

Primate groups worksheet

Ask your class if they can name a group of primates. You'll probably get answers of 'lemur', 'monkey', 'ape', or more specific examples of certain species like 'chimpanzee', 'gorilla', etc.

Below is information introducing you to the wonderful world of primates - our extended family! The aim is to get readers better educated with the main groups of primates that they may already be familiar with.

The information can be read through as a group or alone. It is kept simple to make it accessible to younger learners and provide a base to build upon. Primatology can get complicated so for now lets start with an introduction!

After reading through the introduction there is a worksheet to go through with blanks. Fill in the missing words to complete the worksheet. Answers are available on another sheet at the end of this pack.

Enjoy and happy learning!



Primate groups

Primates are a group of mammals that include us and our closest relatives. Humans are primates! There are well over 500 species of primates that can be organised into different groups based on genetics. Members of these groups share physical traits that can be used to distinguish them from each other. The major groups that most people will be familiar with are the lemurs, monkeys, and apes. However, not all primates fit into these groups!

Lemurs are endemic to the island on Madagascar - this means they are found naturally on Madagascar and nowhere else. Lemurs have more 'ancestral' traits, traits that are more similar to what ancestral primates had years ago. These physical traits include a wet nose, a longer snout, a tooth comb (made from their bottom incisors), and a reflective layer at the back of the eye.

Apes and monkeys share many of the same traits as they are more closely related. Monkeys and apes in comparison have much shorter snouts than lemurs. They rely on smell a lot less than lemurs and so do not need a long snout and wet nose. Instead, a short face and dry nose. Sight is much more important.

Monkeys can be divided into two different groups; monkeys found in the Americas and monkeys found in Africa and Asia. Monkeys in the Americas all evolved from the same ancestor who made their way over to the Americas many years ago. It was believed the ancestor crossed the seas on a raft of vegetation.

Monkeys of the Americas and Afro-Eurasian monkeys have some physical differences from each other that can be used to tell them apart. The easiest way is by looking at the nose. A monkey from the Americas has a nose with nostrils that face sideways. An Afro-Eurasian monkey has nostrils that point downwards. There are also some differences in their number of teeth.

Apes generally have the largest brain-to-body ratio, making them the most intelligent of species. Humans are classified as apes. There are 5 great apes, gorillas, chimpanzees, bonobos, orangutans and humans, as well as small apes which is the gibbons.

Easiest way to tell the difference between an ape and a monkey? Apes have no tail!

The primates that do not fit into these groups are less well known. If you looked at them you might not think they were closely related to us!

Tarsiers are small primates closely related to monkeys. They have big eyes, each is larger than its brain, to help them see at night as they are nocturnal. They also have elongated ankle bones for leaping between trees.

Lorises are nocturnal primates related to lemurs and the only venomous primates. They have a special gland in their elbow that secretes an oil which can make a venom when mixed with their saliva.

Bushbabys, angwantibos and **pottos** are similar to the other species. They are small, quiet, nocturnal primates that can be hard to spot moving through the trees.

Primates groups – worksheet

Fill in the blanks with the missing word.

Primates are a group of _____ that include humans and our closest relatives. There are over _____ species of primates that can be organised into different groups based on _____.

Members of these different groups share _____ traits that can distinguish them from each other.

Lemurs are found on _____ and nowhere else. They have more _____ traits, such as a wet nose, longer snout, a _____, and a _____ at the back of their eye.

Monkeys and _____ share many traits as they are closely related. They have _____ snouts compared to lemurs, as they rely less on smell.

Monkeys can be divided into two groups; Monkeys of the _____ and _____ monkeys. It is believed monkeys of the _____ evolved from an ancestor who made it to the Americas on a raft of _____.

There are some physical differences between monkeys of the Americas and Afro-Eurasian monkeys that can be used to tell them apart. The easiest way to tell them apart is to look at their _____.

Monkeys of the americas have nostrils that face _____.

Afro- Eurasian monkeys have nostrils that face _____.

There are also differences between the two groups in their _____.

Apes have the largest _____to body ratio making them the most intelligent. There are _____ apes, which includes gorillas, _____, bonobos, _____, and humans, and small apes which are the _____.

Easiest way to tell the difference between an ape and a monkey? Apes have _____!

There are some species of primates that don't fit into these categories, but they are still primates closely related to us! Tarsiers are small primates closely related to _____. They have large _____, each of which is larger than its _____. They help it see at night as they are _____. Tarsiers also have elongated ankle bones to help them leap between trees.

Lorises are the only _____ primates. Their elbows have a gland that secretes an oil that, when mixed with their saliva, becomes venom.

_____, angwantibos, and pottos are small primates, hard to spot, that move slowly through trees.

Primate groups – worksheet

No peeking!

Missing word answers.

Primates are a group of **_mammals_** that include humans and our closest relatives. There are over **_500_** species of primates that can be organised into different groups based on **_genetics_**. Members of these different groups share **_physical_** traits that can distinguish them from each other. Lemurs are found on **_Madagascar_** and nowhere else. They have more **_ancestral_** traits, such as a wet nose, longer snout, a **_tooth comb_**, and a **_reflective layer_** at the back of their eye.

Monkeys and **_apes_** share many traits as they are closely related. They have **_shorter_** snouts compared to lemurs, as they rely less on smell.

Monkeys can be divided into two groups; Monkeys of the **_Americas_** and **_Afro-Eurasian_** monkeys. It is believed monkeys of the **_Americas_** evolved from an ancestor who made it to the Americas on a raft of **_vegetation_**.

There are some physical differences between monkeys of the Americas and Afro-Eurasian monkeys that can be used to tell them apart. The easiest way to tell them apart is to look at their **_nose_**.

Monkeys of the Americas have nostrils that face **_sideways_**. Afro-Eurasian monkeys have nostrils that face **_downwards_**. There are also differences between the two groups in their **_teeth_**.

Apes have the largest **_brain_** to body ratio making them the most intelligent. There are **_great_** apes, which includes gorillas, **_chimpanzees_**, bonobos, **_orangutans_**, and humans, and small apes which are the **_gibbons_**.

Easiest way to tell the difference between an ape and a monkey? Apes have **_no tail_**!

There are some species of primates that don't fit into these categories, but they are still related to us!

Tarsiers are small primates closely related to **_monkeys_**. They have large **_eyes_**, each of which is larger than its **_brain_**.

They help it see at night as they are **_nocturnal_**. Tarsiers also have elongated ankle bones to help them leap between trees.

Lorises are the only **_venomous_** primates. Their elbows have a gland that secretes an oil that, when mixed with their saliva, becomes venom.

bushbabys, angwantibos, and pottos are small primates, hard to spot, that move slowly through trees.

