

My Journey Home Family Connection

This week your child is reading *Cougars*, a selection about the big, mysterious cats that live in many parts of North America.

DAY
1

Vocabulary on the Go What might cats think as they eye birds? Take a neighborhood walk with your child and together imagine things cats might say about birds you see. Use as many of the following words as you can.

unobserved detecting ferocious particular keen

DAY
2

What's the Big Idea? Read a paragraph from a nonfiction book your child is familiar with. Tell your child what that paragraph is mostly about in one sentence. Then ask your child to name details in the paragraph that tell about the main idea.

Tip!

The main idea of a paragraph is what it is mostly about.
The details tell more about the main idea.

DAY
3

Animals Like Us Cougars are incredibly powerful and athletic animals that are known for their secretive habits. Are you a lot like a cougar? If not, what kind of animal are you like? Together, name some animals that are most like you and your child. Then discuss each animal's characteristics.

CHALLENGE

Have your child draw a picture of an animal that is like him or her. Then help your child to write a caption that tells how he or she is like the animal.

Fabulous Fable Together, read this fable about cougars.

The Cougar Reunion

None of the cougars could remember whose idea it was to organize it, and perhaps it didn't matter. But somehow it happened that the cougars decided to hold a reunion.

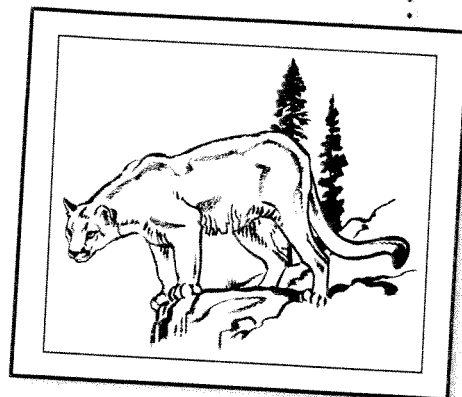
Cougars traveled from far and wide to spend time with each other. Long-separated siblings looked forward to getting reacquainted. The ferocious ones had tall tales ready to go. Even the most secretive old cats had a hankering to see buddies from their youth.

Old friends hugged and wept with joy. Mothers gushed over adorable kittens. A few males dragged dinner along as a feast for all.

But by the next afternoon, contentment flagged; tempers frayed. There wasn't enough space. Or food. "Those noisy kids are scaring off all the good eats," grumbled one cougar. "Oh, get lost," muttered a third.

There was no real discussion, but by the end of the day, all of the cougars had headed back to their own territories.

Moral: *A cougar reunion probably isn't a very good idea.*



Big Cats What makes a lion special? How is a tiger unique? Together, list different types of big cats, and discuss each one's characteristics. Choose one cat and look for books or websites to learn more about it.



Book Links

- *The Truth About Dangerous Sea Creatures*, by Mary M. Cerullo
- *Face to Face with Wolves*, by Jim Brandenburg **CHALLENGE**



Internet Challenge Cougars live in a range of habitats. Together, search the Internet for photos and images of cougars in their natural settings. Talk about how each habitat helps the cougar survive.

Cougars
Home Letter

Home Letter

Dear Family,

This week our class will consider the question “What can a scientist learn by observing the behaviors of a particular animal?” Our main selection, the informational text **Cougars**, introduces students to one of North America’s most mysterious and agile predators. Also included in this week’s readings is **Purr-fection**, a collection of poems about cats. Students will see how a poet’s words can paint vivid images.

This week’s...

Target Vocabulary: unobserved, available, detecting, mature, ferocious, resemble, particular, vary, contentment, keen

Vocabulary Strategy: Shades of meaning

Comprehension Skill: Main ideas and details—identify a topic’s important ideas and supporting details

Comprehension Strategy: Monitor/clarify—as you read, notice what isn’t making sense and find ways to figure out the parts that are confusing

Writing Focus: Informative writing—revise a research report

Activities to Do Together

Vocabulary

With your child, see how many of this week’s **Target Vocabulary** words you can use in a story about visiting a zoo.

Big Cats, Little Cats

Talk with your child about the similarities and differences between house cats and big cats, such as cougars, tigers, and lions. How do their behaviors reflect their environment?

When I Read About...

Help your child research the habitat and diet of cougars. Ask your child to draft a paragraph that gives key details about where cougars live and what they eat. Remind your child to include facts, and not opinions about the species. Then help your child revise the paragraph, correcting any spelling errors and adding or deleting details.



Go to the *eBook* to read and listen to this week’s selection.

Cougars

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. cellar | 22. clamor |
| 2. flavor | 23. tremor |
| 3. cougar | 24. circular |
| 4. chapter | 25. adviser |
| 5. mayor | |
| 6. anger | |
| 7. senator | |
| 8. passenger | |
| 9. major | |
| 10. popular | |
| 11. tractor | |
| 12. thunder | |
| 13. pillar | |
| 14. border | |
| 15. calendar | |
| 16. quarter | |
| 17. lunar | |
| 18. proper | |
| 19. elevator | |
| 20. bitter | |
| 21. stellar | |

Name _____ Date _____

Cougars
Vocabulary Word Cards

unobserved

resemble

available

particular

detecting

vary

mature

contentment

ferocious

keen

Target Vocabulary

Big Cats
Target Vocabulary

Fill in the Idea-Support Map with sentences that support the idea, "Animals face many dangers in the wild." Use words from the Target Vocabulary list. Examples are started for you.

Vocabulary

unobserved	available	detecting
mature	ferocious	resemble
particular	vary	contentment
keen		

Idea: **Animals face many dangers in the wild.**

Predators such as lions hide behind rocks and trees, _____ by their prey.

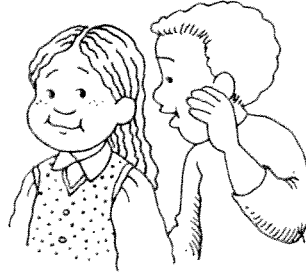
Animals may starve during cold seasons when food is not easily _____.

Shades of Meaning

Cougars
Vocabulary Strategies:
Shades of Meaning

Read each set of words. Then circle the word that best describes a louder sound. You may use a dictionary to help you.

1. whisper say



2. shriek cry



3. shout roar

4. plop thud

5. crash tap

Shades of Meaning

Read the words in the Word Bank. Then write a story about an animal using all of the words. Use the words in a way that shows their different shades of meaning. You may use a dictionary to help you.

Word Bank

**observe
study**

eat
devour

admire
respect

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Name _____ Date _____

Shades of Meaning

Cougars
 Vocabulary Strategies:
 Shades of Meaning

Read each sentence. Think about how the underlined words have slightly different meanings. Then draw a picture to show the meaning of the underlined word in each sentence. You may use a dictionary to help you.

This bug is small.

This bug is tiny.

This bug is miniscule.