

Raccoons Like City Life

Life is good for raccoons in Toronto. There is lots of garbage to eat. There are many places to live, such as attics, chimneys, and garages.

More than 10,000 of these animals live in the city. That's about one raccoon for every 200 people. And their population is growing.

City raccoons live well. They are about one kilogram heavier than their country cousins. An adult male in Toronto can weigh more than eight kilograms.

Raccoons are cute, but they are still wild animals and can be dangerous. People should not feed them or keep them as pets. Raccoons usually ignore people, but they can be vicious if their babies are threatened.

Raccoons are also pests. They dig up many gardens. They get into garbage cans and make a mess. They can also cause a lot of damage to homes. Once they get into an attic, they are hard to get out. The best protection is to close up any holes into attics and garages. Also keep garbage cans securely covered.

Raccoons are in the city to stay. They have adapted so well that they would not survive easily in the wild.



Brad Gates make a living removing wildlife from people's homes and garages. He says raccoons are intelligent. Once he got a call to remove a raccoon from a garage. The owners couldn't figure out how the animal got inside all the time. Then Gates discovered the raccoon had learned how to operate the automatic garage door. It pushed the button to open the door, walked in, and then closed the door.

Assessment C – continued

Facts About Raccoons

HABITAT: Raccoons are found throughout southern Canada. In the wild, they live mostly in wooded areas. They feed along rivers and lakes.

APPEARANCE: They are distinguished by their black facial mask and ringed tail. Their colour varies from almost black to light brown. They weigh 5 to 12 kg.

HABITS: Raccoons come out at night. They are good climbers. They are also strong, but reluctant swimmers. They do not hibernate in winter, but many sleep through cold periods in their dens. Adult males usually live alone. Females and young live in family groups. Raccoons have a nest only when nursing their young. Usually three kits (babies) are born in March to May. Young raccoons become independent in autumn.

DIET: Raccoons eat almost anything. In the wild, their diet includes nuts, seeds, fruits, insects, eggs, frogs, and crayfish. They may dip their food in water, but do not "wash" it.

CAUTION: Recently, rabies has been found in the raccoons of eastern Canada.

From Zuern, G. (1999) *Ontario Reader for EAL and Literacy Learners*. Toronto: Newcomer Communications.

Yes or No?

Answer these questions about "Raccoons like city life."

1. Is life good for raccoons in Toronto? Yes
2. Is there lots of garbage to eat? _____
3. Are city raccoons lighter than country raccoons? _____
4. Can raccoons be dangerous? _____
5. Should people keep them as pets? _____
6. Do raccoons usually threaten people? _____
7. Can raccoons cause a lot of damage to homes? _____
8. Are raccoons hard to get out of attics? _____
9. Have raccoons adapted well to city life? _____

Assessment C – continued

Categories

Put these descriptions of raccoons in the correct category:

insects	black facial mask	black to light brown
ringed tail	do not hibernate	frogs
good climbers	nuts	come out at night

Diet	Habits	Appearance
<i>Insects</i>		

Vocabulary

Write the number of the definition for each key word:

Definitions	Key Words
1. make; create	_____ adult
2. in danger	_____ attic
3. grown up; mature	___ <u>1</u> _____ cause
4. give food to	_____ cute
5. savage, dangerous	_____ feed
6. waste; rubbish	_____ garage
7. building for parked cars	_____ garbage
8. attractive; adorable	_____ ignore
9. dirty, untidy situation	_____ mess
10. pay no attention to	_____ pests
11. animals that people keep as companions	_____ pets
12. troublesome animals	_____ threatened
13. natural state	_____ vicious
14. the top part of a house, under the roof	_____ wild

Assessment C – continued

Raccoons Like Life: **ANSWER KEY**

Yes or No?

Answer these questions about "Raccoons like city life."

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9. Have raccoons adapted well to city life? Yes

Categories

Put these descriptions of raccoons in the correct category:

insects	black facial mask	black to light brown
ringed tail	do not hibernate	frogs
good climbers	nuts	come out at night

Diet	Habits	Appearance
insects	good climbers	ringed tail
nuts	do not hibernate	black facial mask
frogs	come out at night	black to light brown

Vocabulary

Write the number of the definition for each key word:

Definitions	Key Words
1. make; create	<u>3</u> adult
2. in danger	<u>14</u> attic
3. grown up; mature	<u>1</u> cause
4. give food to	<u>8</u> cute
5. savage, dangerous	<u>4</u> feed
6. waste; rubbish	<u>7</u> garage
7. building for parked cars	<u>6</u> garbage
8. attractive; adorable	<u>10</u> ignore
9. dirty, untidy situation	<u>9</u> mess
10. pay no attention to	<u>12</u> pests
11. animals that people keep as companions	<u>11</u> pets
12. troublesome animals	<u>2</u> threatened
13. natural state	<u>5</u> vicious
14. the top part of a house, under the roof	<u>13</u> wild

Assessment C – continued

Grades 5+

Writing PICTURE PROMPT

Encourage the student to include the five (5) W's. Who? What? Where? When? Why?

Writing	
The EAL student can:	
A2.1 – A2.2	<input type="checkbox"/> organize information around a central idea using graphic organizers <input type="checkbox"/> begin to use common tenses, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation, with some accuracy <input type="checkbox"/> use conventional spelling for common and personally relevant words <input type="checkbox"/> write appropriate responses (using short sentences, phrases, or graphic organizers) to written questions <input type="checkbox"/> begin to use a variety of forms (e.g. notes, dialogues, narratives, reports)
B1.1 – B1.2	<input type="checkbox"/> produce prose using appropriate verb tenses, connectors, subject-verb agreement, noun, adjective and adverb phrases, and clauses, and conventional spelling, with some accuracy <input type="checkbox"/> organize and sequence ideas effectively <input type="checkbox"/> begin to use variety in vocabulary and sentence structure <input type="checkbox"/> use paragraphs when writing descriptions and narratives
B2+	<input type="checkbox"/> use grade-appropriate vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> produce reports, editorials, paragraphs, summaries, and notes on a variety of topics, with few grammatical or spelling errors <input type="checkbox"/> use the stages of the writing process <input type="checkbox"/> write with a clear focus, coherent organization, and varied vocabulary
Reading	
The EAL student can:	
A2.1 – A2.2	<input type="checkbox"/> use strategies to assist in deriving meaning from text <input type="checkbox"/> understand familiar vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> select main ideas <input type="checkbox"/> use some correct phrasing and rhythm when reading aloud
B1.1 – B1.2	<input type="checkbox"/> describe short components <input type="checkbox"/> read and understand grade-appropriate text, with minimal assistance
B2+	<input type="checkbox"/> recall and retell a written story <input type="checkbox"/> figure out meaning in text that may be unfamiliar and contain challenging vocabulary and sentence structure
Comments/Observations:	