan, practice, and perform a comedy show.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **punchline (p. 16)** the words at the end of a joke that make it funny or surprising
- **pace (p. 16)** to set the speed of something
- **plot (p. 17)** the series of events that tell a story or joke

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: Why is friendship an important part of life?

Tell the class a joke and then ask volunteers to share an (appropriate!) joke. Talk about why we like jokes and how they make us feel. Guide students to notice that good jokes are often part storytelling and part commentary. Additionally, the element of surprise is the foundation of any good joke. Help students compile a list of joke categories. (Ex: knock-knock jokes, riddles, puns, etc.)

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display and review the vocabulary words to be sure students understand the definitions before reading. As a post-reading activity, have students use the three vocabulary words to summarize the article.

READ & DISCUSS

Reinforce comprehension of the concepts and details presented in the article by using the following prompts to direct discussion.

1. Why do most people enjoy hearing a good joke?
2. What delivery mistakes can make a joke less funny? (Describe two.)
3. Explain the phrase “stepping on your punchline.”
4. How can clues from the audience help you adjust your joke-telling?
5. When can jokes cause bad feelings instead of good feelings?

SKILL FOCUS: Constructing Explanations

INSTRUCT: Advise students to review the article and to study the six expert tips for successful joke-telling. Then distribute the *Constructing Explanations: The Joke's on You* graphic organizer. Tell students they will use information from the article to complete the worksheet. Students will explain the tips and indicate how they improve the comedic experience for both the joke-teller and the audience. This activity will help students get ready for the Performing Arts extension activity.

ASSESS: Review the worksheet. The answer to the Think Tank questions should be completed independently and must include logical reasoning.

EXTEND

Performing Arts Tell students they will be working in small groups to present a four- to five-joke comedy routine. Group members who are not comfortable performing can focus on researching jokes and critiquing performances using information from the article as other members practice. Show an age-appropriate comedy routine from the internet. Then have groups follow these steps:

1. Choose a topic for your routine, such as family, pets, school.
2. Gather appropriate jokes related to your topic from books and the internet, or write your own jokes.
3. Write each joke on a separate index card.
4. Practice telling jokes and moving smoothly from one joke to the next by making short comments or remarks.

Review proper audience behavior. Then have groups perform.

The Joke's on You

Constructing Explanations Explain each tip listed below and describe how it improves the comedic experience for both the joke-teller and the audience.

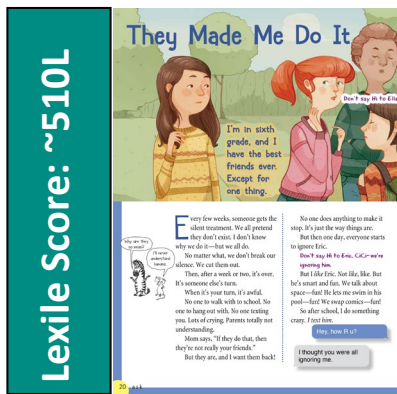
Joke-Telling Tips	Explanation
Practice	
Know your jokes	
Confidence	
Less is more	
Timing	
Listen to the audience	

Think Tank: Are some of the tips above more important than others? Which tip do you think is most important for improving your joke-telling ability? Why? How would your performance be weaker if you ignored one of these tips? Write your answers to these questions on another piece of paper. Include supporting details from the article.

They Made Me Do It and I'm Sorry

pp. 20–21, Contemporary Realistic Fiction

Most students understand the concept of the “silent treatment.” This story tells about a group of sixth-grade friends who routinely give each other the silent treatment until one friend is brave enough to put a stop to it.



ENGAGE

Conversation Question: Why is friendship an important part of life?

Ask students to explain peer pressure in their own words. Then discuss the following questions: *Why do you think kids are more easily influenced by their friends and classmates? What are some examples of negative and positive peer pressure? Why is it hard to stand up to peer pressure?* Finally, tell students to notice how the characters in this story deal with peer pressure.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Post the key terms and discuss the definitions. Then display the following items and have students work in pairs to respond.

1. When is it helpful to **ignore** someone? When is it hurtful?
2. Name something you would **swap** with a friend.
3. Use the verb **cave** correctly in a sentence.

READ & DISCUSS

After students read the article, discuss the questions below.

1. Explain the silent treatment. Why does it feel bad to be given the silent treatment?
2. Why does CiCi ignore Eric even though she regrets doing so?
3. Why did CiCi text Eric? What do her texts reveal about her?
4. How does Eric deal with the silent treatment?
5. What lesson does this story teach?

SKILL FOCUS: Problem and Solutions

INSTRUCT: Inform students that they will reread the article with a partner and highlight details that show how the primary problem in the story (the silent treatment) is resolved. Distribute copies of the *Problem and Solution: The Sound of Silence* graphic organizer. Review the directions and then have partners work together to complete it.

ASSESS: Have students share their responses with the class.

EXTEND

Language Arts Have students choose one of the characters in the story to role-play. Then have them write a letter to an advice columnist describing a problem related to the silent treatment. For example, they could role-play Eric and ask how to deal with being given the silent treatment. They could write as CiCi and ask how to deal with the pressure to give a good friend the silent treatment. Finally, they could write as one of the other kids in the group and ask how to stop the group from giving the silent treatment once and for all. After students finish, have them exchange letters with a partner and respond to the new letter as if they were an advice columnist. Show examples of advice columns in local newspapers for reference.

RESOURCES

Problem and Solution: The Sound of Silence

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn how peers can be a negative influence.
- Students will examine the problem-and-solution relationship.
- Students will write narratives to develop imagined experiences.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **ignore (p. 20)** to refuse to show that you hear or see something or someone
- **swap (p. 20)** to give something to someone and receive something in return
- **cave (p. 21)** to give in to pressure

The Sound of Silence

Problem and Solution Use information from “They Made Me Do It and I’m Sorry” to complete **Part A**. Use your own thoughts and ideas to complete **Part B**.

Problem: The Silent Treatment

Part A: This is how CiCi and Eric dealt with the silent treatment:

1.

2.

Part B: These are my suggestions for dealing with the silent treatment:

1.

2.