

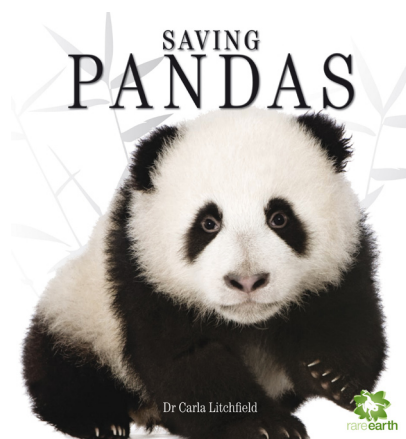


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Teacher Notes

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Saving Pandas

By Carla Litchfield

Hands up if you want to save the giant panda? Giant pandas are endangered, with fewer than 2500 adults left in the wild.

Genre

Written and visual information

Reading level

Lower to upper primary

Interest level

Lower to upper primary

About the book

Saving Pandas is an excellent text for classes that are studying giant pandas, endangered species or China. The photographs are highly engaging. Information is accessible and topics covered include habitat, diet, mating, babies and threats to the panda. Information is also provided on panda reserves and the role they play in protection.

The websites listed in the book provide fantastic opportunities for further research and class activities. Students can complete many learning activities online. They can watch pandas on webcams, send postcards to zoos about their observations and complete a range of activity sheets.

Learning Activities

Topics include:

- Physical features
- Habitat
- Diet
- Mating
- Babies
- China
- Endangered species
- Threats to the panda
- Panda reserves/zoos

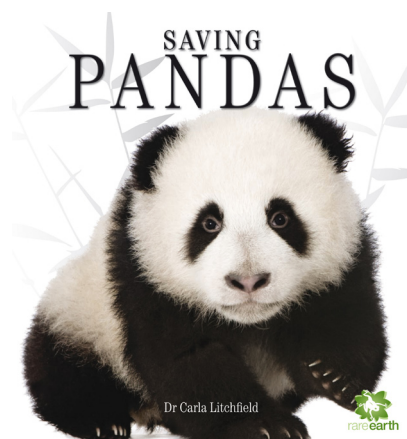


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INTRODUCING THE BOOK

Visual Literacy

Study the cover (front and back) of *Saving Pandas*.

- What messages/ideas does the cover convey?
- Is the cover effective? Why or why not?
- Before reading the information in the book, study the photographs and list three things that you learn from them about pandas.

Book Features and Format

Saving Pandas has many features that are important in factual texts:

- Clear headings and subheadings
 - Photographs
 - Page numbers
 - Glossary
 - Index
 - List of websites
1. Locate each of the above features in the book.
 2. Discuss the features of this book that make information easy to find. (For example, words written in bold appear in the glossary.)
 3. List some features of this book's glossary and index that make it clear and well organised.

SOSE/HSIE

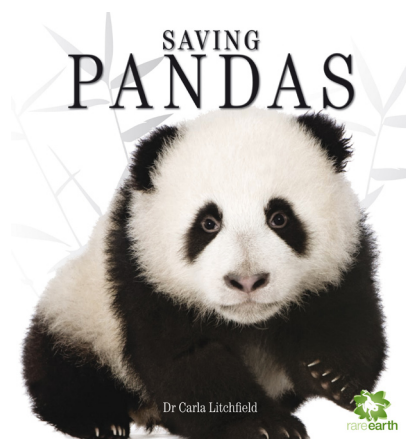
Draw or trace a map of contemporary China. Remember to include a border, title, north arrow, key and scale on your map. Mark onto your map the things listed below.

- The capital city
- The two main rivers
- The provinces of China
- Surrounding oceans and seas
- The six areas in south-central China where pandas live (Hint: you can find more information about these on the websites listed in the back of the book.)

China travel guide

Create a tourist guide for people visiting China. You might like to include information on the topics listed below.

- Geography (for example travel maps)
- Climate
- Currency
- Food
- Sights (including the Wolong Conservation Centre and other places where people are likely to see pandas)
- Festivals
- Required visas
- Transport to China and within China



SCIENCE

Use the text and at least two other resources to complete the table below on giant pandas. (Hint: when you are taking notes you do not need to write in full sentences.)

Habitat	Physical features	Diet	Behaviour/communication	Mating	Babies	Interesting features

Website activities

Explore the websites listed in the back of the book.

www.pandasinternational.org

- Complete the learning activities for kids on this website.

www.zooatlanta.org/site/the_animals/giant_panda_info.html

- Watch a video of a giant panda on this website. What things do you learn?
- Watch the pandas on the panda cam. (Teacher note: panda cam only operates at certain times.)
- Choose your favourite fun fact about giant pandas and share it with the class.

www.sandiegozoo.org/zoo/ex_panda_station.html

- View the panda cam on this website and send a postcard about something you see. (Teacher note: students can fill out the postcard while they are on the panda cam page.)
- Choose one of the pandas shown on this site and collect some facts. Create a PowerPoint presentation to inform the class about your chosen panda. There is a lot of information in blogs, too.

Endangered Species

In pairs, answer the following questions.

- What is an endangered species?
- Why are pandas endangered?
- Why is it important to save the panda?
- What is being done to save the pandas?
- What can people do to save the panda?

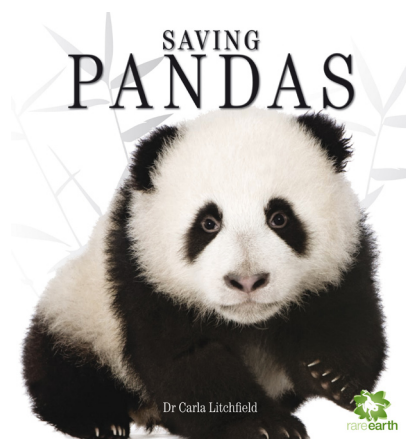


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Design a media campaign to inform the public about the dangers facing pandas. How will you convince the public to save the panda? Complete three things from the list below as part of your campaign.

- A television advertisement
- A newspaper advertisement
- A series of slogans to appear on t-shirts or bumper stickers
- A letter to the editor
- A news article for the paper

Extended research

Research one of the other bears listed on page 2 of the book. Present your findings about this bear in the same format as *Saving Pandas*. Use the headings listed below as a guide for collecting information.

- Habitat
- Behaviour
- Physical characteristics
- Diet
- Life span
- Threats
- Interesting features
- Communication
- Mating
- Babies
- Predators
- Zoos and sanctuaries

ENGLISH

Reading and writing

Write and illustrate a comic book about a day in the life of a panda living in a zoo.

Write captions for the pictures in *Saving Pandas* and share these with the class.

Write three blogs or three diary entries of a zoo worker who is preparing to release a panda into the wild. If you are unsure about what to write, consider answering some of the questions listed below.

- What work have you done to prepare the panda for life in the wild?
- What skills does a panda need in order to survive in the wild?
- Can you describe a time when the panda showed some of these skills?
- What hopes do you have for the panda that you are releasing?
- What fears do you have for the panda that you are releasing?
- How will you say goodbye to the panda?
- What will you miss most about this panda?

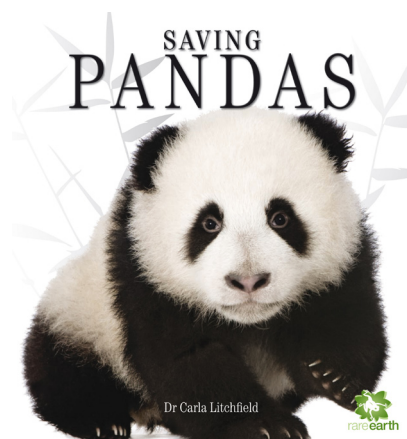


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Write a story from the point-of-view of a panda living in the zoo. What is their life like? What do they think of the people staring at them? What do they think of the zookeepers that look after them?

Write and illustrate a children's book about a panda. Your purpose might be to convey information about pandas or it might be to simply entertain your readers with a good story.

Write a series of poems about the pandas in this book. Some types of poems that you might write are listed below.

- Haiku
- Acrostic (or name poem)
- Cinquain
- Free verse
- Rhyming poem
- Couplet

Speaking and listening

Choose one of your poems and read it to the class.

Forms pairs. Imagine that you are primary school teachers. Plan the first five to ten minutes of a class to introduce students to the topic of 'Saving Pandas'. How will you gain the interest of the students? Now, test your class plan on your class! Some suggestions are listed below.

- Read the class a story and ask them some questions.
- Show the class some pictures and give them some information about pandas.
- Write and perform a play about pandas.
- Give the class a quiz to see what they know about pandas.

CREATIVE ARTS

Art

Design and draw some posters that encourage people to help pandas.

Create a model to illustrate the habitat and diet of the panda.



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Carla Litchfield is a scientist at Adelaide Zoo, who has studied great apes in both Africa and Australia. She is a lecturer at the University of South Australia, and in 2000 was awarded the 'Unsung Hero of Australian Science' by the Australian Science Communicators. She is the author of *The Chimpanzee Book: Apes Like Us*.