



# The Green Fern Zoo

## Unit 4 Reader

Core Knowledge Language Arts® • New York Edition • Skills Strand



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## Meet Vern

My name is V**ern**, and I have the best job! My job is to take you kids in to see the Green F**ern** Zoo.

We will see things with wings and things with scales, things that bite and things that sting, things that creep and things that swim.

I have lots of fun facts and tales to share with you. So let's see the zoo and have some fun!





## Things That Swim

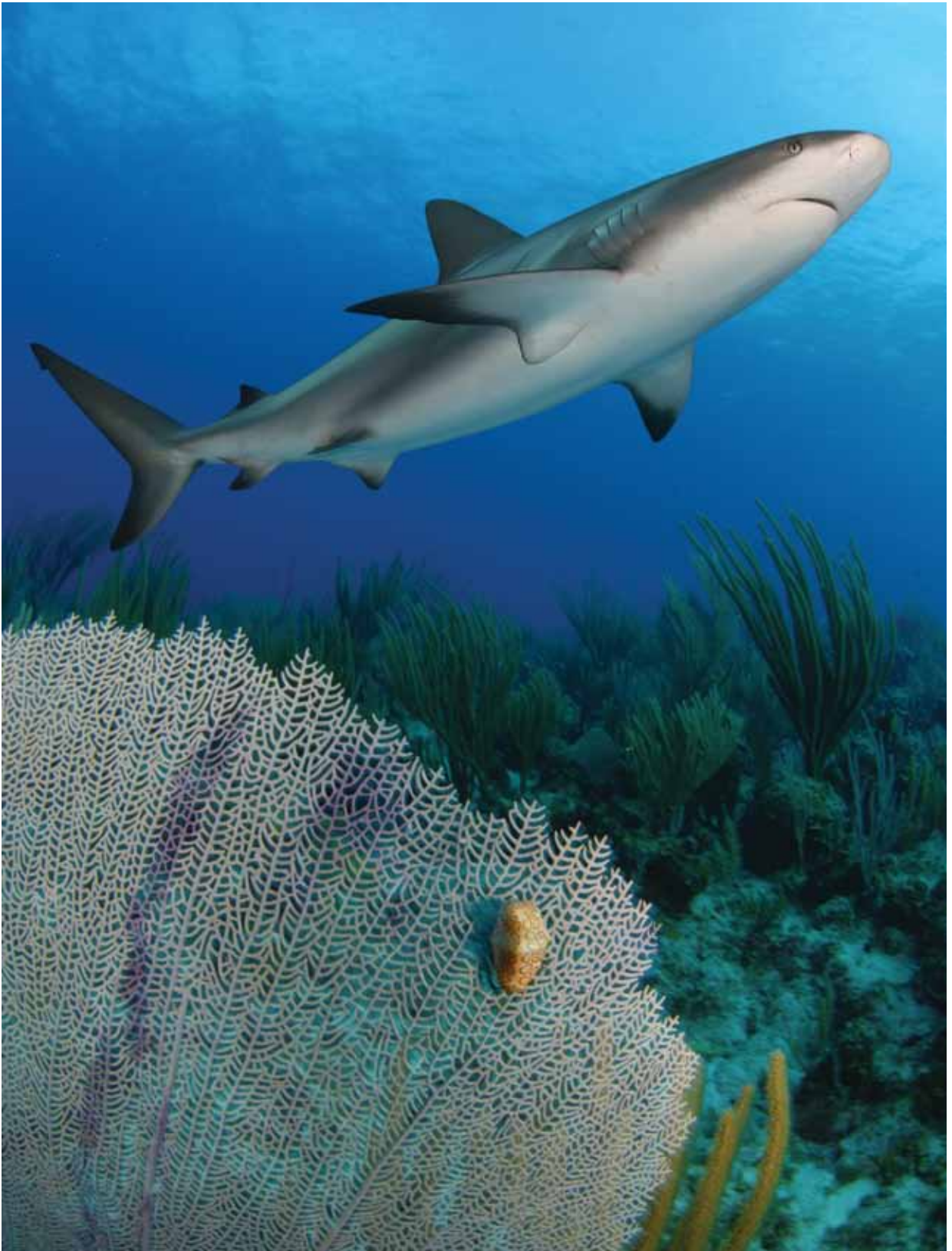
I hope you kids like things that swim, be·cause this is the room where we keep all the fish.

The fish here are trout. A trout is a fish that swims in cool lakes and creeks. You can see that they have lots of spots and **marks**. The spots and **marks** help the trout hide. They make the trout look a lot like the sand on the bed of a creek.



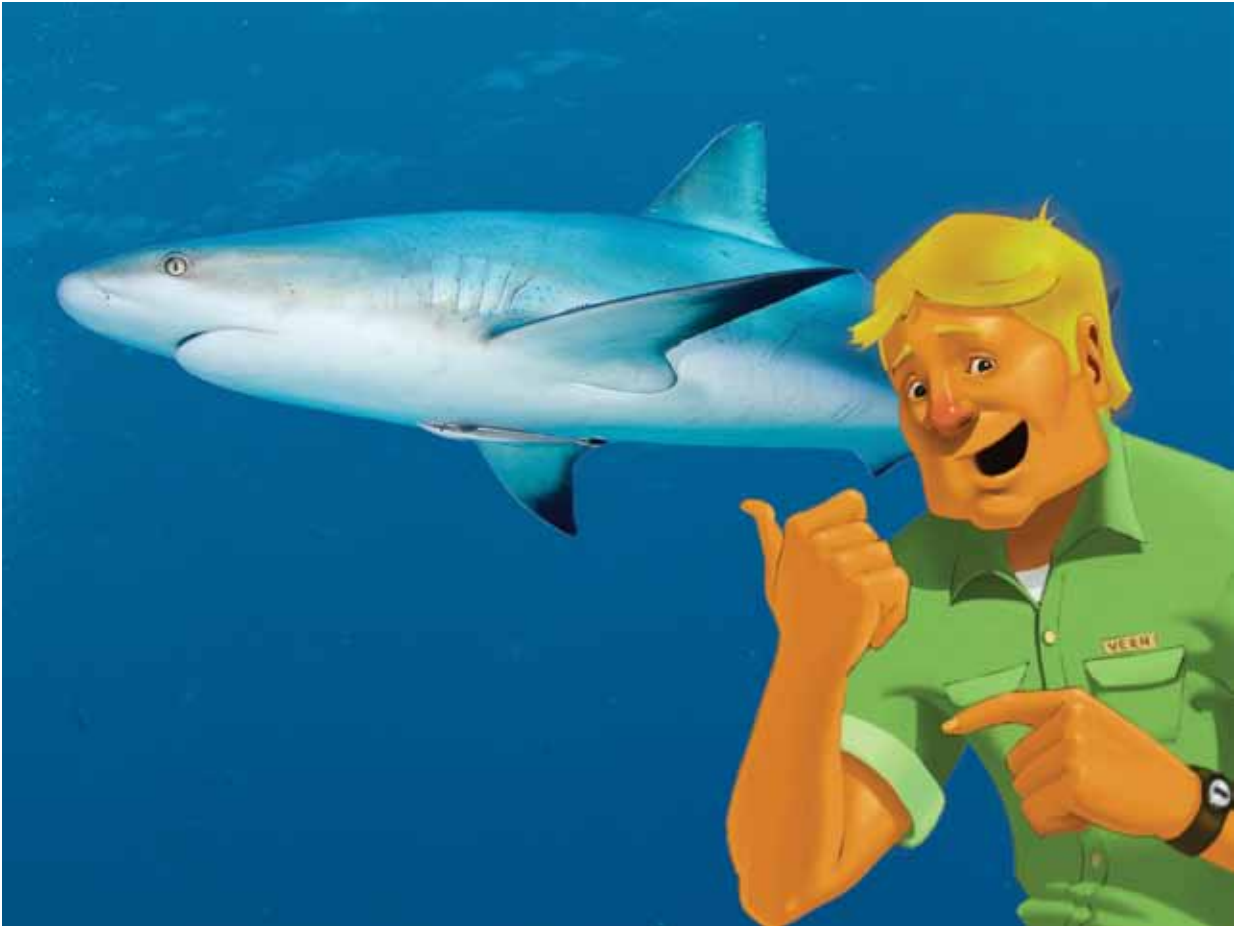
Here's a big fish that makes all of the wee fish run and hide. This is a reef shark. It has that name be·cause it likes to make its home close to a reef, where there are lots of fish.





You can see that the reef shark has fins and a set of gills on its side. You can not see them from here, but this shark has lots of sharp teeth in its mouth.

Would a reef shark bite you? Well, you are not the lunch that this shark would like best. A reef shark likes to feed on squid, crabs, and shrimp. But it would be smart not to get the reef shark mad at you all the same!



## Chimps

Next, let's see the chimps. We have ten chimps here at the Green **Fern** Zoo. You can see them all out there if you look **hard**.

The one you see here is Bess. She has a snack in **her** mouth. Bess and the rest of the chimps like to munch on plants, nuts, and seeds.





Do you see that chimp with the stick? That's **Bart**. **Bart** likes to have ants **for** lunch. To get the ants, he takes a stick and sticks it in an ant hill. Then he lifts it up and licks off the ants. Yum, yum!



The chimp with the rope in his hand is Max. He's just a babe. He was **born** in **March**. Bess is his mom.

Max is a lot of fun. He likes to swing on the rope and splash in the pool.





The two chimps up on the rocks are **Carl** and **Norm**. **Carl** is the one on the left. **Carl** and **Norm** are pals. But they were not pals last week.

Last week we gave them a branch from a fig tree **for** lunch. **Norm** took the branch and ran off with it. He ate all of the figs. **Carl** was mad at **Norm** all week.

But that was last week. This week the two of them are pals.



## Mandrills

Here you can see two man·drills. Man·drills are a lot like chimps.

Do you like the red nose? The man·drill with the red nose is a male.

The man·drill on the left is groom·ing the male with the red nose. She is looking **for** ticks and bugs. Man·drills like groom·ing be·cause it makes them look good and feel good, too.





Look! One of the man·drills is  
yawn·ing! You can see that he has  
long, sh**arp** teeth. Those sh**arp**  
teeth help him chop up his food.



Man·drills like a lot of foods. We feed our man·drills ants, grass, nuts, **bark**, plant shoots, and roots.

Man·drills have sacks in·side their cheeks. They can stuff food in the sacks and keep it there un·til they need a snack. Then they pop the food out and munch on it!





## Things with Wings

Next, let's see some things with wings.

This is a puff·in. He makes his home up **n**orth, not too **far** from the **N**orth Pole.

Look at those cute feet!  
But they are not just cute. The puff·in's feet help him swim.

Note, as well, his big bill. The puff·in can use his bill to get fish.



Puff·ins are b**o**rn from eggs.  
The puff·in mom and dad sit on  
their egg. The mom sits. Then the  
dad sits. In the end, the chick  
pops out of the shell. The mom  
and dad take care of the chick  
un·til it can care f**o**r it·self. Look!  
That puff·in has fish in h**er** bill! She  
will feed those fish to h**er** chick.





In this next room, we have a finch. Un·like the puff·in, the finch makes a home in wood·lands. He can use his bill to snap up grass seeds **for** food.

I'm sad to tell you that the finch is gett·ing to be quite rare. We are proud to have five of them here at the Green **Fern** Zoo.



## Big Cats

Do you like cats? If you do, look there in the grass. Do you see the cat?

That is not the **sort** of cat that you keep in your home and feed cat food. That is a bob·cat.

Bob·cats are good hunt·**ers**. They hunt rabb·its, rats, and some·times deer and sheep.

That bob·cat's name is Rob·**ert**, **or** Bob **for** short. Get it?





If you look up on that rock,  
you will see a cat that's bigg·**er**  
than a bob·cat. It's a pan·th**er**.

Pan·th**ers** can have spots.  
They can be tan, too. Here at the  
Green F**ern** Zoo, we have two  
black pan·th**ers**. The name of this  
one is Jet.



That's Jet's sis·**ter**, Flash, up on the tree branch. Flash has strong legs that help **her** run fast. She has sh**arp** teeth and sh**arp** claws that help **her** hunt rabb·its and deer. She can use **her** claws to scam·**per** up a tree if she needs to.

You can see that she is not all black like Jet. She has some spots.





# Groundhogs

Here you can see a ground·hog.

Ground·hogs have sh**ar**p claws that help them dig holes in the ground. They spend a lot of time down in those d**ar**k holes.



Ground·hogs like to feed on grass and plants. But when they run out of their holes to get food, they have to be on the look·out. Some critt·**ers**, like bob·cats and snakes, like to dine on ground·hogs. This ground·hog here is sitt·ing up to see if there is a snake **or** a bob·cat close by.





This ground·hog is named Pepp·**er**. We **feed** **her** grass, tree **bark**, and in·sects, but the food that she likes best is **corn**. We found that out yes·**ter**·day **morn**·ing when she got out from **her** pen.

We found **her** in the pett·ing zoo. She ate a lot of the **corn** that was there **for** the ducks and hens.





## The Reptile Room

Who likes snakes? Hands up if you like them!

Some kids like snakes best of all, and some kids can't stand them. If you do not like snakes, you can skip this next room be·cause it is the rep·tile room.



This is a gar·ter snake. Gar·ter snakes feed on slugs, in·sects, and frogs. For those critt·ers, the gar·ter snake is a kill·er. But for us, it is harm·less. A gar·ter snake could bite you, but its bite would not make you sick.





This is a ratt·**ler**. He is a des·**ert** dwell·**er** that hunts **for** rats and rabb·its. He has a patt·**ern** on his scales that helps him blend in and hide in the des·**ert** sands. When the ratt·**ler** is hidd·en, it is **hard** **for** rats and rabb·its to see him.





A ratt·**ler** is not harm·less like a gar·**ter** snake. If you ev·**er** see this snake hiss·ing and coil·ing up, you bett·**er** stand back and let it be. The ratt·**ler** has sh**arp** fangs, and a bite from a ratt·**ler** could kill you. But we are safe here in the rep·tile room. There is a sheet of glass keep·ing us safe from the snakes.





## Termites

What do you kids like to have **for** lunch? Hot dogs? Chick·en nugg·ets?

What if I gave you a lump of wood **or** a big tree stump **for** lunch? Would you like that?

Well, if you were a **ter**·mite, you would like it. **Ter**·mites are in·sects that like to munch on wood.







See this big spike sticking up from the ground? It looks **sort** of like a rock, but it is a **ter**·mite mound. If you could look in·side, you would see lots of **ter**·mites.



If you would like to see what **ter**·mites look like, take a peek in this box.

As you can see, **ter**·mites look a lot like ants. They have six legs like ants. A **ter**·mite mound has a queen who makes eggs, just like in an ant·hill. Here you can see that the **ter**·mite queen is much **bigg**·**er** than the rest of the **ter**·mites.

Would a **ter**·mite munch on your home? It would if your home is made of wood. The **ter**·mites from a big mound could have your liv·ing room **for** lunch and your bed·room **for** dinn·**er**!





## River Otters

Do o you like to run and jump?  
Do o you like to chase your pals?  
Do o you like to splash in the pool in  
the summ·er? Do o you like to slide  
down hills in the win·ter?

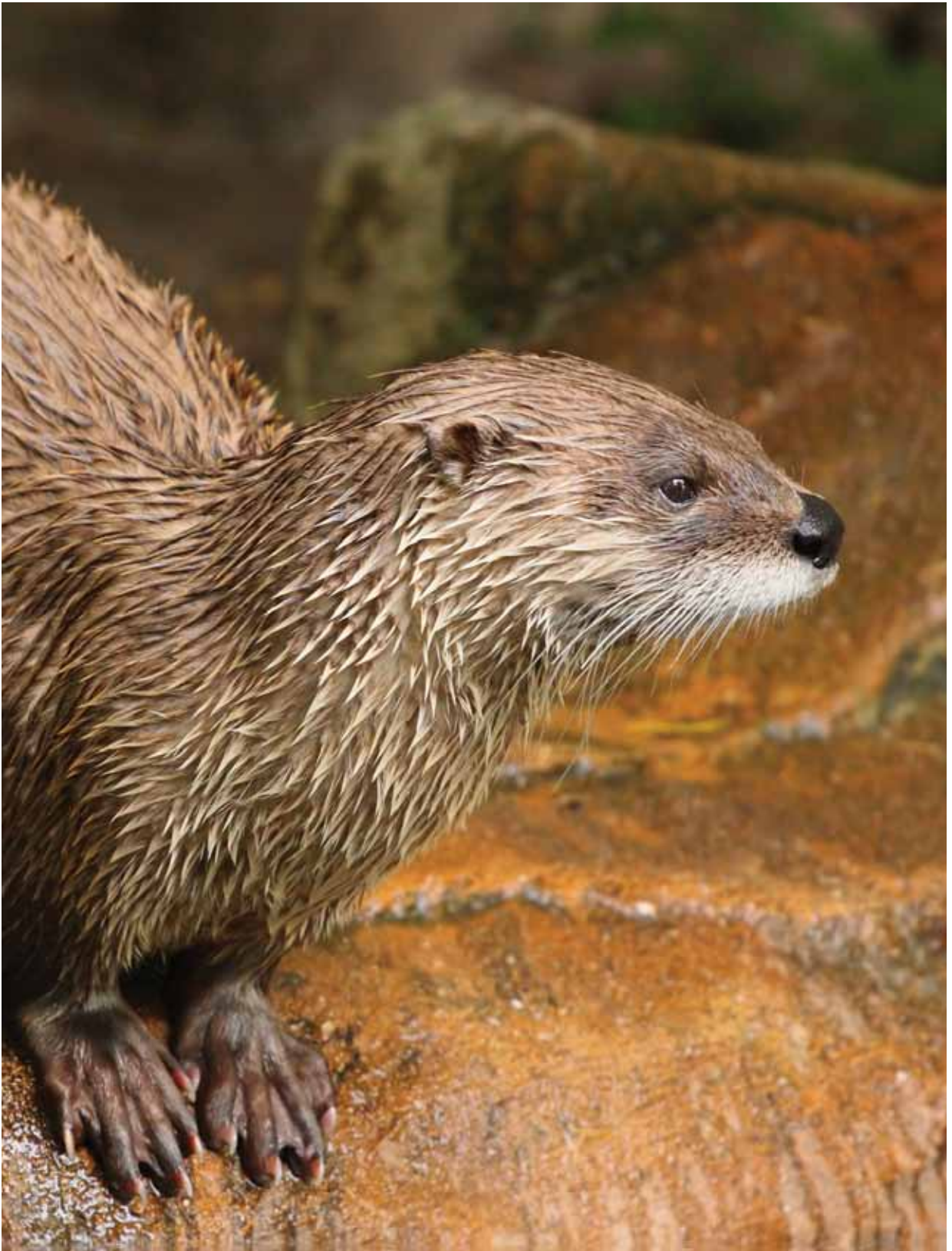
Well, if you like to do those  
things, you would make a good  
ott·er! You can see three of our  
riv·er ott·ers up on the rocks:  
Al·ex, All·en, and Ag·nes. That's  
Al·ex up on top of All·en. The last  
one is Ag·nes.





Ott·**ers** have short, strong legs with webbed paws and sharp claws. The webb·ing helps the ott·**ers** swim fast and get their food. Riv·**er** ott·**ers** hunt **for** fish, frogs, and crabs.

When it is time **for** bed, the riv·**er** ott·**ers** scam·**per** to their den. They have nests on land that are lined with grass, moss, and bark.



## Cranes and Spoon·bills

Here you can see two sand·hill cranes.

A sand·hill crane has long legs, a **dark**, point·**ed** bill, and a red spot next to its bill. Sand·hill cranes are found in wet·lands. They like to hunt **for** frogs, snakes, and in·sects.







Those are sand·hill cranes, too.  
In fact, that's a mom and a dad  
with their chicks. When sand·hill  
cranes mate, they tilt their bills up  
and make hoot·ing sounds. Then  
the mom and dad make a nest.  
The mom sits on the eggs **for** 4  
weeks un·til the chicks are **born**.



That's a spoon·bill. He has that name be·cause his bill is shaped like a spoon.

The spoon·bill wades in pools to get his food. He swings his bill back and forth. If he feels an in·sect swimm·ing in·side his bill, he snaps it shut.

When spoon·bills mate, they make a nest. When the chicks are born, they can't see. The mom and dad have to care for them until they can see.



# The Ostrich

This is an os·trich. He is a big one. He tips the scales at close to two hun·dred pounds.

An os·trich has wings that it can flap, but it can't get off the ground. Still, an os·trich can run fast on land. It can run as fast as a **car**!

If it gets mad, an os·trich can kick you. My pal Fred here at the zoo got kicked**ed** by an os·trich. The os·trich broke Fred's leg in three spots! Ouch!





## Deer

Look there! Do you see the two deer in the woods? The one who is look·ing at us is named Hope.

Hope was not **born** in this zoo. I found **her** by my home one **morn·ing** af·**ter** a **storm**. A tree fell on **her** and broke **her** leg. She could not stand up.

I drove **her** here and the vet **fixed** up **her** leg. We **named** **her** Hope and found a spot **for** **her** in the zoo. To·day **her** leg is fine and she is as strong as ev·**er**.





## The Petting Zoo

Well, kids, the last thing that you all get to see is the pett·ing zoo.

You can't pet the os·trich, the ott·**ers**, **or** the spoon·bills. And it would not be wise to pet the pan·th**er or** the bob·cat! But in this **part** of the zoo, you can pet all of the critt·**ers**.

This rabb·it's name is Hoss. He likes it when you rub his neck.





Here are two chick·ens. They like it when you toss them seed **corn**.

You can pet the chick·ens, too. But some·times they get scared**ed**. It's best if you do not run up to them be·cause runn·ing scares them.

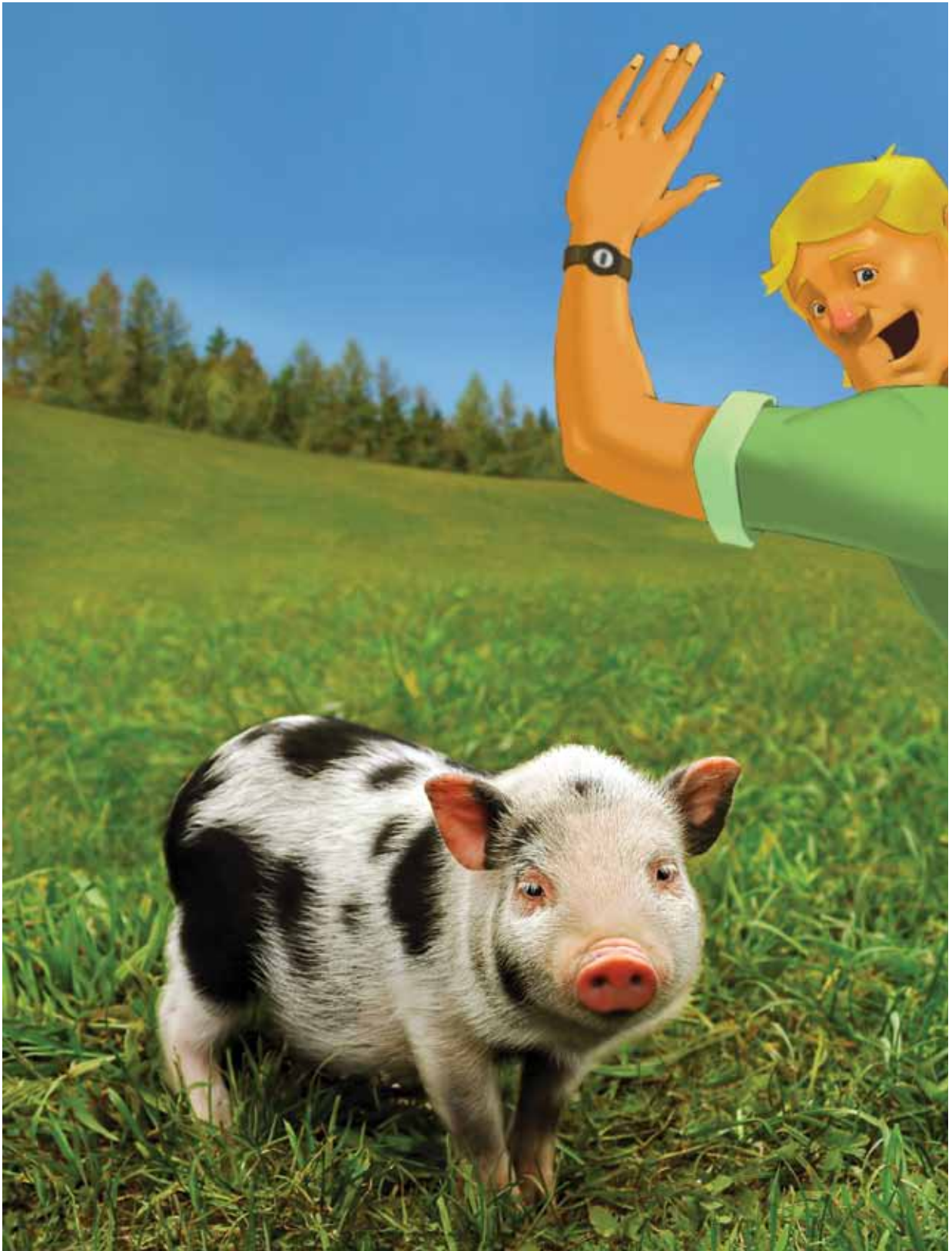


There's Pam, our pet pig. You can pet **her**, too. Pam likes to be pett·**ed**.

Well, kids, that's it **for** me. I hope you had a good time at the zoo to·day. I had fun point·ing out some of the critt·**ers** that I like best.

I hope some of you can vi·sit with your moms and dads. There is so much to see here at the Green **Fern** Zoo. You could vis·it us five times and still see lots of cool things!





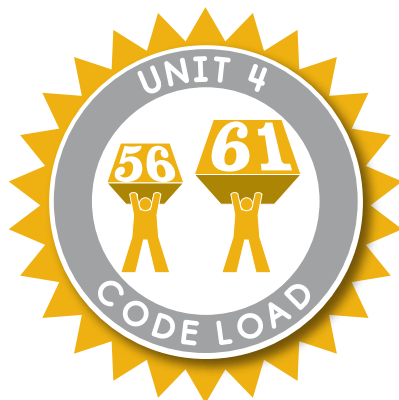
## About this Book

This book has been created for use by students learning to read with the Core Knowledge Reading Program. Readability levels are suitable for early readers. The book has also been carefully leveled in terms of its “code load,” or the number of spellings used in the stories.

The English writing system is complex. It uses more than 200 spellings to stand for 40-odd sounds. Many sounds can be spelled several different ways, and many spellings can be pronounced several different ways. This book has been designed to make early reading experiences simpler and more productive by using a subset of the available spellings. It uses *only* spellings that students have been taught to sound out as part of their phonics lessons, plus a handful of Tricky Words, which have also been deliberately introduced in the lessons. This means that the stories will be 100% decodable if they are assigned at the proper time.

As the students move through the program, they learn new spellings and the “code load” in the decodable Readers increases gradually. The code load graphic on this page indicates the number of spellings students are expected to know in order to read the first story of the book and the number of spellings students are expected to know in order to read the final stories in the book. The columns on the inside back cover list the specific spellings and Tricky Words students are expected to recognize at the beginning of this Reader. The bullets at the bottom of the inside back cover identify spellings, Tricky Words, and other topics that are introduced gradually in the unit this Reader accompanies.

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## Code Knowledge assumed at the beginning of this Reader:

### Vowel Sounds and Spellings:

/i/ as in skim  
 /e/ as in bed  
 /a/ as in tap  
 /u/ as in up  
 /o/ as in flop  
 /ee/ as in bee  
 /a\_e/ as in late  
 /i\_e/ as in time  
 /o\_e/ as in home  
 /u\_e/ as in cute  
 /oo/ as in soon  
 /oo/ as in look  
 /ou/ as in shout  
 /oi/ as in oil  
 /aw/ as in paw

### Other:

punctuation (period, comma, quotation marks, question mark, exclamation point, apostrophe)

### Consonant Sounds and Spellings:

/p/ as in tip, tipping  
 /b/ as in rub, rubbing  
 /t/ as in bat, batting  
 /d/ as in bid, bidding  
 /k/ as in cot, kid, rock, soccer  
 /g/ as in log, logging  
 /ch/ as in chin  
 /j/ as in jog  
 /f/ as in fat, huff  
 /v/ as in vet  
 /s/ as in sit, hiss  
 /z/ as in zip, dogs, buzz  
 /th/ as in thin  
 /th/ as in then

/m/ as in swim, swimming  
 /n/ as in run, running  
 /ng/ as in king  
 /h/ as in ham  
 /w/ as in wet  
 /l/ as in lamp, fill  
 /r/ as in rip, ferret  
 /y/ as in yes  
 /sh/ as in shop  
 /x/ as in box  
 /qu/ as in quit

### Tricky Words:

a, I, know, so, of, all, some, from, word, are, were, have, one, once, to, do, two, who, said, says, was, when, where, why, what, which, here, there, he, she, we, be, me, they, their, my, by, you, your, could, would, should, down, because

## Code Knowledge added gradually in the unit for this Reader:

- Beginning with "Meet Vern": the sound /er/ spelled 'er' as in her
- Beginning with "Things That Swim": the sound /ar/ spelled 'ar' as in car
- Beginning with "Chimps": the sound /or/ spelled 'or' as in for
- Beginning with "Mandrills": two-syllable words
- Beginning with "Groundhogs": the Tricky Words *today*, *yesterday*, *tomorrow*; /t/ as in asked, /d/ as in filled



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