



Transcript for *The Lion Queens of India* (Lee & Low Books) Preview Video

Preview (0:00 – 8:11)

Hi everyone! It's Colleen from the KU Natural History Museum, and I'm so excited to remind you about tomorrow's Story Book Science. Now, tomorrow's Story Book Science will be the last reading, but we're going to read a very exciting book, which is *The Lion Queens of India*. This book is by Jan Reynolds, and it is being read with permission from Lee and Low Books.

Now, all this month we've been talking about national parks. And we're going to continue our discussion of national parks by learning about a national park in India! And that national park is Gir National Park. And I have a photo that I'd like to share with you. This is an image of Gir National Park, and I want you to take a moment to look at it. And I want you to make some observations. What do you notice about the photo? What do you notice about the photo, and what does that mean about the park? Alright? So, take a moment to just look at that.

What do you notice? When I look at this photo, I notice a lot of trees. So, if I didn't know anything about Gir National Park, I would think that it's a forest.

And it is! Gir National Park is located within a forest wildlife sanctuary. And in that forest wildlife sanctuary are the last remaining wild Asiatic lions.

Now, it might be a little hard to see the photo of the lion. So, here is that same photo.

Asiatic lions, they used to have a really large range. So, you could see them in lots of different places. And I have a map to show you just how many places you could find Asiatic lions. So, you could find them in southern Europe and then all across Asia. That is where their historic range was. But because of hunting, Asiatic lions, their population declined. So, they had less and less numbers. And now, the only place where wild Asiatic lions can be found is in India, specifically in that forest wildlife sanctuary where Gir National Park is located. And that's located here. This is a close up of the country of India, but that is where the wildlife sanctuary and national park is located, which is just a zoomed in section of that part of the country. Alright!

Now, Asiatic lions, they have a couple features that can be used to identify them. The first is probably the thing that is the most unique about them, and that is their skin fold! All along the underside of their belly, they have this skinfold. Alright? So, that's something that's unique to Asiatic lions. Additionally, the males have manes. And when we think of manes we normally think of, you know, a huge mass of hair! But for Asiatic lions, most of the hair of a male's mane is located underneath the chin. And that means their ears are visible. So, there's some hair at the top of their head, but we can definitely see the ears. And most of that hair is dark in color and underneath the chin.

Now, I want to show that photo of an Asiatic lion again. And when you look at this photo, what type of animal do you think an Asiatic lion is? Do you think it's a cat? Excellent!

Asiatic lions are members of a family known as family Felidae. And I'm going to put that on the wall, underneath the photo of the Asiatic lion.

And family Felidae is the family of cats. So, it includes lions, tigers, cougars. Even house cats, or domestic cats we sometimes call them. And the reason they're all in a family together is because they share characteristics, or special characters. And I want to go over one of those with you! So, I'm going to grab a museum specimen, so that we can go over some of those characters together. Alright?

Alright! So, this is a museum specimen of a house cat, or a domestic cat. And what I want you to look at are its teeth! Now, it is missing some of them, but what do you notice about the teeth of the house cat, or the domestic cat?

When I look at the teeth, what I notice are that the teeth are very long. They are sharp, and they are narrow. So, why do you think a domestic cat, or a house cat, whatever name you want to call it, why do you think it needs those long, sharp, and narrow teeth? Do you think it needs those teeth to eat? Yeah.

Now, I'm going to put this down for a moment. What do you think a house cat, or a domestic cat, eats? Why does it need those long, sharp, and narrow teeth? It probably needs those teeth in order to cut up its food or slice up its food, right? Yeah. And that's because domestic cats, house cats, whatever name you want to use for them, and other cats are carnivores! So, they are meat eaters. And that's a very important word, so we are going to put it on the wall as a vocabulary word.

So, cats are carnivores. They eat meat, and they need those long, sharp, and narrow teeth in order to slice and cut their food. Alright?

Now, I have one other museum specimen that I'd like to share with you, and I'm going to go grab that. Alright. So, this is another example of a cat, and I'm not going to tell you what species of cat. What I'd like you to do is look at its teeth! We just noticed the teeth of a house cat, or a domestic cat. And what I want you to do with this museum specimen of a different cat species is make observations. What are the same about the teeth? What are different about the teeth of this specimen compared to the house cat. Alright? So, I'll give you a moment to look at its teeth. And again, some of the teeth are missing. Some of them are chipped. But what do you notice? Alright. So, I'll let you look for one moment longer. And now, I'm going to put the specimen down.

So, tomorrow, after our reading of the book *The Lion Queens of India*, we'll talk more about Asiatic lions. We'll talk more about cats. And I'm so excited to be able to do that with you and also explore Gir National Park. So, I hope that I see you tomorrow. And I can't wait to talk about cats then! Alright? Bye!