

Dane County's Teen Newspaper

Simpson Street Free Press

Curriculum Guide – April 2010 Issue

Look for our vocabulary crosswords, geography quizzes, and other learning tools launching online soon!

Science, page 1 (continued on page 2):

Have your students read the front-page article about bark beetles and monarch butterflies. Discuss why scientists decided to cut down thousands of fir trees instead of applying pesticides to combat a bark beetle infestation. What implications might this decision have on monarch butterflies? What other effects could this decision have?

Also read the article about the Kepler satellite on the bottom of the front page. Discuss what characteristics a planet must have in order to support human life. How does the Kepler satellite help with the search for these planets?

Geography, pages 2-5:

- What is causing the Siberian Shelf to melt at an increasingly fast pace? Why is this melting such a large issue? What downstream effects does it have on plant and animal life?
- How are hurricanes and typhoons different? How is a tornado different from either a hurricane or a typhoon?
- What makes a ray so light? What are some characteristics of rays?
- What has caused the sturgeon population to decline in Wisconsin? How are researchers monitoring this population?

Have your students read the articles about invasive species on pages 4 and 5 (Invasion of the Asian Carp, Invading North America, Anatomy of an Invasion, and Other Great Lakes Invaders). Discuss the different types of invasive species and why they are bad for our lakes. What effects do these species have on the lake ecosystem? How can we prevent invasive species from spreading?

Animal Watch, pages 16-17:

- How do elephants warn their enemies? What do they do if the attacking animal does not heed their warning?
- What is a serval cat? How is this type of cat different from other cats?
- What makes toucans unique? In particular, what is special about their bill?
- How do butterflies fool predators? What other types of animals use camouflage and other tricks to deceive predators?



Energy and the Environment, pages 18-19:

- What is the cap and trade system? Do experts think it will reduce greenhouse gases? What are some alternatives to this system?

- Why are reports saying that tap water might be better to drink than bottled water?
- How are offshore wind farms set up? Why would companies put wind turbines offshore if the construction process is more difficult?

Science, pages 22-23:

- What is the oldest known form of life on Earth?
- What fascinating things can bacteria do?
- What is an organelle? Name some organelles and list their functions.
- How are plant cells and animal cells different? How are they similar?
- What are some characteristics of the red-tailed hawk? Have any of your students ever seen one around Dane County?
- Marsupials are a specialist species. What does this mean? What are some types of marsupials?

History, pages 27-28:

- How did the Tarahamara Indians survive the Spanish invasions of the 1500s? How do they live today?
- What did scientists find near Venice, Italy? What was this place like?
- What is the difference between Cajun and Creole food? Between the history of each group?

Geography

On a world or U.S. map, locate the following countries, areas, or landmarks mentioned in this issue of the *Simpson Street Free Press*.

Page 1: Mexico

Page 2: Arctic Ocean; Siberia

Page 2: South Pole

Page 7: Afghanistan

Page 16: Kenya

Page 18: Mt. Kilimanjaro (Africa)

Page 19: Denmark

Page 21: Sudan

Page 23: Australia

Page 23: New Guinea

Page 27: Spain

Page 27: Italy

Teachers:

We love to hear from our readers. Have your students pick their favorite article and write a short letter to the reporter. Letters can be mailed or e-mailed to us. Thanks to all of you. Keep up your great work!

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Simpson Street Free Press Literacy Initiative Book Talk, pages 12-13:

- If any of your students have read the books we've reviewed, have them share their thoughts about the book.
- Have students write their own review of books on our "Classic 30" lists and submit it to us for possible publication in the next issue of the *Simpson Street Free Press*. Published students receive **\$25 gift certificates** to a local bookstore.
- Let us know what **your school's book club** is reading! We want to feature your book club in the next issue of the *Simpson Street Free Press*.
- **Encourage students to join the 6-7-8 Club – the official online book club of the Simpson Street Free Press!** Students can join by visiting our website, www.simpsonstreetfreepress.org.