CELEBRATE CATS
Before reading “Every Day Is Caturday,” pages 6–10, ask students to help you define the word “Caturday.” Point out that it is a combination of “cat” and “Saturday,” and that people first used the word to represent the day of the week (Saturday) when they would celebrate cats by posting on special Internet sites lots of cat photos with funny captions.

After children have read “Every Day Is Caturday” ask them to explain what the author meant by the title. Then enhance students’ comprehension of the story by assigning the Which Cat Is That? student page.

Wrap up the lesson by celebrating “Caturday” for a week in your classroom. Encourage students to bring in photos of cats (wild and/or domestic), write funny captions for them, and post the results on a bulletin board.

ZOOM IN ON BIODIVERSITY
After students read about marine plankton in “Super (Small) Heroes,” pages 14–19, search for some freshwater plankton in a body of water near your home. Collect a sample of water from your closest stream or pond and look at it together under a microscope or with a magnifying glass. What do students see? Can they find any plankton?

Plankton represent amazing biodiversity because there are so many different kinds. Investigate local biodiversity with something a little bigger and easier to count. For example, discover how many different species of trees there are in your schoolyard or a local park, using the tree shapes, differences in leaves and bark, and leaf buds specified in field guides.

WHITE STORKS AND ALLIGATORS
Before students read “Up on the Rooftops,” pages 20–25, and “The Amazing Alligator,” pages 30–35, have them complete Part 1 of the White Storks and Alligators student page. Then after students have read the stories, ask them to do Part 2.

Next, explain to students that an adaptation is something that helps an animal survive in the place, or habitat, where it lives. Emphasize that adaptations may be either physical (e.g., body parts such as feathers or strong jaws) or behavioral (e.g., actions such as building a nest high in a tree or basking in the sun to stay warm). Note that many of the interesting features students listed in Part 1 of their student pages are adaptations. Ask students to explain how these and other adaptations mentioned in the white stork and alligator articles help the animals live in their native habitats. Then ask:

• What would happen if the animals switched habitats? (Note: White storks have adapted to wetlands, so the switch would not be as challenging for them.)
• Why is it important for animals to live in the habitats for which they are adapted?
• Why do efforts to help endangered animals often focus on conserving or restoring their habitats?

GATOR CAFÉ
As students discovered in “The Amazing Alligator,” pages 30–35, gators eat lots of different things. Discuss how when they are young, alligators eat insects, snails, crustaceans, worms, and small fish. As they grow, they consume larger prey, including turtles, various mammals, birds, and larger fish. Then ask the class to help you design a menu for a family restaurant for alligators. Have students come up with creative names for items on the menu (including kiddie meals) and a name for the restaurant. They should also design an attractive menu. For a link with math, have students add prices to the menu items. Pretending to be hungry gators, they can order different combinations of food and then calculate their total bills.
Each statement below describes a wild cat that you met in “Every Day Is Caturday,” pages 6–10. Write the name of each cat next to its description. (The names of the seven cats are in the word box at right.)

**CAT DESCRIPTIONS**

- Can go without water for weeks at a time. **Black-footed cat**
- Is most likely to hunt and eat a monkey. **Caracal**
- Catches a bird in mid-air. **Cat**
- Hunts and prowls during the day. **Cheetah**
- Has the densest fur of any cat. **Chausie**
- Has pink skin. **Fishing cat**
- Fishes in a marsh. **Jaguarundi**

**WILD CATS**

- Black-footed cat
- Caracal
- Fishing cat
- Jaguarundi
- Margay
- Pallas’s cat
- Sand cat

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**CELEBRATE CATUSDAY WITH THESE RIDDLES**

What do you call a cat that drinks lemonade instead of milk?
_A sourpuss._

What does a cat call mice on skateboards?
_Meals on Wheels._

What’s a cat’s favorite cereal?
_Mice Krispies._

PART 1: BEFORE YOU READ THE ARTICLES

Look at the photos of these two animals in the September issue. Make a list of what makes each animal interesting or different from other animals.

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<th>WHITE STORK FEATURES</th>
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PART 2: AFTER YOU READ THE ARTICLES

A habitat is the place where an animal or plant lives and meets its survival needs. Answer these questions about two animal habitats:

1. What kind of habitat does an American alligator live in? __________________________
   __________________________
   __________________________

2. What habitats do the white storks in the Ranger Rick article live in? _________________
   __________________________
   __________________________
   __________________________