

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Janet of the Apes



Hi! My name is Janet, and my favorite animals are gorillas, orangutans, bonobos (buh-NOH-bohs), and chimps. That's why my friends call me "Janet of the Apes."

At least I hope that's the reason.

Anyhow, I've learned some fascinating facts about our hairy cousins. In my research, I've also discovered the problems they face. Read on. Then help me make a plan to save the world's great apes.

### All About Apes

There are four kinds of great apes: bonobos, chimpanzees, gorillas, and orangutans. Many scientists also consider humans part of this family.

#### No More Monkey Business!

People often call apes "monkeys." Wrong! That's sort of like calling a whale a fish. Monkeys and apes differ in important ways. Apes are smarter and more closely related to humans. They're also larger than monkeys, with bigger brains.

Unlike monkeys, apes don't have tails. They use their eyes more than their noses. They have fewer babies and spend more time teaching and raising them.

### Meet the Family

Why did the baboon cross the road?



When it comes to size, gorillas are the greatest of the great apes. Despite their fierce looks, they're actually gentle and peaceful. They may look like mighty hunters, but they eat only plants. Some gorillas have been taught to use sign language. By speaking with their hands, gorillas reveal that they can feel happy, lonely, angry, and sad. They can even make jokes!

Chimpanzees share more than 99% of our genes. That means they're more closely related to people than to gorillas. Chimps can make and use their own tools to get food. Pretty clever!



Bonobos are a lot like chimps in their looks. They're less likely to fight with each other, though.

Unlike the other great apes (who are found in Africa), orangutans live in Indonesia. They're extremely playful. When it rains, they sometimes use big leaves as umbrellas.



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## Know the Danger



Almost all of the world's great apes are in danger. Their survival is threatened, and humans are the reason. People often steal baby chimps, orangutans, and gorillas from their mothers and sell them as pets or circus animals. Because apes protect their babies, stealing an infant usually means having to kill his mother. Sometimes it means killing several family members. Apes are also killed for meat and for their hands, skulls, or other body parts, which are made into souvenirs.



One of the biggest threats to great apes is the loss of their habitat. People have been moving in on their forests. They have been cutting trees to make room for farms. Wood from rainforest trees is also sold to American lumber stores. Some of it is made into furniture, toys, and other products sold in the United States. Those products are often cheap to buy—but they cost animals their homes.



## We Can Help

I wish everyone would make better decisions. I think it would help if people realized how some of their choices affect animals in other parts of the world. I'll do my part to help great apes and do my best to spread the word. Here's my plan. For each step, circle the best choice: a, b, or c.

- 1. I will tell my friends** (a) about the problems apes face and how we can help, (b) that I am too busy learning about apes to hang out anymore, (c) gorilla jokes.
- 2. I will ask my family not to buy** (a) celery hearts, (b) things made by cutting rainforest trees, (c) red beans and rice.
- 3. I will ask my school not to plan trips to** (a) circuses that use wild animals, (b) science museums, (c) Detroit, Michigan.
- 4. I will ask my senators and representatives to pass** (a) the salt, (b) the buck, (c) laws that protect great apes.
- 5. Before buying new toys or other stuff, I will ask myself,** (a) "Does that come with a remote control?" (b) "Is this something I really need or want?" (c) "Does it come in purple?"



**Choose one problem that threatens the survival of apes. On the back, draw a poster that draws people's attention to the problem.**