

# Zebras

Most people know that zebras are wild horses with stripes and that they live in Africa. But did you know that of all the zebras in the world, no two look exactly alike? Each zebra has a unique pattern of stripes.

A zebra's stripes serve many purposes. They help zebras recognize each other. They also work as a form of camouflage. The stripes may confuse predators. They make it hard to pick out one zebra from the group. The stripes help scientists tell zebras apart too. Zoologists use a zebra's stripe pattern to help determine its species. Some zebras have stripes that are far apart, with a lighter stripe between two darker ones. Other zebras have narrow stripes. There are zebras with stripes all over their bodies. Some zebras have no stripes on their legs or bellies.



Many years ago, there was a kind of zebra with beautiful brown and white stripes. The stripes were only on the zebras' heads and front halves. The zebras had no stripes on their legs, bellies, rear halves, or tails. Sadly, hunters killed too many of these zebras. They became extinct in 1883.

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## Quiz Questions

1. What is the main idea of this story?

- ☐ a. Stripes can be a form of camouflage.
- ☐ b. One kind of zebra is now extinct.
- ☐ c. Zebras' stripes are unique and useful.

2. Why did the zebras with beautiful brown and white stripes become extinct?

- ☐ a. Hunters killed too many of them.
- ☐ b. Predators could recognize them.
- ☐ c. They didn't have enough stripes.

3. What does the word **narrow** mean in this story?

- ☐ a. thin
- ☐ b. colorful
- ☐ c. large

4. How can a zebra's stripes help the zebra survive?

- \_\_\_ a. The stripes may confuse a predator.
- \_\_\_ b. The stripes may help the zebra find other zebras.
- \_\_\_ c. The stripes may help zoologists find the zebra.

5. What purposes do zebras' stripes serve?

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6. Select the best word for each definition.

extinct	figure out
unique	different from all the rest
serve	be useful
determine	no longer living

7. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

No two zebras look \_\_\_\_\_ the same. Each one has a unique \_\_\_\_\_ of stripes.  
Many years ago, there was one kind of zebra \_\_\_\_\_ know about with a pattern of brown and  
white stripes. These zebras didn't have any stripes on their \_\_\_\_\_. Hunters caused these  
beautiful animals to become \_\_\_\_\_.

exactly, extinct, pattern, rear halves, recognize, unique, zoologists