

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# A Very Loud Monkey

By Guy Belleranti



If you ever go for a hike in the tropical rainforests of Central or South America, you might hear one of the loudest animals in the world: the howler monkey. Using their large throats and super-sized vocal cords, howler monkeys grunt, bark, howl, and roar in order to communicate with each other. Males also give husky territorial calls to defend their turf. The monkeys' calls are so loud they can be heard from three miles away!

Howler monkeys have hairless faces with beards. Each species of howler monkey has slightly different coloring, ranging from black to brown to red. Howlers of all species live in groups called troops. The troops are mostly made up of females and their babies. Only a couple of adult males belong to each troop.

These noisy monkeys spend most of their time high in the trees. Their long prehensile tails act like an extra arm, gripping branches. In fact, their prehensile tails are able to support their entire body weight. This helps to prevent the howler monkeys from falling from the tree tops.

A howler's main source of food is leaves, but its diet also consists of fruit, flowers, and nuts. When these monkeys aren't making loud calls or eating, they're usually grooming one another or sleeping. In fact, howlers rest 18 or more hours each day!

Does the howler monkey have any predators? Yes, harpy eagles, jaguars, and snakes all prey on these monkeys. Unfortunately, humans do too. People hunt howler monkeys for food and keep them as exotic pets. People have also cut down some of the monkeys' rainforest habitat for cattle grazing and farmland. However, people are also protecting this vocal species by nurturing them in wildlife sanctuaries. Don't keep quiet about these awesome primates! Tell someone you know what you've learned about the howler monkey.

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1. According to the information in the article, on which continent can you find howler monkeys?
  - a. Asia
  - b. South America
  - c. Australia
  - d. Africa
2. Which interaction between people and howler monkeys is *not* described in the article?
  - a. People have destroyed some of the monkeys' habitat.
  - b. People sometimes keep howler monkeys as pets.
  - c. People have built safe places for howler monkeys, called sanctuaries.
  - d. People sometimes study the monkeys in their natural environment.
3. Many species of monkeys make noises to communicate with each other. What makes the vocal communication of the howler monkeys so much louder than that of other species?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. According to the article, three of the howler monkeys' predators are eagles, jaguars, and snakes. What do these three animals have in common?
  - a. They are all a lot larger than a howler monkey.
  - b. They all have excellent vision to spot howler monkeys in the jungle.
  - c. They all can access tree tops, where the howler monkeys spend their time.
  - d. They are all mammals that use strong jaws to capture and consume howlers.
5. Based on what you've read in the article, would you classify the howler monkey as a carnivore, an omnivore, or a herbivore?  
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Fill in the missing letters to create a vocabulary word from the article. Then write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. p \_\_\_ e \_\_\_ a \_\_\_ o r s

**clue:** animals that eat other animals

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. s a \_\_\_ c \_\_\_ u a \_\_\_ i e s

**clue:** places where animals can live in safety

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_ u s \_\_\_ y

**clue:** sounding deep and rough

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. j a \_\_\_ u a \_\_\_ \_\_\_

**clue:** wild cats that live in tropical rainforests

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. p \_\_\_ e \_\_\_ e n \_\_\_ i \_\_\_ e

**clue:** able to grab things like branches

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. g \_\_\_ o o \_\_\_ i \_\_\_ g

**clue:** the act of cleaning or brushing fur or hair

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. p \_\_\_ i \_\_\_ a \_\_\_ e s

**clue:** category that includes monkeys and gorillas

7. \_\_\_\_\_

8. e \_\_\_ o \_\_\_ i \_\_\_

**clue:** wild or foreign

8. \_\_\_\_\_

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In the article, "A Very Loud Monkey," you learned that howler monkeys have prehensile tails, or tails that can grip objects.

On the lines below, describe why you think it is useful for howler monkeys to have prehensile tails. Think of where howler monkeys spend most of their time and what they eat as food to help you form your answer.

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## ANSWER KEY

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  - d. People sometimes study the monkeys in their natural environment.**
3. Many species of monkeys make noises to communicate with each other. What makes the vocal communication of the howler monkeys so much louder than that of other species?

**Howler monkeys have large throats and super-sized vocal cords that make them much louder.**

4. According to the article, three of the howler monkeys' predators are eagles, jaguars, and snakes. What do these three animals have in common?
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5. Based on what you've read in the article, would you classify the howler monkey as a carnivore, an omnivore, or a herbivore?

**Herbivore - they eat leaves, fruits, and nuts.**



## ANSWER KEY

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Fill in the missing letters to create a vocabulary word from the article. Then write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. p r e d a t o r s

*clue: animals that eat other animals*

1. predators

2. s a n c t u a r i e s

*clue: places where animals can live in safety*

2. sanctuaries

3. h u s k y

*clue: sounding deep and rough*

3. husky

4. j a g u a r s

*clue: wild cats that live in tropical rainforests*

4. jaguars

5. p r e h e n s i l e

*clue: able to grab things like branches*

5. prehensile

6. g r o o m i n g

*clue: the act of cleaning or brushing fur or hair*

6. grooming

7. p r i m a t e s

*clue: category that includes monkeys and gorillas*

7. primates

8. e x o t i c

*clue: wild or foreign*

8. exotic