

African Rift Interp Binder



Table of Contents:

Interpretive Cart Guidelines.....	Page 2
Biofacts Interpretation and Talking Points.....	Page 3
<u>Animal Talking Points:</u>	
Giraffe.....	Page 4
Become a Giraffe Hero.....	Page 6
Facts About Our Individuals.....	Page 8
Animal ID Photos.....	Page 9
Resources.....	Page 11

African Rift Interp Binder

Giraffe Interpretive Station Guidelines:

When staffing the giraffe interpretive station:

1. Find all of the biofacts that you will need and place them into a box for transportation (a list of all of the biofacts you need can be found in this binder).
2. Bring chairs (optional, are located in the CEF building) and the box down with you to the silver table that is permanently set up near the giraffe exhibit.
3. Place tablecloth on the table.
4. Group and place the Biofacts and laminated info sheets based on species.
- 5. KEEP AN EYE ON BIOFACTS AT ALL TIMES.**
6. An adult must accompany small children at all times.
7. Follow the talking point outline in the binder.
8. If you have to leave, put everything away in the box and take it back to DC. Do not leave anything unattended.
- 9. Reminder: Zooteens must always travel in pairs, unless stated otherwise!**
- 10. At the end of the day,** put **EVERYTHING** back in the box and pack it back up to DC. (If you brought chairs, put them back in the CEF building and lock it)
11. Record each topic discussed during your shift in the binder.
12. Return biofacts and binder to the docent area where they were found.

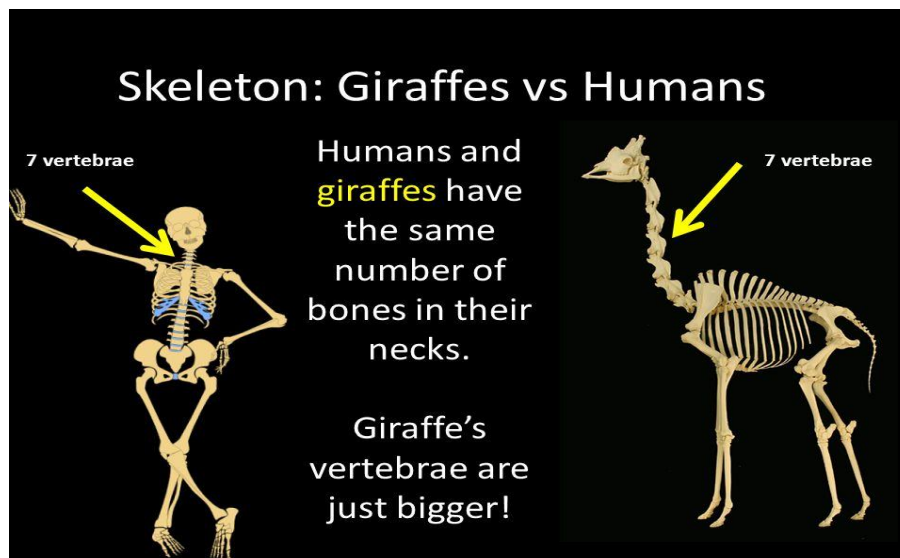
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Biofacts for African Rift Interpretation:

<u>Biofacts for Giraffe Interp:</u>	
Biofact:	Use:
Photo of giraffe skull	Use to talk about the ossicones.
Zebra skull	Use to compare with giraffe skull.
Vertebrae comparison (giraffe vs. human)	Use to discuss having the same number of vertebrae as humans.
Giraffe tail	Use when talking about tail.
Zebra hoof pieces	Let people touch while talking about zebras.

Biofacts Talking Points:

1. Comparing giraffe and zebra skull.
 - a. Discuss the factual differences
 - i. Ossicones
 - ii. Size differences
 - iii. Even though both are ungulates, they have evolved in very different ways.
2. Vertebrae comparison.
 - a. Tell participants that humans have 7 vertebrae and then ask them to guess how many giraffes might have.
 - i. Show the vertebrae comparison and explain that giraffes also have 7 vertebrae.
 1. They just have larger vertebrae than we do!



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Animal Talking Points:

Giraffe:

Physical Characteristics:

1. Giraffe's have very impressive tongues.
 - a. They have prehensile tongues that they use to wrap around their food.
 - i. Giraffe's eat the leaves of acacia trees.
 1. These trees are covered with thorns, so giraffes use their nimble tongues to weave through the thorns and strip the branches of their leaves.
 - b. The dark coloration is thought to help protect their tongue from the African sun.
 - b. A giraffe's tongue is, on average, 18 inches long.
 - i. Or about as long as your forearm.
2. The horn-like structures on their head are called ossicones.
 - a. They are actually made of bone and attached to their skull.
 - b. Male giraffes often use these when they are fighting another male.
3. Of all hoofed animals, giraffes have the largest eyes and field of vision.
 - a. Giraffes are considered "living watchtowers" due to their excellent vision and height combined.
 - i. Neighboring animals have been known to use giraffe's reactions to predators as an indicator of their own safety, because giraffes can see predators from very far away.
 1. Zebras are one of the animals that depend on the good vision of giraffes to help protect themselves from predators.
 2. This means that they tend to congregate naturally in the wild and is the reason that they share an exhibit at the zoo.
 - a. Giraffes also depend on zebra's excellent night-vision to help protect them from predators at night.
 - i. This is called a "mutualistic relationship", where both animals are benefiting from the presence of the other animal.
 4. Humans have 7 vertebrae in their neck. How many vertebrae do you think giraffe's have?
 - a. Giraffe's only have seven vertebrae, despite having such long necks.
 - i. Their vertebrae are just much larger.
 - ii. Giraffes have the longest necks in the world, reaching six to seven feet long on average.
 1. But why is the giraffe's neck so long?

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- a. It allows them to reach food resources that other herbivores cannot reach.
 - b. Male giraffes use their long necks to fight other giraffes, a behavior called “necking”.
5. Every giraffe has different spot patterns, much like a fingerprint.
- a. Scientists use spot patterns to tell apart individuals.
 - b. Giraffe spots help them hide from predators.
 - i. Their spots break up their shape in shadows.
 - 1. As the shadows shift, their spots help them “disappear” into the background.

Conservation:

6. Giraffes are on the endangered species list.
- a. Poaching and habitat destruction have caused wild giraffe populations to decline.
 - i. Populations have decreased 40% over the last 30 years and they are now locally extinct in 7 African countries.
 - b. How can you help?
 - i. Be a Giraffe Hero!
 - ii. See next page.



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Be a Giraffe Hero!

What can you do to help giraffes?

1. **Be loud for the quiet giant.** Tell everyone you know that giraffes are endangered and need help.
2. **Give money or time** to an organization that works to save giraffes.
3. **Grow trees!** Giraffes and lots of other animals need native trees, and deforestation hurts these animals. Planting native trees wherever you live helps animals and the environment.
4. **Refuse** to buy anything made with giraffe body parts, including bones, tail hair, or fur.



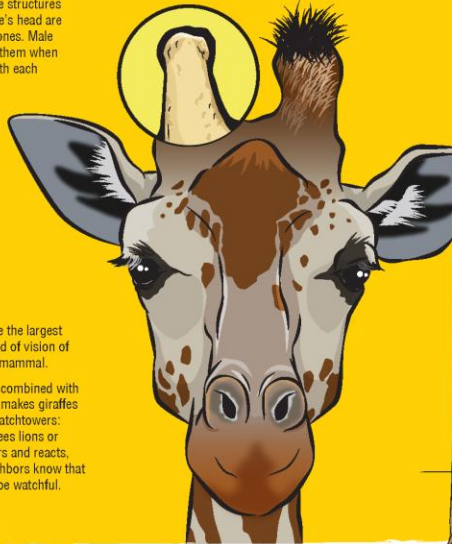
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GIRAFFES: MORE THAN THE SUM OF THEIR PARTS

GIRAFFES ARE WONDERFULLY WEIRD. LET'S TOUR
THEIR WEIRDNESS FROM TOP TO BOTTOM.

OSSICONES (HORNS)

The horn-like structures on the giraffe's head are called ossicones. Male giraffes use them when they fight with each other.



EYES

Giraffes have the largest eyes and field of vision of any hooved mammal.

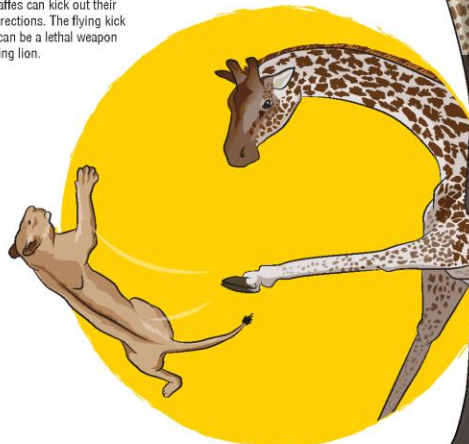
Great vision combined with great height makes giraffes true living watchtowers: If a giraffe sees lions or other dangers and reacts, then its neighbors know that it is time to be watchful.

LEGS

Giraffes have legs that are as long as their necks, about two meters (6 or 7 feet.)

The long legs of giraffes give them long strides that can accelerate up to 56 km (35 miles.)

At the base of giraffe legs are sharp hooves. Giraffes can kick out their legs in all directions. The flying kick of a giraffe can be a lethal weapon to an attacking lion.



SCENT

Giraffes have been noted for their distinctive odor. Chemicals that can kill harmful microbes on giraffe skin cause this scent and may also help prevent mosquito bites.

TONGUE

Giraffes have prehensile tongues, meaning they can wrap them around food items. A giraffe tongue is half a meter (18 inches.)

Giraffes can weave this long, nimble tongue between the sharp thorns of an acacia branch and strip it of leaves.

The bluish coloration of the giraffe's tongue may provide it with built-in protection from the harsh African sun.

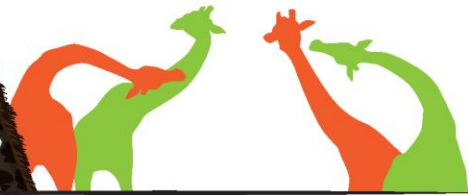


NECK

Giraffes have the longest necks of any animal, reaching two meters or more (six or seven feet.) Despite its long neck, the giraffe has only seven vertebrae, exactly the same number as you do!

A giraffe's neck has many functions:

1. Exclusive restaurant reservations: It allows giraffes to reach food that other herbivores can't.
2. Built-in room with a view: It gives the giraffe a view unparalleled by any other animal on the ground.
3. Built-in weaponry: Male giraffes spar by whipping their necks at each other in combat called "necking."



SPOTS

The spots of Masai giraffes are very pointy. Some are shaped like leaves. Some are shaped like stars.

Every giraffe has a different spot pattern. Scientists recognize individual giraffes by their spots.

Giraffe spots help them hide in shadows. The spots help break up the giraffe's shape. As shadows shift their spots help them "disappear" against the background of bushes and trees.

TAIL

Giraffe tails are about one meter (3 feet.) Their long black tail hairs make effective fly swatters to bat away pesky flies.

Researchers have found that giraffes with missing tail tassels often also have long claw scars on their backsides—souvenirs of failed lion attacks!

POOP

Giraffes digest most of what they eat. Their poop is very small relative to their size.



To learn more visit www.africasgiants.org

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African Rift Interp Binder

Facts About Our Individuals:

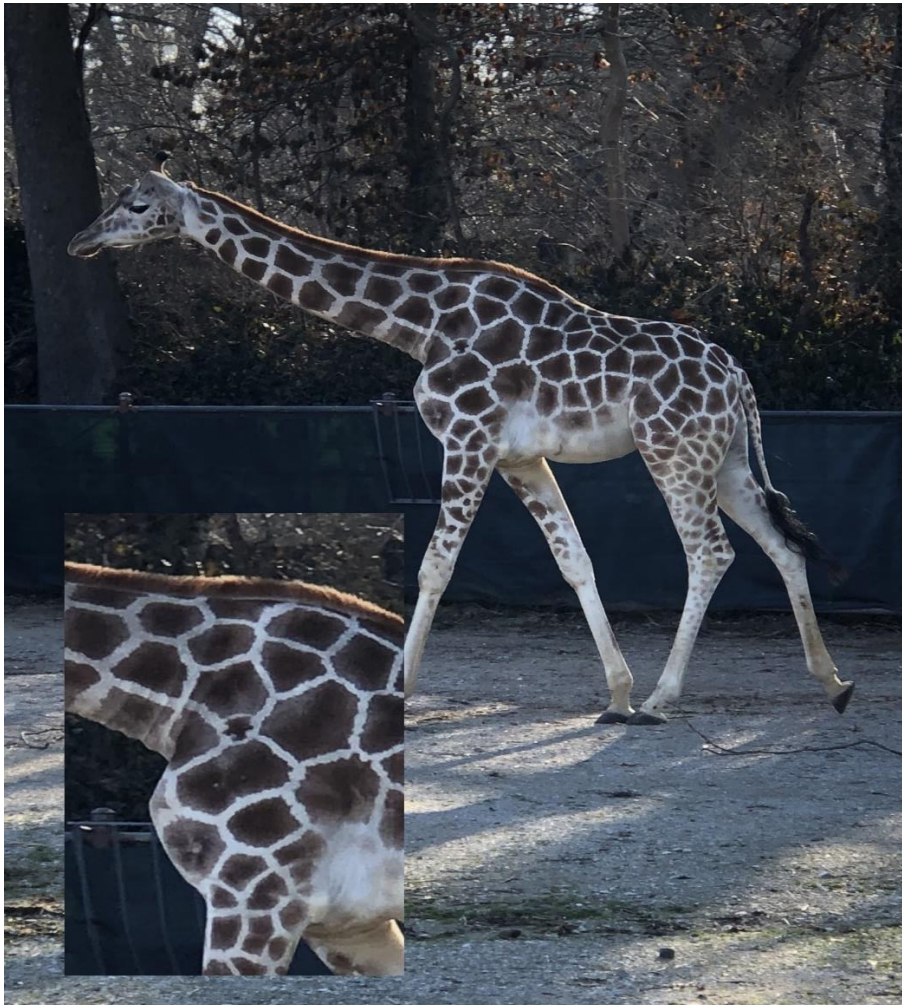
Giraffes:

Name	Gender	Defining Features
Kijana	Female	Newest friend from Binder Park Zoo, darker spots
Clementine	Female	Has "Frankenstein" spot on her lower neck (left side).

Zebra:

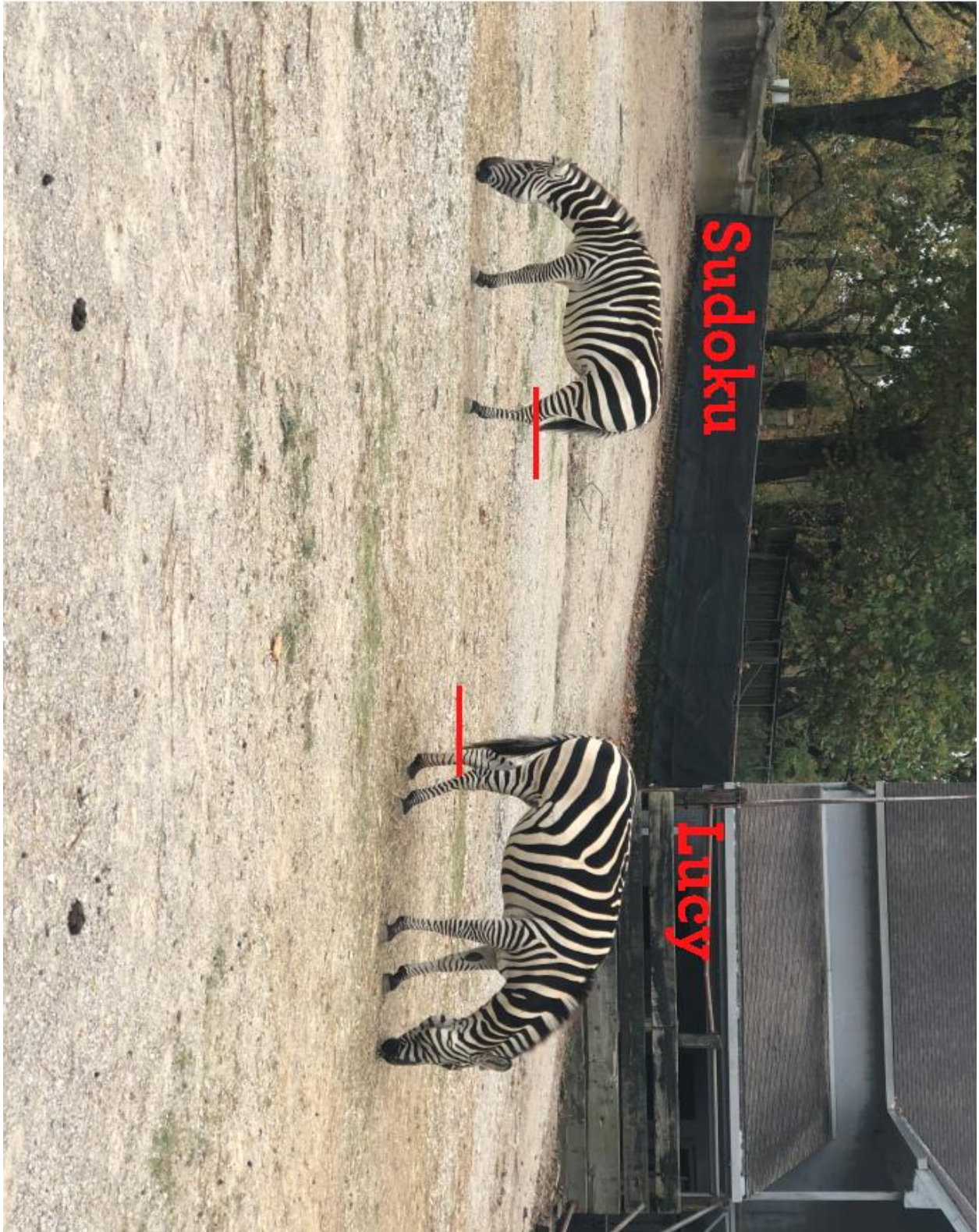
Name	Gender	Defining Features
Sudoku	Female	Shorter tail.
Lucy	Female	Longer tail.

Clementine:



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Zebras:



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Resources:

Giraffe:

<https://www.africasgiants.org/giraffe.html>