**Summary of the Reader**
This book looks at some of the ways in which certain animals have developed bodies, skills and endurance in moving. Compared to human beings, animals with such skills seem to excel as athletes, and they are indeed to be wondered at. However, in the animal world no special training has taken place for an Olympiad. They have developed their prowess in order to survive or avoid being eaten in their particular habitat.

The habitats are divided into four broad categories in which the animal athletes live:
- **trees** – spider monkeys, gibbons, flying squirrels
- **land** – red kangaroos, African wild dogs, gazelles, elephants
- **air** – storks, Monarch butterflies, hummingbirds, dragonflies
- **water** – penguins, dolphins, grey whales, flying fish

There is also a section on cats, including the domestic cat, the tiger and the cheetah.

The information about the animals is commented on by a cartoon cat character.

**Introducing the topic**
Before students read the book …
- Ask if students have pets which move in interesting ways. Can their pets run, jump, fly? Why is there a cartoon cat pictured on the title page of the book? Show the cartoon cat on page 3. What is it doing? Are cats athletic? What are the names of some of the big cats?
- Show pictures or short video clips of some of the animals which feature in the book. Teach the words for these animals.
- Talk about those parts of an animal’s body which help it move. Teach new vocabulary. Ask which part of the animal’s body allows it to walk, run, jump. Which part do they fly with?
- Ask students to find examples in the book showing animals running, jumping, gliding, flying, and so on.

**Did you know … ?**
- A tiger’s roar can be heard three kilometers away.
- The fur of female red kangaroos is actually blue.
- To keep warm in Antarctica, penguins stand together in huge groups and take turns moving to the centre of the group, where they are protected from the icy cold temperatures and wind.

---

**Level 4**

**Suitable for:** young learners who have completed up to 200 hours of study in English

**Type of English:** British

**Headwords:** 800

**Key words:** 15 (see pages 2 and 6 of this Factsheet)

**Subject words:** 15 (see pages 2 and 7 of this Factsheet)

**Key grammar:** present tenses, modals, comparative and superlative adjectives
Penguin KiDS FACTSHEET

Key words
(see page 6 of this Factsheet for the Key words in context)

- champion (n / adj)
- cheetah (n)
- dragonfly (n)
- flying squirrel (n)
- gazelle (n)
- gibbon (n)
- hummingbird (n)
- kilogram (n)
- litre (n)
- only (adj / adv)
- rise (v)
- spider monkey (n)
- stork (n)
- swing (v)
- wild (adj)

Subject words
(see page 7 of this Factsheet for the Subject words in context)

- acrobat (n)
- athlete (n)
- backwards (adv)
- branch (n)
- glide (v)
- grassland (n)
- habitat (n)
- insect (n)
- long-distance (adj)
- nectar (n)
- per (kilometre per hour, km/h)
- predator (n)
- prehensile (tail) (adj)
- prey (n)
- stamina (n)

Curriculum links

Natural Science
- Students look at how an animal’s body is adapted to movement in its particular habitat, e.g. the long arms of the spider monkey that enable it to swing from branch to branch.
- Students could study an animal which migrates to or from their country.

Physical Education
- Students look at the world of human sport, well-known sports celebrities and sporting events; students make a poster about their favourite sport or athletic activity, or a poster profiling a sports star.
- Students discuss their favourite animal athletes from the book, and others not mentioned. They put together a ‘dream team’ of animal athletes for an imaginary animal Olympiad.
- Students could draw a table showing the fastest animals in different habitats, i.e. on land, in air, in water.

Environmental Studies
Students could look at the environment and changing habitats by studying one animal in the book whose habitat is threatened by man (e.g. through logging or hunting) or global climate changes.

Maths
Simple calculations based on some of the facts and figures in the book, e.g. An elephant can eat 100 kg of food in one day, so how much can two elephants eat in three days? (600 kg)

Literacy
- Students list different animal parts, e.g. claws, tail, fur, etc. and then match an animal to each characteristic, for example, claws – cat.
- Students sort animals into groups according to different criteria, e.g. predators, animals that fly, animals that swim, etc.
- Students then choose their favourite animal and describe it.

Art
Students could make a collage of pictures of animal athletes in action.

Geography
- Revise the points of the compass by drawing a cross on the board and asking students to write in the four directions – north, south, east, west. Ask them to name various places that are north / south / east / west relative to their location.
- Next, ask them where they think ‘southeast’ is. Add it to the diagram on the board. Go through
all the combinations, asking different students
to come to the board and show you where
they lie. The rest are southwest, northeast and
northwest.

• Place a world map on the board and ask
students to show you where the following places/
areas are: Central America, South America,
Southeast Asia and North America. These areas
are where the ‘Acrobats in Trees’ (pages 6–8 of
the Reader) live.
Class Activities (After Reading)

Here are some activities to do with your class after reading Animal Athletes.

1. Guessing game – Which animal is it?
   • Prepare a set of descriptive statements about some of the animals in the book, and other animals the students know. These are clues for a guessing game, e.g. It can swim / fly / run / hop, etc. It can walk on two / four legs. It has got a long tail / short tail / wings, etc. It eats grass / fruit / insects, etc. What is it?
   • Show pictures of people walking, running, jumping, climbing, hopping on one leg, standing on their hands and so on. Ask students which parts of the body people use mainly for each activity, e.g. walking and running on two legs, hopping on one, climbing, swimming.
   Show the picture of the spider monkey on page 6. Ask which parts of the monkey’s body are important for movement (tail, arms, legs, hands).
   • Revise the names of animals from the book using a set of pictures as flash cards.
   Ask one student to choose one of the picture cards, but not to show it to the class, then give one or two clues about the animal. The class has to guess which animal you are describing.
   Variation: Divide the class into pairs. Give each pair one animal picture and ask the pair to write a few short statements (clues) for their animal. The students take it in turns to give the class their clues.

2. Animal Olympics
   • In an imaginary Animal Olympics, which events could different animals take part in? Ask students to suggest possible sports and write them on the board, e.g. long-distance running, short-distance running (sprinting), swimming, diving, long jump, high jump, gymnastics, hurdles, aerial acrobatics. It’s fine to invent new sports. Give groups or pairs of students a sheet of paper, and ask them to divide the sheet into four squares. At the top of each square students write the name of the event (e.g. long jump) and underneath they write the name and draw the animal for the event (e.g. kangaroo). Other animals which the students know about can also be named / drawn, e.g. tigers can jump 4 metres or more; some spiders can jump, and fleas can jump huge distances relative to their size.
   • At the end of the activity students can display their work and talk about their dream team.

3. Animal champions
   • Make a class book, or a class chart showing information about animal athletes from information in the book or other sources.
   • Students can work in pairs. They are given, or choose, an animal to research for homework. The students should start by finding a photograph of their animal, or drawing it. Then they find out about:
     habitat
diet and how it finds food
facts about its mobility
interesting facts

Example 1 (see page 5 of the Reader)

Cheetah

Habitat: African grasslands, and sometimes mountains
Diet: small mammals such as rabbits, and larger mammals such as antelopes
Method of finding food: hunting
Mobility: The cheetah is the fastest animal on four legs. The fastest recorded speed was 120 km/h.
Interesting facts: A cheetah is the only big cat that cannot roar. Cheetahs only need to drink once every three to four days. They are smaller than other members of the big cat family, weighing only 45–60 kilograms.
Example 2

Peregrine falcon

Habitat: every continent except Antarctica, in many different habitats (mountains, forests, cities, valleys, deserts and coastlines)
Diet: medium-size birds
Method of finding food: hunting other birds while in flight
Mobility: Peregrines have the fastest diving speed, reaching around 320 km/h, though the top recorded speed is 389 km/h.
Interesting facts: Peregrines can live up to 17 years.
Key words

champion.............They are champions. (p. 3)
cheetah.............The cheetah is the fastest animal on four legs. (p. 5)
dragonfly...........There are many different kinds of dragonfly, but they all live in habitats near water. (p. 17)
flying squirrel.....Flying squirrels live in North American forests. (p. 8)
gazelle..............The dogs kill only the weakest and youngest gazelles. (p. 11)
gibbon..............Gibbons are the fastest animals which live in trees. (p. 7)
hummingbird......A hummingbird moves very quickly from flower to flower. (p. 16)
kilogram...............and eat 100 kilograms of food. (p. 13)
litre...................They can drink about 200 litres every day ... (p. 13)
only...................It is the only bird which can fly backwards. (p. 16)
rise.....................The sun shines on the land, and warm air rises. (p. 14)
spider monkey.....Spider monkeys eat plants, insects and birds’ eggs. (p. 6)
stork...................Every autumn many storks leave Europe and fly south to Africa. (p. 14)
swing....................These acrobats can swing more than 10 metres between trees, high above the ground. (p. 7)
wild.....................They do not live with people because they are wild animals. (p. 4)
Subject words

**acrobat**...... They are fantastic acrobats in trees. (p. 6)

**athlete**...... Are flying fish the best athletes? (p. 21)

**backwards**.... Dragonflies fly up, down and backwards, too. (p. 17)

**branch**...... They can swing from branch to branch with their tails. (p. 6)

**glide**........... They make the shape of two wings with their body, and glide. (p. 8)

**grassland**...... They live in forest habitats and grassland and where they can find big prey. (p. 4)

**habitat**...... Asian and West African elephants live in jungle habitats. (p. 12)

**insect**...... They are the fastest of all flying insects. (p. 17)

**long-distance**...... African wild dogs and gazelles are long-distance athletes. (p. 11)

**nectar**...... Because inside flowers there is nectar, which is their favourite food. (p. 16)

**per** (kilometre...... They can run at a speed of 80 km/h. (p. 11)

per hour, km/h)

**predator**...... It is also important because their predators swim fast, too. (p. 18)

**prehensile** (tail)..... They have prehensile tails which hold on to branches. (p. 6)

**prey**...... A tiger can easily hide in trees and long grass, where its prey cannot see it. (p. 5)

**stamina**...... African wild dogs are famous because they have fantastic stamina. (p. 10)
While-Reading activities

Activity 1a (pages 3–5)
Which is it?

Read pages 3–5 then close your books. Work in pairs.
Read the questions below and write cat, tiger or cheetah.

1 Which is the biggest?

2 Which is the fastest?

3 Which swims well?

4 Which is not a wild animal?

5 Which lives in Asia?

6 Which can hide in trees and long grass?

7 Which eats small prey?

8 Which lives in grassland and is as fast as a car?
**Activity 1b**

Read about other big cats. Write *jaguars, leopards or lions* in the gaps.

1. Today ___________ live in Africa, and there are still a few in India. They live in grasslands. They can run at a speed of 58 km/h, but not for a long time. For about 20 hours each day, they do nothing. They wait until the coolest, darkest times to hunt their prey. They are very good swimmers.

2. Most ___________ live around the Amazon River. They are quite good swimmers. They eat fish, turtles and small alligators, and larger animals such as deer and cows. They can catch fish by moving their tails over the water to attract hungry fish.

3. ___________ live in Africa and Asia. The spots on their bodies help them to hide from their prey. They eat monkeys, snakes, birds, fish and antelopes. They are very good swimmers and great athletes. They can run at 58 km/h, jump six metres in front and three metres straight up. They are the biggest cats to climb trees.

Are they champion athletes? What can they do? Tick ✔ the boxes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>swim</th>
<th>run fast</th>
<th>go fishing</th>
<th>jump</th>
<th>climb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>jaguar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leopard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 2a (pages 6–8)
Write the names of the areas on the map.

Southeast Asia  North America  Central America  USA  South America

Match. Draw lines.

1 Southeast Asia  
2 North America  
3 Central America  
4 South America

a Argentina  
b Canada  
c El Salvador  
d Indonesia  
e USA  
f Nicaragua  
g Peru  
h Thailand
Activity 2b (pages 6–8)
Who am I? Read about the ‘acrobat’ animals on pages 6–8, then close your books. Can you name the animal?

1 I have got very long arms, hands and feet, but I haven’t got a tail. I can move fast in the trees, but I’m slow on the ground. I can swing more than ten metres from tree to tree. I eat plants and insects. My home is in Southeast Asia. .................................................................

2 I can fly, but I haven’t got wings. I glide with my body. I can glide very far, sometimes for 46 metres. You can’t see me in the day because I sleep then. At night, I look for food. You can find me in the forests of North America. .................................................................

3 I can move very easily from tree to tree in the forest because my tail can hold on to branches. I swing from the trees and hold food in my hands. I like to eat plants, insects and birds’ eggs. My home is in the forests of Central and South America. .................................................................

Activity 3a (pages 9–13)
Animal maths. Read and answer the questions.

1 A kangaroo can move 13.5 metres in one jump. How far can it move in four jumps? .................................................................

2 African wild dogs can run at a speed of 56 kilometres an hour for 5 or 6 kilometres. What happens after the sixth kilometre? .................................................................

3 A gazelle can run at a speed of 80 kilometres an hour. In 15 minutes, how far can a gazelle run? .................................................................

4 Elephants can drink about 200 litres of water a day. How much water can they drink in a week? .................................................................
Activity 3b (pages 9–13)
Answer the questions.

1  What is stamina?

2  Which animal can’t run, can jump for nearly 2 kilometres at 40 km/h?

3  Which animal can run very fast and jump in the air at the same time?

4  Which animal has stamina for long-distance running?

5  Which animal has stamina for long-distance walking?

Activity 3c (pages 9–13)
Predator or prey?
Write the name of the animal in the table. Two animals are not predators or prey. Which two?

African wild dog  cat  cheetah  elephant  gazelle  insect
kangaroo  mouse  tiger

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>predators</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>prey</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 4a (page 14)

Write the words.

north  south  spring  summer  autumn  winter

Every year, many animals travel from one place to another. They do this because the 1__________ is cold and it is difficult to find food. In 2__________, storks leave Europe and fly 3__________ to Africa because it is warm there and they can eat. It is a very long journey because they must fly hundreds of kilometres. When they are hungry, they stop and find food. They don’t move their wings all the time; sometimes they glide. When the sun shines on the land, it makes the air warm. This air rises. When the storks are in the rising air, they can glide for a long time. They fly 4__________ back to Europe in 5__________, after the cold winter finishes and they spend the hot 6__________ months there.

Activity 4b (page 15)

Colour. Then write three things that you know about the Monarch butterfly.

1

2

3
Activity 4c (pages 16–17)
Read and write H for hummingbird or D for dragonfly.

1 It eats small insects. □
2 It drinks nectar. □
3 It lives near water. □
4 It’s the fastest flying insect. □
5 It is a bird that can fly backwards. □
6 It lives in the Americas. □
7 It has got beautiful wings. □
8 It always flies near flowers. □

Activity 5 (pages 18–21)
Order the sentences about the animals. Then, write one more thing that you know about them.

1 but are cannot birds they fly. Penguins

2 slowly move They but land in the move sea they very fast. on

3
4 jumping Dolphins fast in swimming enjoy water. and the high

5 acrobats fun. having good They and are like

6

7 warmer swim Mexico. to near In water winter they

8 where also born. It is place babies the are their

9

10 of fish jump sea. Flying out can the

11 hundred They glide can metres. two

12
After-Reading activities

Activity 1

Which animals have something in common? Read the sentences, and find answers in the wordsearch.

1. Name two animals which travel hundreds of kilometres every year.
2. Name two animals which can glide.
3. Which two animals can swim very fast?
4. Name two animals which are good acrobats in trees.
5. Which two animals eat grass and can travel a long way?
6. Which two animals are predators which can run fast?

```
flyingsquirrel
djeyosssfhkzvmqazws
eexttdcrfvtgbyahhn
lujimoepennguiniikk
eolrgpmknjibhda
puvkgeyctftgibbown
hxdrrsseseawgjclg
adkslaqpwoeirehpa
ngreywhaleuteyyehr
tdyvdanpittdhbeio
vkphndwvuoiblttno
spidermonkeyhawg
qetuoatdgjlxvnhahn
monarchbutterfly
wrylpsfhkzcbmge
```
Activity 2
What do they eat? Match the animal with its food and then write sentences.

African wild dog  gibbon  hummingbird  kangaroo  penguin  spider monkey

1 African wild dog
2 gibbon
3 hummingbird
4 kangaroo
5 penguin
6 spider monkey

grass
birds’ eggs

1 A kangaroo eats grass.
2
3
4
5
6

fish
prey animals

3 A gibbon eats fish.
4
5
6

plants and insects
nectar in flowers

3 A hummingbird eats plants and insects.
4 A prey animal eats nectar in flowers.
5
Answer Key

In the back of the Reader

Before You Read
1a Students’ own answers
1b Animals can jump, climb, swim and run.
   They cannot ride a bicycle.
   Penguins, which are birds, can swim.
2 a dolphin, grey whale, flying fish
   b kangaroo, elephant, hummingbird
   c dragonfly
   d grey whale
   e cheetah, gazelle, African wild dog, elephant
   f Students’ own answers

After You Read
1 a dolphin, grey whale, flying fish
   b kangaroo, elephant, hummingbird
   c dragonfly
   d grey whale
   e cheetah, gazelle, African wild dog, elephant
   f Students’ own answers

In this Factsheet

While-Reading activities

Activity 1a
1 tiger  2 cheetah  3 tiger  4 cat  5 tiger  6 tiger  7 cat  8 cheetah

Activity 1b
1 lions  2 jaguars  3 leopards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>swim</th>
<th>run</th>
<th>fishing</th>
<th>jump</th>
<th>climb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>jaguar</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leopard</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 2a
1 Southeast Asia – Indonesia, Thailand
2 North America – Canada, USA
3 Central America – El Salvador, Nicaragua
4 South America – Argentina, Peru
5 Students’ own answers

Activity 2b
1 dolphin  2 flying squirrel  3 spider monkey

Activity 3a
1 54 metres  2 they are slower than 56 km/hr
3 20 kilometres  4 1400 litres

Activity 3b
1 Stamina means you do not get tired quickly.
2 the kangaroo
3 the gazelle
4 the African wild dog
5 the elephant

Activity 3c

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>predators</th>
<th>prey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African wild dog</td>
<td>gazelle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cat</td>
<td>mouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cheetah</td>
<td>insect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Elephants and kangaroos are not predators or prey. They do not hunt other animals because they eat grass; no other animals hunt them.

Activity 4a
1 winter  2 autumn  3 south  4 north  5 spring  6 summer

Activity 4b
Students colour their butterflies.
Every autumn, millions of Monarch butterflies fly south from their homes in North America.
They fly thousands of kilometres to California and Mexico.
In spring they fly north again.
A lot of butterflies die on this difficult journey.

Activity 4c
1 D  2 H  3 D  4 D  5 H  6 H  7 D  8 H
**Activity 5**

1. Penguins are birds but they cannot fly.
2. They move slowly on land but in the sea they move very fast.
3. Penguins live in Antarctica. Great white sharks and Orca whales eat them.
4. Dolphins enjoy swimming fast and jumping high in the water.
5. They are good acrobats and like having fun.
6. Dolphins are intelligent and friendly animals. They sometimes swim near ships and people enjoy watching them.
7. In winter they swim to warmer water near Mexico.
8. It is also the place where their babies are born.
9. Grey whales are fantastic long-distance athletes. They live near Alaska in the summer, where there is a lot of food.
10. Flying fish can jump out of the sea.
11. They can glide two hundred metres.
12. Their predators swim fast but they cannot fly.

**After-Reading activities**

**Activity 1**

1. grey whale / Monarch butterfly / stork
2. stork / flying squirrel
3. dolphin / penguin
4. gibbon / spider monkey
5. kangaroo / elephant
6. tiger / cheetah

**Activity 2**

1. A kangaroo eats grass.
2. A spider monkey eats birds’ eggs.
3. A penguin eats fish.
4. An African wild dog eats gazelles / prey animals.
5. A gibbon eats plants and insects.
6. A hummingbird eats nectar in flowers.