ANIMAL NEWS

LONELY LOCKDOWN

IT'S not just humans who are missing people while the world is on lockdown – zoo animals are missing their visitors too.

Keepers from zoos around the world are reporting that their animals seem to be feeling lonely now that they don't have daily visitors.

Rhinos and giraffes at Orana Wildlife Park in New Zealand are still turning up at the correct time for the 'Meet the animals' talk, which keepers usually hold for guests every day.

Linda Hardwick, from Phoenix Zoo in Arizona, USA, says the monkeys and apes are suffering the most: "Primates, especially, have noticed our guests are gone and go looking for them."

In the UK, staff at animal parks are making sure they spend lots of extra time interacting with their animals. At a nature reserve in Slimbridge, staff are hand-feeding the ducks and geese, which is what visitors would usually do!

But in Japan, staff at an aquarium are worried that their eels are becoming shy without a steady stream of visitors! The garden eels have started hiding in the sand every time their keepers pass by. The zoo has set up five tablets outside the tank and has asked people to video call the eels, so that they stay used to staring eyes!

As the world starts to slowly come out of lockdown, hopefully it won't be too much longer before zoos can welcome visitors again.

"Where did everybody go?"

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A garden eel

Questions on: 'Lonely lockdown'

1) What is the main subject of this news report?

- [ ] Animals from Africa
- [ ] Zoo animals
- [ ] Monkeys and apes

2) Find **four** countries mentioned in this news report.

1. .....
2. .....
3. .....
4. .....

3) What are the rhinos and giraffes doing at a zoo in New Zealand?

4) In Phoenix Zoo, which **group** of animals are missing people the most?

5) How is the lack of visitors affecting eels in Japan?

6) The eels usually see a "steady stream" of visitors. What does this description tell you about the visitors?

7) Explain the clever solution that the aquarium has come up with to help the eels.

8) Why is the animal news from Japan the odd one out?

ANIMAL NEWS

RHINO EVACUATION

RANGERS in Botswana are moving their black rhinos to a secret location to keep them safe from poachers.

Across Africa, there are more than 20,000 (twenty thousand) white rhinos, but black rhino numbers have dwindled to just 4,500.

In Botswana, the last black rhino was killed by a poacher in 1992. However, since then, around 20 animals have been reintroduced to the Okavango Delta with the help of wildlife groups such as Rhinos Without Borders.

For the past month, Botswana, like us, has been in lockdown because of the coronavirus, so tourists are no longer visiting the country's wildlife. Sadly, in March, poachers attacked and killed six of the country's black rhinos. Rangers believe that the lack of visitors to the area is giving poachers more opportunities to hunt.

Botswana's government has been keeping an increased lookout for poachers, but has now decided that moving the remaining black rhinos to a secret location is the safest option.

Why do poachers kill rhinos?

Poachers kill rhinos to collect their horns. Rhino horn is used in traditional Chinese medicines and people in parts of Asia are willing to pay a huge price for it.

Questions on: 'Rhino evacuation'

1) This news report is about which country?

- [ ] Botswana
- [ ] The Bahamas
- [ ] Bangladesh

2) Look at the headline. What does 'evacuate' mean?

- [ ] To move someone, or something, to a different country
- [ ] To hunt and kill an animal when it is illegal
- [ ] To move someone, or something, to a place of safety

3) What do you know about the numbers of black and white rhinos in Africa?

4) What sad event happened in Botswana in 1992?

5) If the country lost all its black rhinos, why do some live there now?

6) Why do experts think that poaching is increasing at the moment?

7) "Black rhino numbers have dwindled to just 4,500."
What do you think the word '**dwindled**' means in this sentence?

8) What **motivates** poachers to kill these protected animals?

ART NEWS

TOWER OF CARDS

A teenager has made a model of the world's tallest building – the Burj Khalifa – from playing cards! The real building is 828 metres high and is found in Dubai. This version is 3.25 metres high and was built by Vishnu Vasu in India. The amazing house of cards took five-and-a-half hours to build. It required more than 5,000 cards and incredibly steady hands! Vishnu said: "For me, it's a passion. I hope to break the Guinness record of seven metres."

MAKING ART FROM PLASTIC WASTE

Artist Rob Arnold collects plastic waste from Tregantle beach in Cornwall and turns it into works of art. During lockdown, he has made this stunning copy of a Moai ("mow-eye") – a huge stone head from Easter Island. To make the sculpture, Rob sifted through 40 bags of litter collected from the beach and separated more than 50 million pieces of plastic from the sand. Easter Island is a remote island in the Pacific Ocean. It is famous for the mysterious stone heads, carved by its people almost 1,000 years ago.

OH BOTTOM, THOU ART CHANGED!

Epic Games – the American company that created the videogame *Fortnite* – has teamed up with the Royal Shakespeare Company to make a game version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Shakespeare wrote the play in about 1595. This new version will be playable online. Epic says it will be "a new type of storytelling". (The headline is a famous line from the play and Bottom is one the characters!)

Questions on: 'Art News'

Look at the story 'Tower of cards'.

1) What is the Burj Khalifa?

2) Complete the table.

	Height	Location
The real building:		
Vishnu's house of cards:		

3) How high is the highest house of cards ever built?

Look at the story 'Oh Bottom, thou art changed!'

4) What new project are the makers of *Fortnite* working on?

5) Why has this strange headline been chosen?

- ☐ It is a joke about the name of the company.
- ☐ It is a line from Shakespeare's play.
- ☐ It is a quote from the person in charge of making the game.

Look at the story 'Making art from plastic waste'.

6) Choose a word from each box so that the sentence makes sense.

Rob Arnold turns [sand / sculpture / pollution] into [stone / art / litter]

7) What is a Moai?

Consider all the stories.

8) Can you explain how all the stories are linked by the theme ***"New versions"***?

BIG NEWS

ONE SMALL WEE FOR MAN...

HUMAN urine (wee) might one day be used to make concrete on the moon.

New research from the European Space Agency has shown that wee (yes, wee) could help to make concrete on the moon. The concrete would be used to build a lunar base station, where astronauts could live as they explore space.

Concrete is a hard building material made from sand, cement, water and small stones. To make lunar concrete, the main ingredient would be regolith, which is the loose, dusty rock found on the moon's surface.

Mixing the moon rock with wee would help to turn it into concrete. The main substance in wee – apart from water – is a substance called urea. Adding urea would make the concrete easier to mould into the correct shape, before it sets. It would also mean the astronauts wouldn't need to use as much water.

Being able to build using materials available on the moon (or from astronauts) would be really helpful, as it would reduce the need to transport heavy supplies from Earth. We reckon it sounds like a wee-ly good idea!

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Questions on: 'Big News'

1) Who has come up with this idea?

☐ NASA ☐ ESA ☐ JAXA

2) Why do space experts want to make concrete on the moon?

3) Look at the third paragraph.
Find the **adjectives** (describing words).

_____ concrete
_____, _____ rock
_____ building material
_____ ingredient

4) What is the name for loose, dusty rock found on the surface of a planet or moon?

5) Find three possible ingredients for lunar concrete. Look carefully!

1. .....
2. .....
3. .....

6) Find two benefits of using wee to make lunar concrete.

1. .....
2. .....

7) Why can't we just bring all the ingredients for concrete from Earth?

8) Find the **pun** (play on words) used in the last paragraph.
Can you explain how the word has been altered?
What do you think of the joke?!