

Giraffes Paired Texts



1

Record-Setters

The giraffe is a gentle giant. Female giraffes are usually around sixteen feet tall, while males are generally nineteen feet tall. Owing the title of tallest mammal on land, its height isn't the only thing setting records. Its still-like legs are six feet long, and so is its long neck. Along with having the longest legs and longest neck in the animal kingdom, it also has one of the longest tongues. A giraffe's bluish-black tongue is about twenty inches long!

Giraffes are grazers. This means that a giraffe will eat small amounts all day long rather than one large meal. This herbivore lives in the savannas of Africa, and it eats the leaves from the trees that are much higher than other animals can reach. It loves the leaves from acacia (uh-kay-shuh) trees. Its long, flexible tongue helps it eat around the thorns and ants that protect the acacia trees. It will eat about 100 pounds of leaves and limbs per day!

Although the giraffe doesn't set the record for having the longest pregnancy, it is certainly high up on the list. The female giraffe is pregnant for up to 465 days (that's about 15 months). When a baby giraffe (called a calf) is born, it will already be six feet tall and weigh about 150 pounds! But, it can't protect itself the way an adult can. A baby giraffe is very vulnerable. Sharing the savanna with predators like lions, leopards, and hyenas makes it easy prey. An adult giraffe is able to kick a predator in defense. With a hard enough kick, it can actually kill a lion. Even though a calf will be up on its feet within a few minutes of being born, it will need the protection of its mother and the rest of the herd. Less than half of baby giraffes make it to adulthood in the wild.

Another way a giraffe can escape a predator is by running. It can sprint short distances up to 35 miles per hour. It certainly isn't setting any records with its speed, but luckily it has the greatest range of vision of any land animal so it can see a predator with its sensitive eyes long before it arrives.



2

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GIRAFFES



Giraffes Paired Texts Assessment

* Required

Email address *

Your email

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6. Which quote from "Should There Be Zoos?" shows what would be a positive effect for giraffes? * 1 point

- "Zoos cannot create an exact habitat that the animals are used to."
- "Many animals live longer in a zoo..."
- "People don't need to travel to learn..."
- "Some animals are captured in order to be placed in a zoo."

7. Which sentence DOES NOT support giraffes being "gentle giants" in Record-Setters? * 1 point

- An adult giraffe is able to kick a predator in defense.
- Giraffes are the tallest animals on land.
- Giraffes protect their babies.
- Giraffes are herbivores.

Should giraffes be kept in zoos? * 3 points

Support your answer to the question with evidence from both texts.

Your answer
