



Animal Tails:

explorations of the animal world through connections to literature



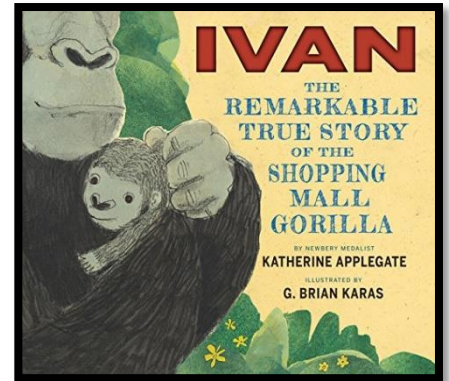
Ivan The Remarkable True Story of the Shopping Mall Gorilla

by Katharine Applegate

Age: 3rd-4th grade

Gather your Gear

- Ivan The Remarkable True Story of the Shopping Mall Gorilla book or watch the reading [here](#)
- Print the gorilla print pages and the image of the gorilla skull attached at the bottom of this lesson
- Markers or crayons



Get Ready

You can help your child make connections by thinking about concepts before reading the story.

- What do you know about gorillas?
- What does a gorilla look like? Have you ever seen a gorilla?
- Where do gorillas live in the wild?
- Where do gorillas live that do not live in the wild?

Read

Read the book, stopping to explore key story ideas. Below are some prompts to help guide you.

Some things to talk about during the story:

- How do you think Ivan felt when he was taken from the wild?
- Have you ever experienced something new and it was scary to you?

Reflect

Briefly discuss what was important or what we learned. Below are some questions to guide you.

Some things to talk about after the story:

- What do you like to do with your free time? What kinds of things did Ivan do when he lived in a human home, after he went to the shopping mall, and when he arrived at Zoo Atlanta?
- Ivan's favorite color was red when painting. What is your favorite color?
- How are gorillas similar to and different from humans?

Relate

Create connections to the idea through activities

Activity: Are we alike or different

1. Grab your materials: gorilla hand and footprint, a phone camera/digital camera, the gorilla skull picture along with a marker/crayon.



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2. With the printed materials, have your child place their hand and foot on each print and trace their own print over the gorillas. What is similar or different about human and gorillas' hand and footprints? If you are able, trace your adult's hand and foot and compare yours as well. Are the gorilla prints larger than the adult human's?
3. Now take a photo of your child's face front and side. Make sure they smile, so you can see their teeth when they take the pictures. Look at both the human photos and the image of the gorilla skull. Through discussion, explore what is similar and different about gorillas faces to humans. Look at the jaws, the teeth, the top of the head.

It takes a team.... join ours

Help us save species by joining the "Zoo Conservation Core" and raise awareness about wild animals, their habitats and why conserving both is so important. Post pictures of you doing the comparisons, or of your hand and feet prints, on your social networks and share with your family and friends what you have learned. Use the hashtag #OnlyZooATL so that we can see all your great work!

Did you know

While we cannot communicate in the same way that gorillas can, we actually have A LOT in common with gorillas. Gorillas, orangutans, chimpanzees, bonobos, and humans are collectively known as the great apes. Because we are so closely related to gorillas, humans share many similar characteristics besides DNA.

- The vision and perception of gorillas is similar to that of humans.
- Hearing is about the same as humans.
- Gestation in females last approximately 8.5 to 9 months and they generally give birth to a single baby.
- The wrinkles on a gorilla's nose are like human fingerprints. They are different in each individual and are used by researchers for identification.
- Gorillas have 32 teeth just like humans.
- Gorillas have opposable thumbs on their hands (and their feet) for grasping.
- Gorillas have over 20 vocalizations that they use to communicate with each other and the animal care staff at Zoo Atlanta.

Want to know more....

- More about western lowland gorillas: <https://zooatlanta.org/animal/western-lowland-gorilla/>
- Explore more about Ivan: <https://zooatlanta.org/animal-legend/ivan/>
- Learn about gorilla conservation in the wild through our conservation partner, The Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International: <https://gorillafund.org/>



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**Adult female
gorilla
handprint**





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Adult female footprint





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Gorilla Skull Images for Comparison

