



BABY AMERICAN BADGER
PATIENT NUMBER: 426
DAYS IN CARE: 89
REASON FOR INTAKE: ORPHANED

WILD RESCUE

Educator Guide: Grades 3-5

3-5 WILD RESCUE CURRICULUM: WHO'S THAT ANIMAL?

OVERVIEW

Students learn about the importance of animal identification, and deepen their knowledge of a number of different animal species featured in the *Wild Rescue* film. They use organized thinking to identify “secret animal” species in an Animal ID Challenge, and role-play as wildlife rescuers in an interactive exercise using real-life animal emergencies and response protocol. Students are also introduced to local citizen science projects, and their value in helping scientists to learn more about communities in nature.

KEY CONCEPTS

- Scientists identify animals by observing their physical features, behaviors, and environments. Correct identification helps rescuers provide the appropriate care.
- Wildlife rescue centers have operators that receive calls everyday from people who have found animals that may need rescuing. These operators have basic scripts that they will often use in order to help determine whether or not a rescue team needs to be sent out for that animal.
- Animal identification is fun, educational, and a meaningful way to support science and community through citizen science projects. (minor grammatical tuning for flow)

VOCABULARY

Animal Identification – using an animal's features, behaviors, and environment to determine its species.

Species – A group of similar living things that can reproduce and have fertile offspring.

Operator - a rescue worker who answers animal emergency calls and helps callers to make thoughtful, safe choices about what to do next.

Citizen Science - when a regular person joins a project started by a team of scientists to help collect specific information in nature.

MATERIALS

- Whiteboards (one per student)
- Expo markers (one per student)
- Tablets or Computers (one per student)
- OR
- Printed *California Hiker* sheets (one stapled packet per group)
- & Printed *Wildlife Rescue Operator* sheets (one stapled packet per group)
- Printed *Notice Nature* worksheets and colored pencils

SETUP

- Distribute whiteboards and expo markers to each student. If whiteboards are not available, paper and pencils are fine!
- Ensure access to enough tablets or computers for each student to use one.

OR

Decide whether you will split your students into groups of two or three for the final activity. If using printed materials, form groups of 2–3 students and print enough copies of the *California Hiker* and *Wildlife Rescue Operator* sheets (pages 7–13) for each group. (*clarified for group use and logistics*)

- If possible, allot 5-15 minutes during which students can spend time outside on school grounds to enjoy nature before your review.
- Print the *Notice Nature* worksheets, and set out colored pencils.

PROCEDURE

I. Introduction - Animal Identification

- a) Ask students to raise their hands if they have a pet. Call on a few to answer:
 - i) What kind of pet do you have?
 - ii) How do you know that that's what kind of animal it is? (For example, “How do you know that it's a calico cat?” or “How do you know that it's a goldfish?”)
- b) Now, ask the students to quietly raise their hands if they've ever seen a wild animal before. Now call on a few students, one at a time, asking each student the same two questions:
 - i) What kind of animal did you meet, and where?
 - ii) How do you know that that's what kind of animal it is? (For example, “How did you know that it was a squirrel that you saw at the park?” or “How did you know that it was a lion at the zoo?”)
- c) Tell the students they might not have realized it, but they were just doing something that scientists and wildlife rescuers do all the time - practicing animal identification! They used their animal's features, behaviors, and environment to determine its species and describe it to the class. A species is a group of living things that share the same or similar features, and can have babies together, who can later have their own babies when they are older.

d) Explain that identifying animals isn't always easy. For example:

- i) Ask students to discuss the difference between either a fox and a coyote, or a wolf and a husky, with the person sitting next to them. After a few minutes, call on a few pairs to share the differences they came up with.
- ii) If you notice any major gaps in their observations, add a few of your own! Make sure that for wolf vs. husky, the behavioral differences in "tamelessness" are mentioned.

e) "Great job! There are so many different animal characteristics that a scientist will look at when identifying an animal. For example, a scientist might look at an animal's features such as its coloring; whether it has fur, feathers, or hair; and the shape and size of its teeth. Scientists will also consider an animal's behavior, such as what it eats, the noises it makes, and whether it is domestic or wild. Finally, a scientist must also consider an animal's environment, or where it is living, in order to help with identification."

II. Secret Animal Identification Challenge

a) Tell the class that they are now going to start their Secret Animal Identification Challenge. Here's how they will play:

- i) As a class, they will be given progressively easier clues to give them hints on the identity of an animal from the *Wild Rescue* movie. After each clue, they write a guess on their whiteboard. When ready, they flip it over, touch their nose, and look at the teacher.

After most are ready, count down: 1-2-3...reveal! Everyone shows and shouts their answer. Then, the teacher will reveal the identity of the secret animal!

b) Begin the game using the secret animals and clues below:

(Note: Make sure to leave a sufficient pause between each clue in order to give students time to really think each one over)

i) Owl

- (1) This animal is found on every continent except Antarctica
- (2) This animal will sometimes hunt other members of its species
- (3) The largest type of this animal can be up to 32in tall
- (4) This animal has feet with two forward-facing toes and two backward-facing toes
- (5) A group of this type of animal is called a "parliament"

(6) This animal is a type of bird

(7) This bird preys on many other smaller animals, such as rats, mice, squirrels, snakes, frogs, and insects

(8) This bird can turn its head almost all the way around

(9) This bird is nocturnal, meaning that it is active at night

(10) This bird makes a sound like, "hoo...hoo..."

ii) Raccoon

(1) This animal is one of the most common mammals in North America

(2) This animal typically weighs about 20lbs

(3) These animals typically live about 2-3 years in the wild, but can live up to 10-12 years in captivity

(4) A group of this type of animal is called a "gaze"

(5) As a baby, this animal is called a "kit"

(6) This animal is nocturnal

(7) This animal has five digits on its paws, and is known for being quite dexterous

(8) These animals will eat just about anything that they can find - sometimes, they may even search in trash cans!

(9) This animal is typically black and gray, with a bushy striped tail

(10) This animal may remind you of a bandit, because of the black mask around its eyes

iii) Hummingbird

(1) There are over 300 species of this type of animal

(2) Males of this animal do not help raise their babies

(3) This animal comes in many different colors

(4) This animal is not able to hop or walk

(5) This animal's heart can beat over 1000 times per minute

(6) This animal is a type of bird

(7) This bird has the smallest eggs in the world

(8) This animal feeds on nectar

(9) This animal is known for "zipping" about quickly from flower to flower

(10) This animal may make a humming sound as it flies

iv) Bobcat

(1) This animal is found only in North America

- (2) This animal mostly lives in forests, mountains, and brushlands
- (3) This animal typically eats small mammals such as bunnies, squirrels, and birds
- (4) This animal is a mammal
- (5) This mammal is an excellent climber
- (6) This mammal is solitary, and lives its life mostly alone
- (7) This animal's coat is reddish-brown, with black spots
- (8) As a baby, this mammal is called a "kitten"
- (9) This animal is a cat in the lynx family, known for its bobbed tail
- (10) In the *Wild Rescue* movie, this cat had an injury to one of its hind legs

v) Opossum

- (1) This animal is the only marsupial found in North America
- (2) As a baby, this animal is called a "joey"
- (3) This animal has gray fur
- (4) This animal has five digits on each paw
- (5) This animal is good at swimming
- (6) This animal is generally not aggressive, but may look a little "scary"
- (7) This animal has a long, hairless tail
- (8) This animal is immune to some venomous snake bites
- (9) Because of its low body temperature, this animal is more resistant to contracting rabies
- (10) This animal is known for its defensive behavior of playing dead in the presence of danger

c) Next, offer the students your own clues for a few of the most commonly-seen animals in your own community. Don't limit this to just the mammals, but see if you can think of an insect or a bird as well. If there is time, you can even let a student or two think of an animal and new clues for the rest of the class!

d) "Amazing work! Now, why is animal identification so important again? Remember, it is because properly identifying an animal makes it possible for wildlife rescuers, like those who work at Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network, to understand how to best help an animal in trouble!"

III. What Would You Do? Call the Operator Game

a) In *Wild Rescue*, people call wildlife centers when they find injured animals. Calling a wildlife center first keeps both the person and the animal safer. (clarified

and preserved well). Every situation is different depending on the **animal, injury, and location**. How the wildlife rescue center will respond to each call will depend on many different factors such as:

- i) The type of animal that is hurt or injured
 - ii) The illness or injury that the animal seems to have
 - iii) Where the animal is located, just to name a few!
- b) "This is why it's so important to always call a wildlife rescue center before taking any other action when you find an animal that is hurt or in distress. This keeps both people and animals safer, and gets animals the help that they need!"
- c) "For example, if Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network receives a call about a seagull with a broken wing, they might ask that person to stay nearby in a safe location and closely watch the animal until a rescue center worker can arrive. Staying nearby and watching can really help this type of animal, because it allows the wildlife rescue worker to find that animal quickly and easily, especially if the animal is moving around or hiding - which many hurt animals do!

However, if they receive a call about a sea lion that seems sick, they will tell the person calling to give that animal lots and lots of space, and give them the phone number to call another special team of wildlife rescuers who are experts on marine mammal rescues."

d) "Because wildlife rescue centers get so many calls about so many different types of animals, it is very important for the wildlife rescue workers that answer the calls to know exactly what to tell the people who are calling. The rescue workers who answer animal emergency calls and help callers make thoughtful, safe choices about what to do next are called wildlife rescue operators."

e) Now, while all calls and all animal rescue missions are a little bit different, wildlife rescue operators have a basic "script" that they will read when responding to calls for each type of animal. In the next game that we're going to play, you and a partner are going to take turns answering each other's wildlife rescue calls and determining whether or not an animal needs rescue."

f) Divide the students into groups of two or three. Tell the class that they will be practicing six calls to a wildlife rescue center with their group member(s). Here is how it will work: One student in the group will be the **California Hiker**, walking through a wonderful and wild space in California. This student will find two or three animals during their nature walk, and make a call to the local wildlife rescue center to try and get that animal help. Another student will be the **Wildlife**

Rescue Operator, and answer the two or three calls being made about an animal in trouble. Each student in the group should have an equal amount of turns playing both roles.

- g) Give students 1-2 minutes to decide who will be the first California Hiker, and who will be the first Wildlife Rescue Operator. Then, ask the students to sit facing each other so that their other group member(s) will not be able to see their "scripts." Next, depending on your unique classroom capabilities and preferences, provide students with one of the following sets of directions:

i) WITH IPADS OR COMPUTERS:

California Hikers will click *California Hiker - I Found an Animal!* and Wildlife Rescue Operators will click *Wildlife Rescue Operator - How Can We Help?*

In their groups, students will begin the game by making the noise of a telephone ringing. Then, the Wildlife Rescue Operator will read their first line - "Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network, what kind of animal have you found?"

The California Hiker's job is to keep their eyes on the animal they've found, and respond to the questions asked by the operator. The hiker must remember to remain calm, and respond to the operator's questions one at a time!

The Wildlife Rescue Operator's job is to ask the hiker the correct set of questions, in order, based on the type of animal that they are calling about. At the end of each call, the operator will either tell the hiker that the animal should be left alone, or let them know that the rescue team is on their way.

Remind the class that each student in the group should have an equal amount of turns playing both roles.

- ii) WITH PRINTED PAPER:** Ask the first round of California Hikers to pick up one printed hiker packet for their group. Now, ask the first round of Wildlife Rescue Operators to pick up one printed operator packet for their group.

In their groups, students will begin the game by making the noise of a telephone ringing. Then, the Wildlife Rescue Operator will read their first line - "Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network, what kind of animal have you found?"

The California Hiker's job is to keep their eyes on the animal they've found, and respond to the questions asked by the operator. Hiker responds to the operator's scripted questions.

The Wildlife Rescue Operator's job is to ask the hiker the correct set of questions, in order, based on the type of animal that they are calling about. At the end of each call, the operator will either tell the hiker that the animal should be left alone, or let them know that the rescue team is on their way. Switch roles after each set.

- h) As the student groups conduct their calls, walk around the classroom and be prepared to assist students that have any questions. The first call or two may need some support for a few student groups, but the game should flow smoothly from there!

After 5-10 minutes, ask students to show that they are done with all six animal calls by returning their hiker and operator packets.

- i) Once all students have finished their calls, share that the scripts they read today in their roles as operators are actual scripts that real wildlife rescue centers use to help people every day. The advice that they were offering was real advice that can be helpful for knowing whether or not an animal needs help, and is something that they can use in the future when they are at school, the park, or even just in their own backyards.

- j) Ask students if there were any pieces of advice that one of the operators gave that surprised them, and if so, call on a few to share their answers.

- k) Tell the students that for the next question, you'd like them to either nod their heads "yes," or shake their heads "no."

Ask: "Were all the animal calls true emergencies?"

- l) "Correct! There were 2 animals that the hiker thought were in danger, but were actually just fine and did not need rescuing. In fact, if the hiker had tried to touch, move, or "rescue" those animals that were doing just fine, without calling the wildlife rescue center, those animals could have gotten really hurt.

Most people really love animals and want to help them and make sure that they are safe and happy. Sometimes, we just don't know the best way to do it! That's why it's always important to call a wildlife rescue center when you think you may have found an animal trouble - it's their job to help us, and the animals we all love so much!"

- m) "Remember, we have wild neighbors living all around us! Our homes are their habitats, and you never know when a feathery or furry neighbor might need your help to get the lifesaving care that they need."

IV. Wrap-Up: How to be a Wild Rescuer

- a) Congratulate the students on their successful round of calls, especially noting their calm voices as hikers and expertise as operators.
- b) Remind the students of the importance of animal identification: Properly identifying an animal makes it possible for wildlife rescuers to understand how to best help an animal in trouble.
- c) Tell the students that today, they learned that there is a Wildlife Care Center in Santa Barbara, California where all of these animals and more get the specialized help

that they need to survive. Ask them to nod their heads if they would like to identify and help animals too, in their own backyards and homes, and even at school.

- d) Share that one way that they can help animals just by identifying is through citizen science. Citizen science is when a regular person - like you or me! - joins a project started by a team of scientists to help collect certain information out in nature.

One example of a citizen science project could be asking everyone who visits a neighborhood park to count all of the white butterflies that they see each time they visit that park, and then share that information through a special app before they drive home. This information could be super helpful - the scientists may learn that the number of white butterflies in that city is growing or shrinking, or that the butterflies are most active on sunny days at the park and least active on rainy days.

- e) Tell the students that there are countless projects in citizen science for them to take part in. They can search for local citizen science projects online, search for animal identification apps on their phones, or even start their own citizen science project in their community or school.
- f) "The reason that there are so many great tools for animal identification and opportunities in citizen science is because regular people like us can be a HUGE help for the animals in the places where we live. Learning more ourselves, and helping others - even scientists! - to learn more with us is one of the best ways to keep our homes and habitats healthy and thriving."

WONDER IN THE WILD

If possible, move the class to an outdoor area for just 5-15 minutes, inviting them to notice and enjoy nature a little extra after their time watching *Wild Rescue* and doing so well with their learning activities. Encourage them to touch the dirt, grass, and leaves; look under rocks; listen for birds or the wind; smell the plants around them; and try to spot any birds or insects.

NOTICE NATURE WORKSHEET

Ask students to start by writing their names on their Notice Nature worksheets. Then, briefly explain nature journaling and why it is important - scientists and nature-lovers often like to draw pictures of plants and animals to notice them better and really focus on them, and also to have a great way to remember what they looked like later. Now, invite students to think of an animal that they think they know pretty well, and begin writing facts about that animal on the lines provided. Then, ask them to draw that animal from a few different angles. If they are unsure about which animal to draw, remind them of the species that they learned about in the "Secret Animal Identification Challenge" (owl, raccoon, hummingbird, bobcat, opossum). Encourage them to be creative, and use lots of color in their drawing.

REVIEW & DISCUSSION

- Why is animal identification so important?
- In the "Secret Animal Identification Challenge," which animal was the hardest for you to guess?
- What is the coolest animal that you have ever seen in real-life? This could be outside in your backyard, at the park or on a hike, or even at an aquarium or zoo!
- What should you do if you find an animal that you think might need rescuing?
- What is one thing you saw in the *Wild Rescue* movie that surprised or amazed you?
- What is one way that we can team up with scientists to learn more about our homes and habitats, and the wild neighbors that are living all around us?

Name: _____

Notice Nature Worksheet

Animal name: _____

Habitat: _____

Diet: _____

Appearance: _____

My favorite feature or fact about this animal _____

Zoomed-In Drawing of One Cool Feature of This Animal’s Body

(Hint: Think tail, teeth, paws, feet, wings, fins, gills, feathers, eyes, etc)

Drawing of This Animal’s Face

Drawing of This Animal in its Habitat

Wildlife Rescue Operator - How Can We Help?

“I FOUND A BABY CROW!”

Question 1: “Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network, what kind of animal have you found?”

Question 2: “Does the animal have any visible injuries?” If yes, tell the caller that the rescue team is on their way. If no, proceed to the next question.

Question 3: “Do you see a nest nearby?” If no, tell the caller that the rescue team is on their way. If yes, proceed to the next question.

Question 4: “Does the baby crow have feathers? Are the eyes open?” If no, tell the caller that the rescue team is on their way. If yes, proceed to the next question.

Question 5: “Does the baby have other crows nearby, ready to tend to it?” If no, tell the caller that the rescue team is on their way. Round complete! If yes, proceed to the final line.

Final Line: “Young crows spend a lot of time on the ground while developing, which unfortunately means they’re often mistaken to be injured or orphaned. “Keep an eye on the baby crow for a little while, if you can. If there are no predators or dangers nearby, that baby crow is probably just fine.”

Wildlife Rescue Operator - How Can We Help?

“I FOUND A BABY SONGBIRD!”

Question 1: “Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network, what kind of animal have you found?”

Question 2: “Has the baby songbird been picked up by a cat, dog, or other predator?” If yes, tell the caller that the rescue team is on their way. If no, proceed to the next question.

Question 3: “Does the animal have any visible injuries?” If yes, tell the caller that the rescue team is on their way. If no, proceed to the next question.

Question 4: “Does the baby songbird have feathers?” If no, tell the caller that the baby bird is a “nestling,” and that you will need more information. If yes, tell the caller that the baby bird is a “fledgling,” and that you will need more information.

Question 5: “Do you see a nest nearby? Do you see active parents nearby?” If no, tell the caller that the rescue team is on their way. Round complete! If yes, proceed to the final line.

Final Line: “Every year, SBWCN receives hundreds of baby birds that are mistakenly believed to be in need of care. Keep an eye on the baby songbird for a little while, if you can. If there are no predators or dangers nearby, that baby is probably just fine.”

Wildlife Rescue Operator - How Can We Help?

“I FOUND A NEST OF BUNNIES!”

Question 1: “Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network, what kind of animal have you found?”

Question 2: “Do the animals have any visible injuries? ”If yes, tell the caller that the rescue team is on their way. If no, proceed to the next question.

Question 3: “Do you see a mother bunny nearby?” If yes, tell the caller that the baby bunnies are safe and should be left alone. If no, proceed to the next question.

Question 4: “Mother rabbits visit their nests only a few times daily, usually at dawn and dusk. To check if the mother is returning, pour a ring of baking flour around the outside of the nest. After 24 hours, observe whether the flour has been disturbed. Do you notice any disturbances to the ring of flour? ”If no, tell the caller that the rescue team is on their way. Round complete! If yes, proceed to the final line.

Final Line: “Discovering a baby mammal alone can be concerning, but not all young animals require human intervention. Bunnies are one of the most frequently “kidnapped” mammal species. If you find a nest of bunnies, it’s best to keep an eye on it for a little while if you can, and to leave the nest undisturbed. If there are no predators or dangers nearby, the baby bunnies are probably just fine.”

Wildlife Rescue Operator - How Can We Help?

"I FOUND A BABY SKUNK!"

Question 1: "Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network, what kind of animal have you found?"

Question 2: "Does the animal have any visible injuries?" If yes, tell the caller that the rescue team is on their way. If no, proceed to the next question

Question 3: "Approximately how large is the baby skunk, in inches?" If 6in or more, tell the caller that the baby skunk is probably just fine, and likely just exploring. If no, proceed to the next question.

Question 4: "Does the baby skunk appear healthy? Or, does it look disoriented and confused?" If healthy, tell the caller that the baby skunk is probably just fine, and likely just exploring. Round complete! If disoriented, tell the caller that the rescue team is on their way and proceed to the final line.

Final Line: "Discovering a baby mammal alone can be concerning, but not all young animals require human intervention. If you see a baby skunk without a mother, it might not need any help! Juvenile skunks will often go on walks with their siblings during the day without the supervision of their mother and then return to the den at night. However, if a baby skunk seems disoriented, is alone for an extended period, or shows signs of injury, always seek professional help. Avoid handling skunks due to the risk of rabies and other diseases."

Wildlife Rescue Operator - How Can We Help?

“I FOUND A BABY OPOSSUM!”

Question 1: “Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network, what kind of animal have you found?”

Question 2: “Does the animals have any visible injuries?” If yes, tell the caller that the rescue team is on their way and proceed to the next question. If no, proceed to the next question.

Question 3: “Approximately how large is the baby opossum, in inches?” If 8in or more, tell the caller that the baby is likely self-sufficient, but may still need medical attention. Help is on the way! Proceed to the final line. If less than 8in, tell the caller that the baby likely still needs its mother, and may also need urgent medical attention. Help is on the way! Proceed to the final line.

Final Line: “Discovering a baby mammal alone can be concerning, but not all young animals require human intervention. However, smaller opossums found alone may need assistance, especially if the mother is deceased. Additionally, animals with visible injuries should always be reported to your local wildlife rehabilitation center.”

Wildlife Rescue Operator - How Can We Help?

“I FOUND A MARINE MAMMAL!”

Question 1: “Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network, what kind of animal have you found?”

Question 2: “Do not touch the injured or stranded animal. Stay 50 feet away from the animal at all times. Now, what is the exact location of the animal?”

Final Line: “Please call the CIMWI Hotline (805) 567-1505, or your local marine mammal rescue and rehabilitation organization. Keep an eye on the animal from a distance if possible, and take note of its exact location. Being accurate is important and making note of any prominent landmarks is helpful.”

What Would You Do? California Hiker



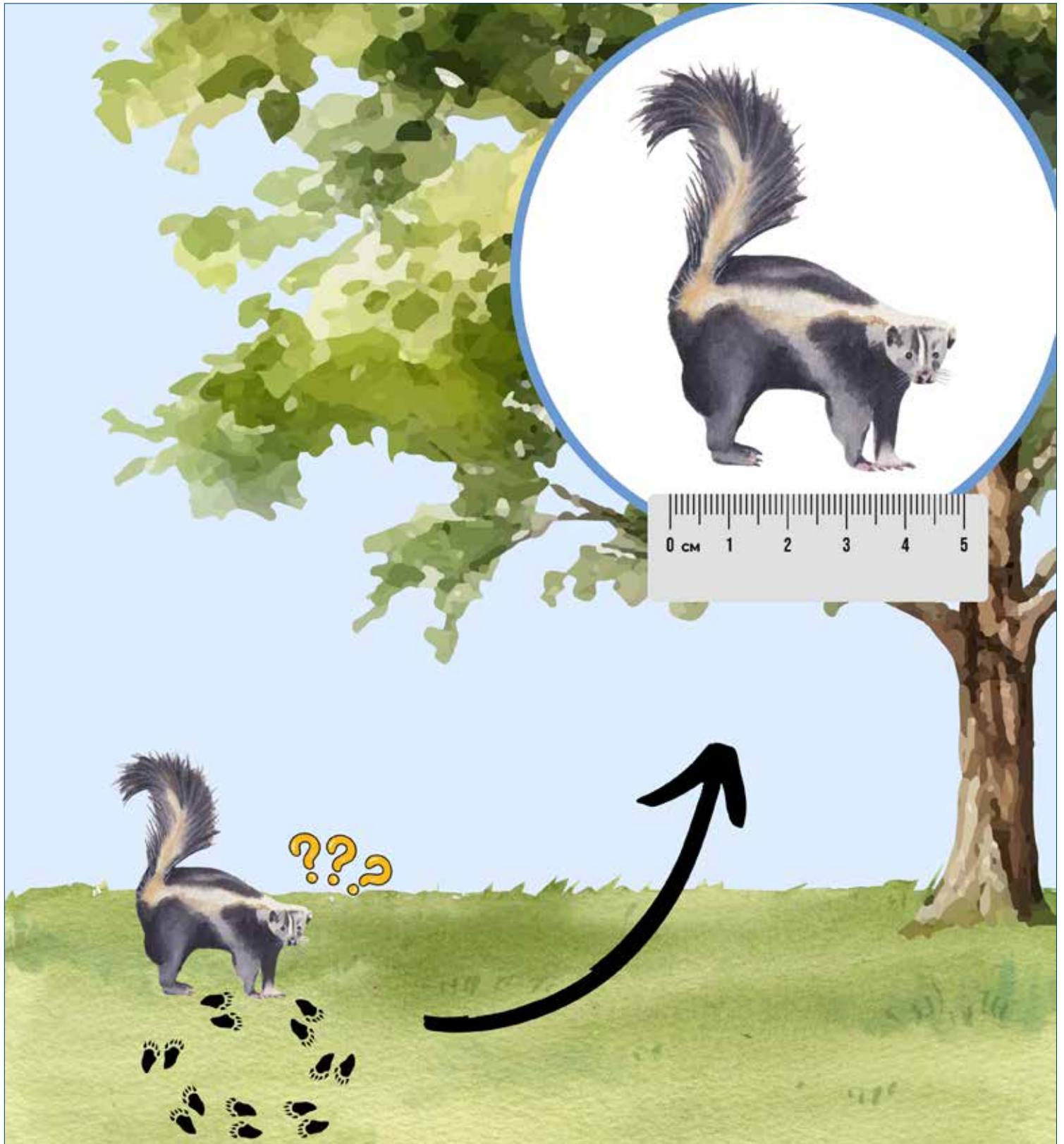
What Would You Do? California Hiker



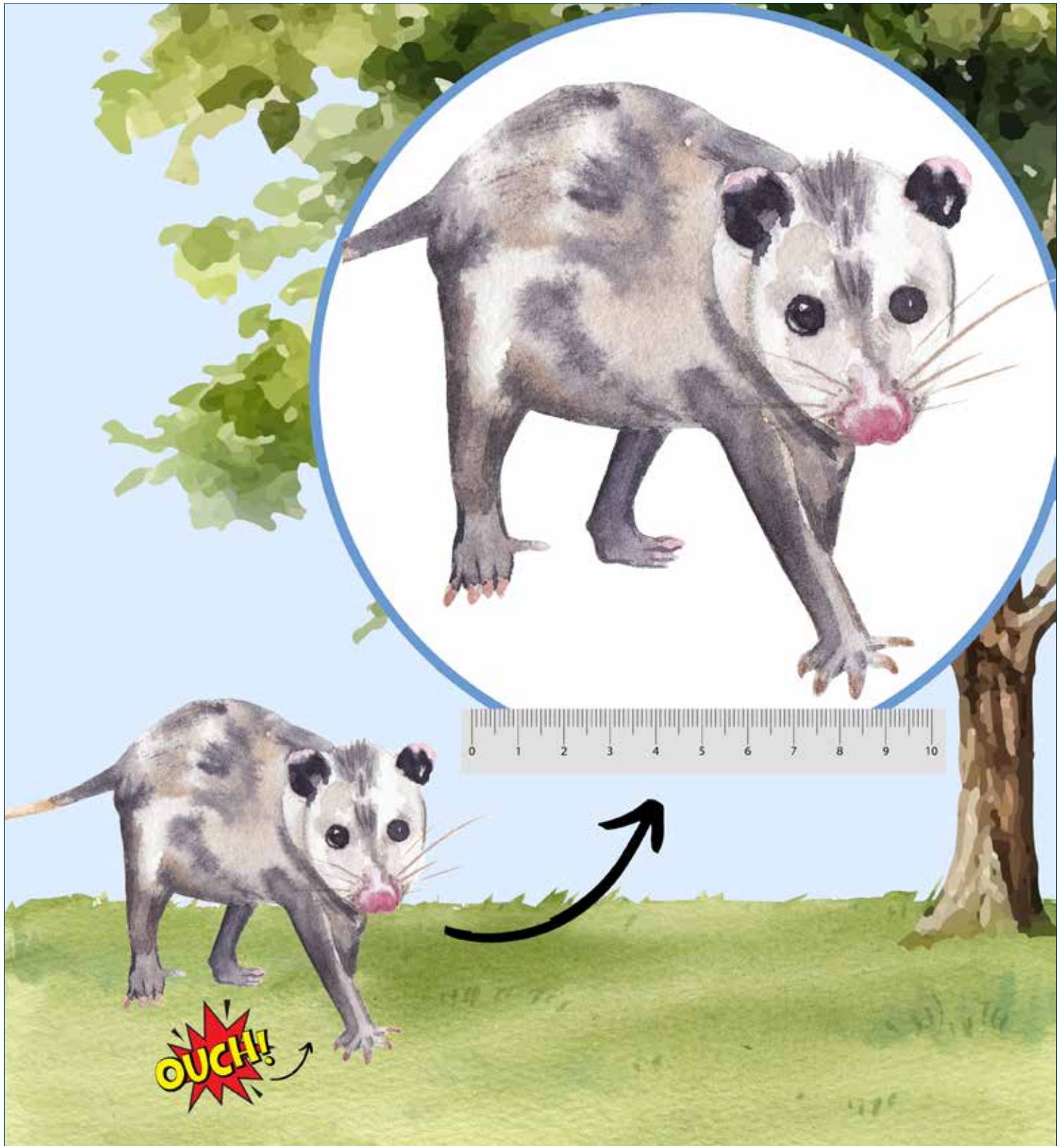
What Would You Do? California Hiker



What Would You Do? California Hiker



What Would You Do? California Hiker



What Would You Do? California Hiker

