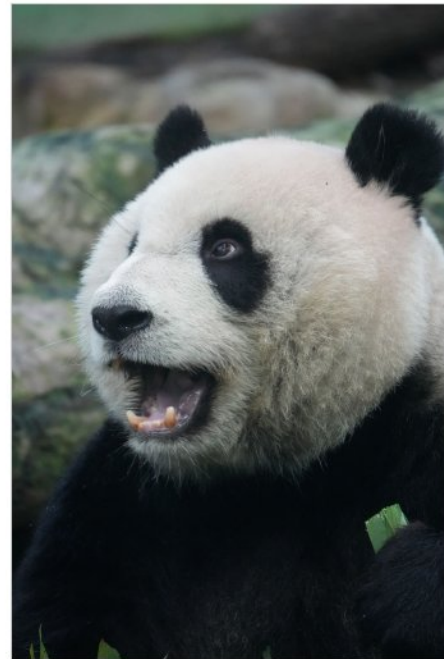


The Giant Panda — A Living Symbol of Conservation

Reading Worksheet — Level F | [tahricteaches.com](https://www.tahricteaches.com)

The giant panda is one of the most beloved animals in the world. With its rounded body and striking black-and-white fur, it has become a global **symbol** of wildlife conservation. Although it looks like a peaceful, oversized teddy **bear**, the panda is a true member of the bear family. It lives only in a few remote mountain ranges in central China, where cool mist and dense **forest** create the perfect home.



Pandas are famous for one unusual habit: they live almost entirely on **bamboo**. Their **diet** is over 99 percent bamboo, even though their stomachs were originally built for meat. To get enough energy, a single panda must **consume** between 12 and 38 kilograms of bamboo every day, spending up to 16 hours feeding. Their strong jaws and a special wrist bone that works like a thumb help them strip and grip bamboo with surprising skill.

Despite their power, pandas are remarkably **gentle**. They prefer a quiet, solitary life, climbing trees, resting in the shade, and avoiding other animals whenever possible. To **survive** in their misty mountain **environment**, they have **adapted** thick, oily fur that keeps out the cold and rain. Mothers are also fiercely protective, raising tiny pink cubs that are born no bigger than a stick of butter.

For many years, the giant panda was in serious danger. Logging, farming, and road building destroyed huge sections of bamboo forest, and the wild population dropped to fewer than 1,000 animals. People began to fear that pandas would disappear forever. To **protect** them, the Chinese government created more than 60 special nature reserves where the panda's habitat would be safe from human harm.

Today, more than 1,800 pandas live in the wild, and the species has been moved from "endangered" to "vulnerable" on the global conservation list. It is one of the great success stories of modern wildlife protection. Even so, climate change and shrinking forests still **threaten** their long-term future. The giant panda reminds us that with patience, science, and care, we can share the planet with even its most fragile creatures.

A. Vocabulary

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. symbol ____ | a. the kinds of food that a person or animal usually eats |
| 2. bear ____ | b. the natural surroundings in which a plant or animal lives |
| 3. forest ____ | c. kind, calm, and careful in the way one acts |
| 4. bamboo ____ | d. to keep safe from harm or danger |
| 5. diet ____ | e. to put in danger; to be likely to cause harm |
| 6. consume ____ | f. a large mammal with thick fur, strong legs, and a short tail |
| 7. gentle ____ | g. a large area of land thickly covered with trees and plants |
| 8. survive ____ | h. a tall, fast-growing grass with hard, hollow stems |
| 9. environment ____ | i. to eat or drink something; to use up |
| 10. adapt ____ | j. to continue to live, especially through hard conditions |
| 11. protect ____ | k. to change in order to fit a new situation or environment |
| 12. threaten ____ | l. a sign, object, or animal that represents an idea or group |



B. True or False

1. The giant panda is a true member of the bear family. ____
2. Pandas live in many countries across Asia and Africa. ____
3. A panda's diet is more than 99 percent bamboo. ____
4. Pandas can eat up to 38 kilograms of bamboo every day. ____
5. Pandas are loud, aggressive animals that like to live in big groups. ____
6. Newborn panda cubs are pink and no bigger than a stick of butter. ____
7. The wild panda population once dropped to fewer than 1,000 animals. ____
8. China has created more than 60 nature reserves to protect pandas. ____
9. Climate change and shrinking forests no longer threaten pandas at all. ____



C. Fill in the Blanks

Word Bank: adapt, bamboo, consume, protect, symbol

1. The giant panda has become a global _____ of wildlife conservation.
2. To get enough energy, a single panda must _____ up to 38 kilograms of bamboo daily.
3. Pandas have _____ thick, oily fur to survive the cold, misty mountains.
4. The Chinese government built more than 60 nature reserves to _____ panda habitat.
5. A panda's diet is more than 99 percent _____, even though it is a bear.

D. Comprehension Questions

1. Why is the giant panda considered a true bear, and where does it live in the wild?
2. Describe a panda's diet and explain how its body has adapted for eating bamboo.
3. What is panda behavior like, and how do mothers care for their cubs?
4. Why did the wild panda population drop so sharply, and what did China do in response?
5. What is the current conservation status of the panda, and what challenges still remain?

E. Discussion Questions

1. Should countries spend large amounts of money to save a single species like the panda? Why or why not?
2. Pandas are sometimes called 'charismatic megafauna' — popular animals used to raise money for conservation. Is it fair that less cute species get less attention?

3. If you could design one new program to protect pandas and their habitat, what would it look like and why?



Answer Key

The Giant Panda — A Living Symbol of Conservation

Teacher Reference Only | tahricteaches.com

A. Vocabulary: 1-l, 2-f, 3-g, 4-h, 5-a, 6-i, 7-c, 8-j, 9-b, 10-k, 11-d, 12-e

B. True/False: 1-T, 2-F, 3-T, 4-T, 5-F, 6-T, 7-T, 8-T, 9-F

C. Fill Blanks: 1-symbol, 2-consume, 3-adapt, 4-protect, 5-bamboo

D. Comprehension:

1. The giant panda is classified as a bear because it shares the body structure and family traits of true bears. It lives only in a few remote mountain ranges in central China, where cool mist and dense forest create its habitat.
2. A panda's diet is over 99 percent bamboo. To eat it, the panda uses strong jaws and a special wrist bone that works like a thumb to grip and strip bamboo stalks.
3. Pandas are gentle and solitary. They prefer a quiet life of climbing, resting, and avoiding other animals. Mothers are fiercely protective and raise tiny pink cubs that are born no bigger than a stick of butter.
4. The wild population dropped to fewer than 1,000 because logging, farming, and road building destroyed huge sections of bamboo forest. In response, China created more than 60 nature reserves to protect panda habitat.
5. The panda has been moved from 'endangered' to 'vulnerable,' with more than 1,800 living in the wild. However, climate change and shrinking forests still threaten their long-term future.