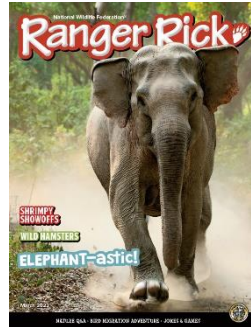
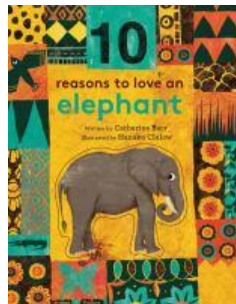
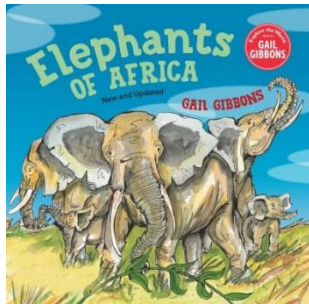


Lesson Starter Title: "How to Be an Elephant" Ranger!

**Inspired by the WWF educator toolkit from <https://www.worldwildlife.org/teaching-resources/toolkits/elephant-toolkit>

Book(s): *How to Be an Elephant Growing Up in the African Wild* by Katherine Roy and other nonfiction texts about elephants and wildlife rangers such as the magazine article listed below in *Ranger Rick*, *Elephants of Africa* (2021) by Gail Gibbons, *10 Reasons to Love an Elephant* by Catherine Barr, and/or the mini episode of *Leo the Wildlife Ranger*.



In a Nutshell:

Elephant populations are incredibly vulnerable, and their habitats are shrinking. Since 1979, African elephant's habitats have shrunk 50% and Asian elephants are now left with only 15% of their original range according to the World Wide Fund for Nature. Elephants are very important to the ecosystem and are considered a "keystone" species because of their impact on the living spaces of many other animals, which Roy describes in her book! In this lesson, students are asked to use the information gained from nonfiction sources in order to write creatively. They will compose a diary entry as if they are a wildlife ranger to describe what a ranger does to benefit the elephants and the environment.

Do This!

1. Read or do a picture-walk of *How to Be an Elephant* by Roy with your students. If you choose to do a picture-walk, make sure to read/spend more time on the sections "Making Space" and "Common Ground" for the purpose of this lesson.
2. Explain what "endangered" means and what a wildlife ranger does: manage and protect parks, forests, or wildlife. Ask, "Why is this job important for elephants? Why is this job important for humans and other animals?"

*This could be a great time to ask if they know of any other endangered species and talk about that if you would like!

3. Read the article, "Collaring Elephants in Kenya" with students (next page or available to download on WWF link at top).

*Share other texts about elephants and wildlife ranging such as this [Ranger Rick article](#) from March 2022 or this [mini episode of Leo the Wildlife Ranger](#).

4. Ask students “Would you want to be a wildlife ranger? Why or why not?” and recall what you read in the article about the technology to monitor elephants.

*Challenge students to propose ideas of how they would protect elephants if they were rangers. Encourage creativity with technology and other strategies.

5. Ask students to imagine they are an elephant wildlife ranger and have them create a diary entry summarizing their day. Encourage creativity with descriptions while also having them incorporate what they learned from nonfiction texts.
6. Extension: Have them add art to their diary entry and collect the entries in one “anthology” for the classroom library.

Use This—Printable!

My day as a wildlife ranger template and “Collaring Elephants in Kenya”



WILD CLASSROOM

ELEPHANTS

COLLARING ELEPHANTS IN KENYA

WWF—along with rangers from the Kenyan Wildlife Service—recently set out to place collars on elephants in the Maasai Mara National Reserve in Kenya. But this is no ordinary collar like your dog wears; these collars contain GPS satellite tracking that allows scientists to follow the elephants as they move across their habitat. Being able to identify popular elephant areas helps rangers better protect the elephants. These collars tell rangers whether an elephant is active, stationary, or injured, which will allow the rangers to respond more quickly and effectively to poaching incidents and human-elephant conflicts.

Collaring an African elephant that can weigh up to seven tons is not easy! Read below about the steps of this difficult task.



7:00 AM

After half an hour of tracking elephants in the humid morning, the team finds the herd they've been seeking. A 20-year-old matriarch elephant is chosen as the best choice for collaring because she's likely to travel far distances to breed.

7:30 AM

A veterinarian prepares the drug used to temporarily immobilize the elephant. The drug makes the elephant go to sleep within 15 minutes. The team must act quickly to attach the collar, or the elephant could suffocate under its own weight.





7:45 AM

One person measures the elephant's tusk, while another measures its neck. Others ensure the animal remains hydrated and healthy.

7:55 AM

The team checks that the GPS collar, which weighs about 22 pounds, is producing a signal and working properly. Team members then fit the collar around the elephant's neck and bolt it securely in place.



8:15 AM

WWF-Kenya elephant officer David Leto tests a GPS device.

8:30 AM

The successfully collared elephant, nicknamed "Kiambi," rejoins her herd.

The collar attached to Kiambi's neck will allow rangers to track her movements, which will help them protect her and her herd. Other technology that helps rangers protect wildlife includes:

- **Drones** flying above and **infrared cameras** positioned throughout elephant areas allow rangers to catch poachers from far away and in the dark.
- **Detection devices** alert people (especially farmers) to the sound of elephants approaching their community, which helps avoid human-elephant conflict.
- **Solar-powered lights** have also been installed around communities that typically have wildlife visitors to deter them and reduce human conflict.

Date: _____

My day as a wildlife ranger!
