

David Livingstone: African Animals

An educational worksheet for children aged 9-13 published by
LivingstoneOnline.org

Written at Mabotsa on the 15th February 1844 to his future father in-law, Robert Moffat (CC Number 0098)

My Dear Sir,

I am in very different circumstances now from those in which I expected to have addressed from our new station. The lions here are very numerous & very troublesome and besides having attacked us have destroyed some of the cattle of our people one of them destroyed 9 sheep & goats in broad daylight in a little eminence opposite our hut last Wednesday. The natives came screaming to us as we were engaged in the water course and as all operations were immediately suspended I very imprudently returned across the valley in order to encourage them to destroy him. This very nearly cost me my life for after he was wounded he rushed down, bit Mabalwe badly on the thigh, another native on the shoulder & myself on the arm. The humerus is splintered & his teeth have produced deep wounds which may trouble me for a long time.

David Livingstone

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Experiences and Outcomes:

Literacy and English

Students can practice deep reading and textual analysis to explore Livingstone's letters.

Social Studies and Sustainability

Students can explore conservation issues around endangered animals and explore Livingstone's famous encounter with a lion.

Suggested Questions:

One of the things that made Africa so strange and exciting for David was the animals. In many cases the animals were bigger, hairier and scarier than those he encounter back home in Scotland! Who was bitten on the thigh by the lion?

How many sheep and goats had the lion destroyed?

Imagine trying to describe a lion to someone who had never seen a picture of one. What would you say?

Further Reading:

Lions are the only social big cat and often hunt in packs. This means their bite does not need to be as strong as other big cats. Can you name a big cat with a stronger bite?

There are only around 20,000 lions left on the African continent, an estimated 30-50% decline in the past 20 years. What do you think has caused their decline? Click on the link or the model of David's broken arm to go to The African Wildlife Foundation and find out all about efforts to conserve the Ewaso lions in Kenya.

<http://www.awf.org/projects/ewaso-lions>



Image courtesy of the David Livingstone Centre

This educational resource was developed by Kate Simpson and Megan Ward, who are staff of *Livingstone Online* (livingstoneonline.org). *Livingstone Online* is the leading site for learning more about the life and writings of David Livingstone. Visit our site to discover an array of images and texts that supplement the educational material found in this worksheet.