

Reading Booklet 1

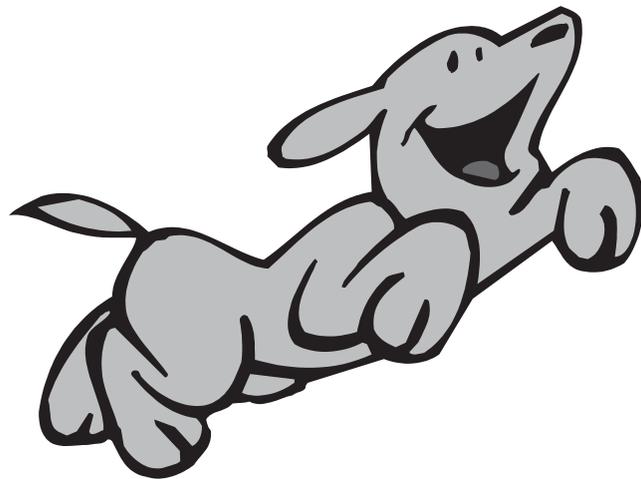
The Happy Wanderer

No strings to tie him down
The world is his to roam
The happy wanderer calls his pack
Any warm dry place will he call home.

Frollicking, rollicking down the road
With a carefree attitude
The happy wanderer invites his friends
To join his playful mood.

One by one they join the parade
Padding feet and whipping tails
Bounding and boisterous is the chorus
Scattering leaves like wintry gales.

The burning orb high in the sky
Cuts short their song and playful fun
The happy wanderer lays down to rest
Content to dream and not to run.



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Dinosaur Find – Not all it's cracked up to be!

The Southern Hemisphere Institute of Palaeontology recently created much consternation within the scientific community. It announced that a frozen egg had been unearthed during the digging of foundations for a multi-storey car park near Seattle in the United States of America. The egg is believed to be that of a stegosaurus from the Jurassic Period.

On a website blog, scientists from the institute claimed that they had used the preserved DNA from the egg to create an embryo of a stegosaurus which they were soon to implant into another ancient species of reptile – the crocodile, which would ensure its success.



However, due to the clever work of our investigative journalists, we have discovered that the whole announcement made on April 1st, was in actual fact – a hoax! Anonymous sources from within the institute have said that the internet images of the egg were nothing more than digitally enhanced photos of painted rocks. One scientist has been

recorded as saying, "It's a sad day for science when you can no longer believe your own eyes."

So, despite the amazing nature of advanced computer technology, it may not be all it's cracked up to be!

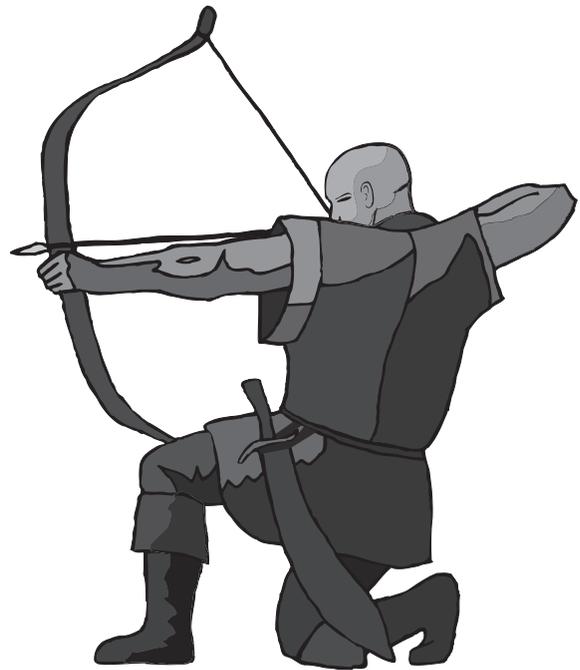
By: Di Nasaw

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John Flanagan

John Flanagan, the Australian author of the best selling Ranger's Apprentice series, has written professionally both in Sydney and around the world, filling roles in advertising, television comedy and corporate work.

Taking place in the mythical land of Araluen in the year 643, the main character of the series, a teenage orphan named Will, has been raised since infancy by the local Baron. Will, a slightly built young lad, desperately wants to be apprenticed as a knight – just like his imaginary father and his fellow orphan, the beefy and muscular Horace. Instead, he is apprenticed to the mysterious and elusive Ranger Corps, whose job it is to see but not be seen when keeping law and order around Araluen.



The original Ranger's Apprentice series was written for John Flanagan's then 12-year-old son to encourage a love of reading. The other benefit of the series is to show that you don't have to be big and tough to be a strong person. Originally it was devised as 20 short stories, where the character of Horace was a villain. But in the reworked version, Horace becomes a staunch ally of Will.

John Flanagan is able to write realistically about many aspects of his fictional characters. Like Will, he plays a stringed instrument called a mandolin, and like the famous Rangers, he uses a long bow, once belonging to a local archery club. John describes the day he was offered a publishing contract as a "red letter day".

Now living with his wife in Manly, a Sydney suburb, John Flanagan is currently working on the ninth book in the Ranger's Apprentice series.

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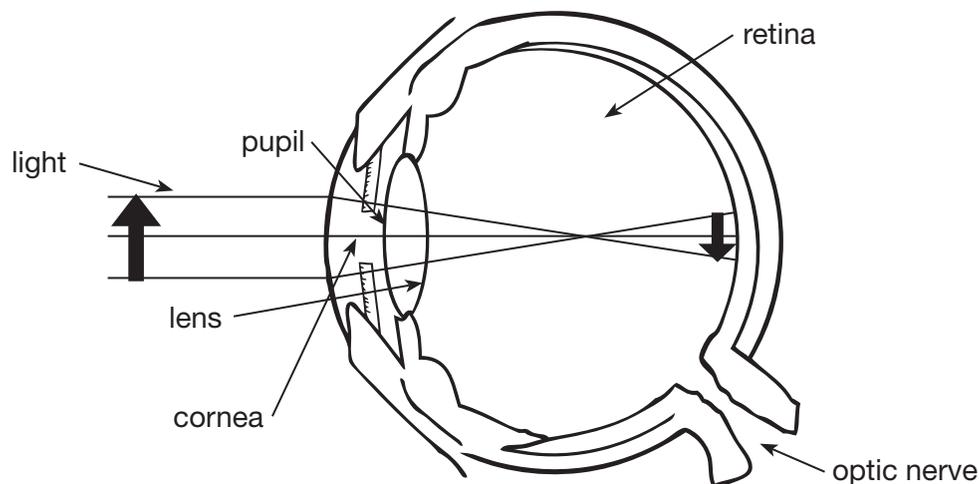
The Human Eye

The human eye and its components operate almost in the same way as a photographic or movie camera. Each part needs to work at its optimal capacity to provide a person with a clear window to the world. However, many people around the world suffer visual impairments such as cataracts and glaucoma. Complications from diseases such as diabetes and a lack of Vitamin A can also lead to impaired vision.

To begin the process, light hits the front of the eye, the cornea, which then bends the rays and directs them through the pupil which is a dark circular opening at the centre of the coloured iris. High levels of light make the pupil dilate, while low levels of light make it contract. Because the cornea is curved, and the light rays are bent, the image sent through the eye is upside down. It is eventually righted by the brain.

Behind the cornea is the lens which is able to change shape so that it can focus on objects close up or at a distance. When people suffer an affliction known as cataracts, the lens becomes cloudy and needs to be replaced by an artificial implant.

Once through the lens, the light hits the back wall of the eye, a thin membrane known as the retina. Here, the light signals are changed into electrical impulses and sent along the optic nerve to the brain which then interprets these signals as visual images.



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Search For Buried Treasure

“Now go and clean up that pigsty!”

“Aye! Aye! Captain,” I grumbled. Scrubbing decks and making everything shipshape was not my idea of a pleasant afternoon.

Secretly I decided to continue my week-long search for the lost treasure of Grizzly Isle. Digging out the ancient map, torn and frayed, I located the last known position of the priceless artefact – three paces due north of Black Sands Lagoon.

Before commencing the search, I made sure that the Captain was occupied below decks. Yes, there she was, hunched over the galley bench, muttering about the inaccurate logbooks and charts.

OK, the coast was clear.

Gathering my equipment (buckets, digging implements and twine) I immediately began the hunt.

Working as quickly as I dared, for stealth is of the utmost importance when dealing with buried treasure, I delved into the nearest pile of debris.

Sifting carefully through each layer I examined the pile for any evidence of my precious quest. I came away disappointed, but not forlorn.

Marking the unsuccessful site off on my map, I made my next crucial decision. The sun was running low on the horizon; soon the Captain would be returning to check on my progress. Did I have enough time left for one last throw of the die?

Greed overtook my common sense as I spotted a likely proposition not far from where I had begun – a mere four paces north-east of Black Sands Lagoon. Would this be the spot? I began to dig.

Clunk! clunk! clunk!

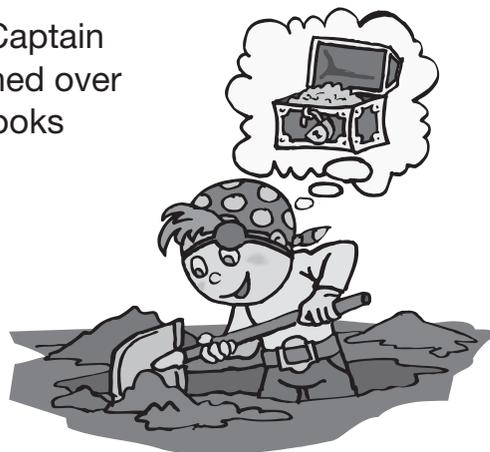
Oh no! I could hear the Captain’s footsteps climbing up the gangway! But still I couldn’t stop – the lure of finding the treasure of Grizzly Isle beckoned.

Then a sparkle, or was it a twinkle, of light caught my eye. Reaching into the darkened centre, I grabbed at my quest with both hands and pulled. Yes! Success at last! I would be the most famous buccaneer of all time. The treasure of Grizzly Isle was mine.

“There you are. It’s awfully quiet in here. I thought you’d fallen asleep.” The Captain’s piercing blue eyes surveyed the decks. “I thought I told you to clean up this pigsty. Get to it, or there’ll be no supper for you tonight.”

“Aye, aye Captain!” I replied and upon receiving an icy stare, corrected myself, “Yes . . . ah . . . sorry.”

A familiar twinkle caught my eye. I gave my teddy a hug before starting to clean up my room. Mum was right – it was a pigsty!



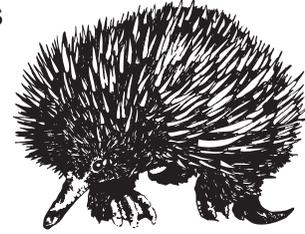
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Animal Sponsorship

Eastern Park Zoo

Expressions of interest are invited for businesses and individuals to take part in our new wildlife sponsorship program.

Contact: Rita Summers
Email: rita@epz.org.au
Expressions of interest close 14th April.



Dear Rita,

I read with interest your ad in the local newspaper last week and my company, Purfect Fur You, is very interested in participating in the sponsorship program.

We believe that it is our duty to nurture and support other living creatures. We would be particularly interested in sponsoring an Australian endangered animal as they are far more appealing, don't you agree?

It is so sad to see on TV the devastating effect that modern development has had on our furry and feathered companions. That is one of the main reasons why we were so taken by the opportunity to play a small part in easing the suffering of poor defenceless creatures.

Zoos like Eastern Park play a vital part in preserving animal species and later reintroducing endangered species back into their native habitat. This must be our ultimate goal.

Please let me know what the next step is in ensuring that our sponsorship application is successful.

Kind regards,
Josh Valisov

Dear Rita,

I was amazed to read your ad in our local paper inviting people to sponsor an animal at Eastern Park Zoo. Yes, we need to protect our environment and all its creatures for the future, but is this the best way?

The modern world, with all its greed and overdevelopment, has slowly stripped our precious animals of their natural habitat. Yet these are some of the same businesses that you are asking for help. Saving one cute and cuddly koala is a more valuable public relations gimmick than saving acres of eucalypt forest. Don't you agree?

Exactly what animals are you seeking sponsorship for anyway: cute little polar bears or funny little penguins wearing black top coats and tails? What is going to happen to all the less desirable creatures? Are they any less valuable? The biters and the slitherers – they deserve protection too.

I hope you do find many businesses to sponsor the animals at Eastern Park Zoo. But kindly consider the best way of spending the windfall. Forest regeneration, monitoring of migration patterns and protecting breeding grounds are all worthy causes that will impact on an entire species, not just a handful, a lucky few.

Yours truly,
Madolyn Meriweather