

## Library Lesson Plan: Monkey See, Monkey Write

1. Read aloud these articles about golden snub-nosed monkeys.

Article #1: "China's Golden Treasure" by Peg Lopata, *Faces*, (Feb 2013, Vol. 29, Issue 5)

### China's Golden Treasure

THE SUN HAS NOT YET RISEN IN THE REMOTE MOUNTAIN FORESTS OF WESTERN CHINA.

BUT NOT EVERYONE, or everything, is still fast asleep. Listen closely and you will hear a chorus of baby-like babbling. The babbling is not from human babies wanting to be changed and fed, but rather from a different kind of early riser -- the Sichuan snub-nosed monkey.

With its long golden hair and pale blue muzzle, the golden, or Sichuan, snub-nosed monkey is quite a striking primate. In the wild, this monkey can only be found in the forests of central and southwestern China. It can withstand the coldest average temperatures of any non-human primate in the world. In the mountains where they live, temperatures can drop as low as 17 degrees Fahrenheit.

'They eat greasy seeds in the winter. That helps them maintain a thick layer of fat under their skin,' says Dr. Qi Xiao-Guang, a professor at Northwest University in Xi'An, China. 'They have lots of hair, and they huddle together when they sleep.'

The golden snub-nosed monkey is an herbivore, meaning it only eats plants. Its favorite food is fruticose lichen, which can be found hanging from tree branches year round. During cold months, the monkeys also eat bark.

Not much is known about these mysterious primates. Scientists have observed that they live both high in the trees and on the ground. Their home range is quite large, about 7 to 15 square miles.

This monkey usually lives in a supertroop -- a group of 150 to 400 individual animals. Within the supertroop, they form smaller groups of one adult male, many adult females, and several younger monkeys, both male and female. Other smaller groups are made up entirely of only males.

Though their habitat is mountainous and remote, their home is under threat. Clear-cutting, or clearing a forested area of all trees, usually makes life difficult for them. They have to move and live somewhere else, sometimes causing conflicts with other monkey groups as they compete for food. Selective logging -- meaning carefully choosing which trees to cut -- may help them survive. Many activists are working hard to make sure this animal, a true treasure of China, endures.

STATS:

Scientific name: *Rhinopithecus roxellana*

Other names: Sichuan golden snub-nosed monkey, snow monkey, orange monkey, Roxellane's monkey

Total population: estimates from 8,000 to 25,000

Geographic range: West-central China (Ganssu, Hubei, Shaanxi, and Sichuan provinces)

Habitat: mountain forests

Height: 22.9 inches to 26.8 inches (males); 18.7 inches to 20.4 inches (females)

Weight: about 43 pounds (males); 27 pounds (females)

Diet: seeds, leaves, bark, buds, twigs, flowers, lichens

Article #2: "China's Golden Monkeys" by Gerry Bishop, Ranger Rick, Dec2007, Vol. 41, Issue 12

## **China's Golden Monkeys**

High in a wind-blown tree, a furry family hugs and huddles. They're golden monkeys, and, for them, it's just another snowy winter day to get through.

But wait a minute. Aren't monkeys supposed to live in nice, warm places? That may be true for some monkeys. But here in the mountains of central China, you'll find another kind of monkey.

Golden monkeys are better equipped for the cold. They're big — more than two feet (60 cm) tall — and have thick coats of fur. Their large size and thick fur help them stay warm.

Braving cold weather isn't the only challenge in these rugged mountains. Finding food can be tough, too. In summer, the monkeys eat mostly tree leaves, but they'll also go for any goodies they can find: fruit, seeds, bamboo shoots, wild onions, insects, worms, and even small birds and eggs. In winter, there may be nothing to eat except lichens or tree bark and insects beneath the bark. Fussy eaters would never survive here!

### **SAVING A TREASURE**

Golden monkeys have toughed it out in these mountains for thousands of years. But now they're up against a new threat. The monkeys need tall trees to live in, but people have been cutting down the trees to get lumber and to clear land for farms. People have also been killing the monkeys for their beautiful fur or for food. Golden monkeys are now so rare that they could become extinct.

The good news is that many people — in China and around the world — care very much about saving the golden monkeys. Scientists are busy learning all they can about how to help them.

And other people are working to protect the forests and to keep the monkeys from being hunted. They hope that one day the future of these precious monkeys will be golden.

#### GIANT LEAP

Golden monkeys are big, but that doesn't stop them from leaping through the treetops. It's a great way to escape from predators.

#### ALL IN THE FAMILY

A golden monkey family usually has one adult male, a few adult females, and several youngsters. Below, Dad hugs one of his youngsters. On the left side of the photo, a mom picks out dirt and fleas from a little one's fur. This grooming helps the baby feel safe and loved, as well as super clean.

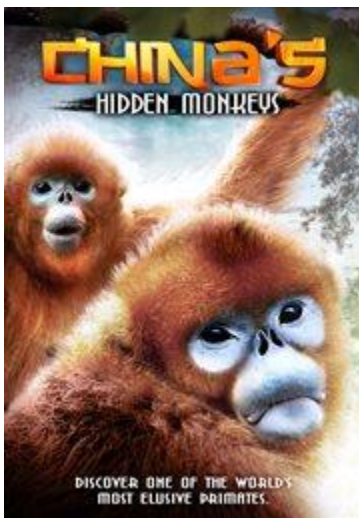
#### BACK OFF!

The young male monkey above has a good reason to bare his teeth: Another male has entered his territory, and he's not at all happy about it! While on the ground, golden monkeys also have to be on guard against hungry predators. For example, leopards and wild dogs might be on the prowl. Better get back up into those trees, you little snub-nose!

Discover more about golden monkeys and other kinds of monkeys online at [globio.org/rr/monkeys](http://globio.org/rr/monkeys).

Conservation status: endangered

2. Play selections from this video "China's Hidden Monkeys" (you can check out the DVD from the library or get it on the Hoopla app).



<https://tcccl.bibliocommons.com/item/show/4132536063>

3. Based on what they have learned about golden snub-nosed monkeys from the article and video(s), ask them to respond to pictures and write what these monkeys are saying, thinking, and next actions.

## What Is This Monkey Saying?



## What Is This Monkey Thinking?



## What Will This Monkey Do Next?

