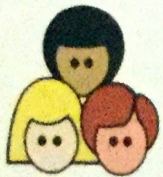


Think and Discuss

Think about the story. Finish the chart on page 97 by filling in Theseus' problems and solutions. Then answer the questions.

1. Use your chart. Would you say that Theseus' greatest problem is a person, a place, or a thing? Explain your choice.
2. What is Theseus' promise to Ariadne? What new problems could this cause?
3. Do you think Theseus' promise to Ariadne is as important as the promise he made to the seven boys and seven girls of Athens? Explain why or why not.
4. How might Theseus keep his promise without any help from Ariadne?
5. What incident first shows that Theseus belongs in a unit about amazing talents?
6. Why does King Minos want the young people from Athens to be fed to the Minotaur? Do you think this is just?
7. In the United States, who decides how someone is punished for a crime? How is this decided under King Minos' system?



WORK IN A GROUP

Meet in a group. Talk about how justice systems work in a classroom and in a school. Ask questions about what your classmates say. Compare their ideas to yours.

Focusing on "Animal Myths and Mysteries"

Think and Read

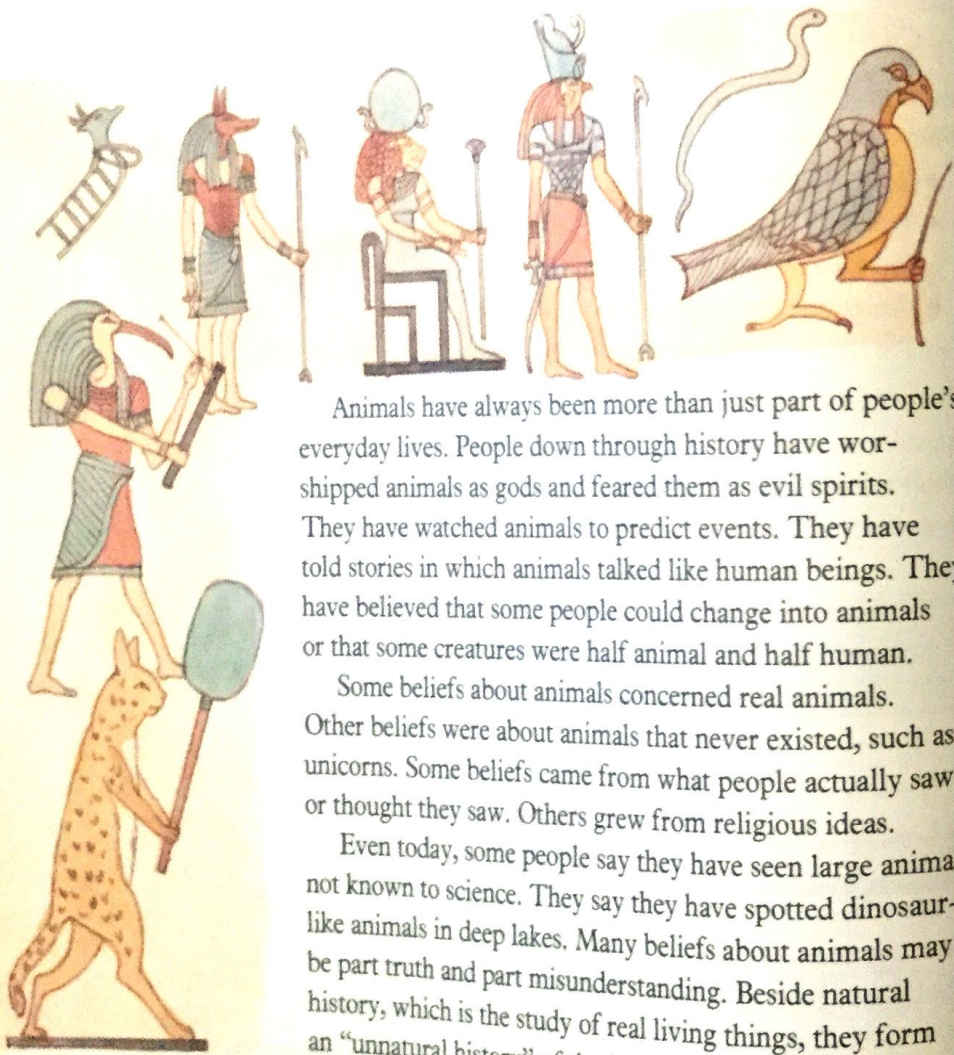
- ▶ Quickly write down everything you have heard about strange creatures, such as Bigfoot or the Loch Ness Monster. Share your information with your classmates.
- ▶ Look at the pictures in this information article. Remember your discussion of strange creatures.
 - What animals will you read about in this article?
 - Which of the animals really exist? Which ones are make-believe?
 - What might the purpose of this selection be?
- ▶ Read the information article to learn details about mysterious animals. Take notes as you read. Use this chart to remember the animals' names and the details that describe them.

Animal Name	Details

Now turn the page and read "Animal Myths and Mysteries." Then you will talk about mythical and mysterious animals.

Connections

Animal Myths and Mysteries



Animals have always been more than just part of people's everyday lives. People down through history have worshipped animals as gods and feared them as evil spirits. They have watched animals to predict events. They have told stories in which animals talked like human beings. They have believed that some people could change into animals or that some creatures were half animal and half human.

Some beliefs about animals concerned real animals. Other beliefs were about animals that never existed, such as unicorns. Some beliefs came from what people actually saw—or thought they saw. Others grew from religious ideas.

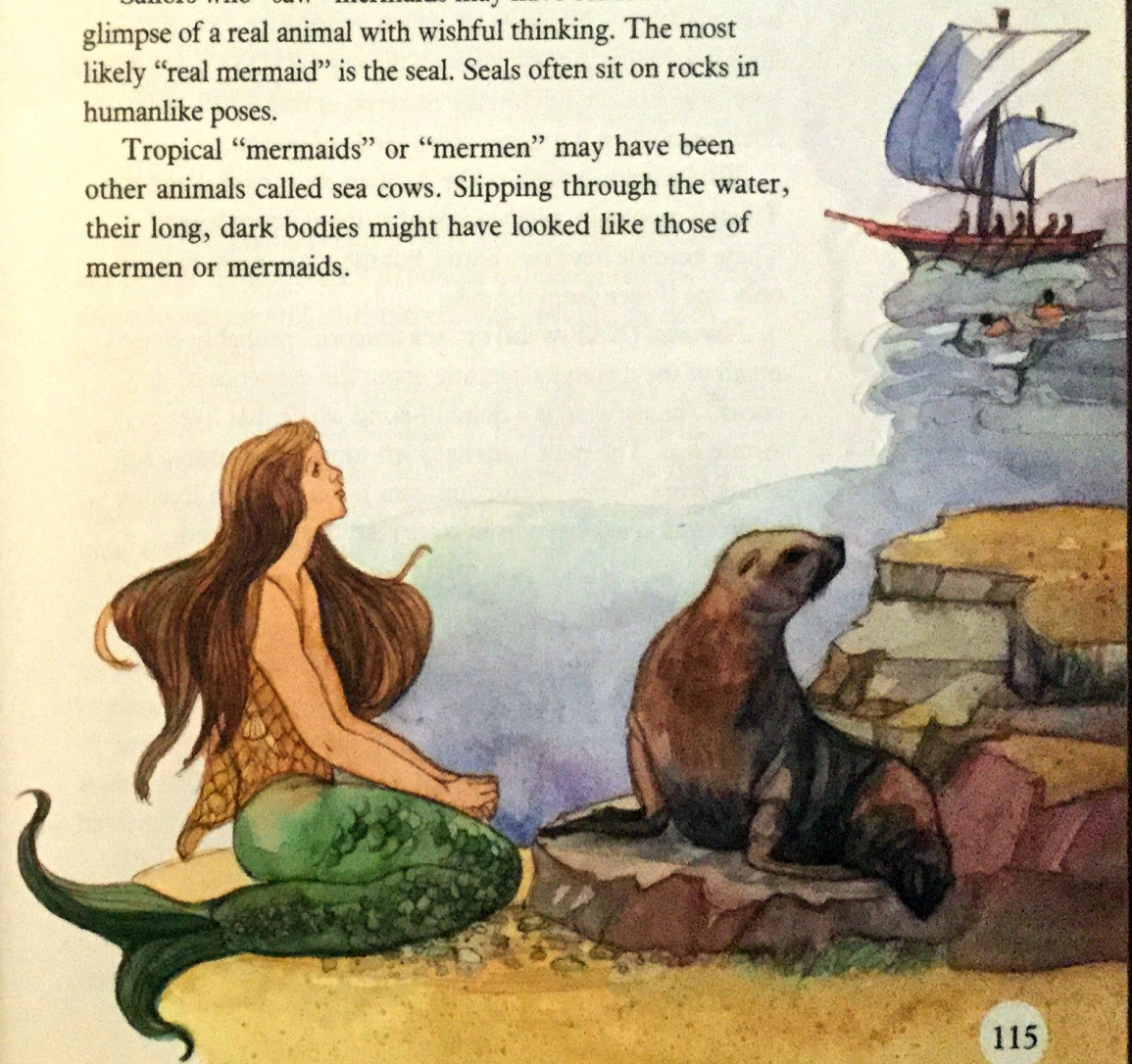
Even today, some people say they have seen large animals not known to science. They say they have spotted dinosaur-like animals in deep lakes. Many beliefs about animals may be part truth and part misunderstanding. Beside natural history, which is the study of real living things, they form an "unnatural history" of the imagination.

For hundreds of years, seafaring people have told stories of mermaids and mermen, humanlike beings with tails like fish instead of legs. Many a sailor thought he saw a mermaid sitting on a rock, combing her hair and singing. Some sailors believed a mermaid's song could lure them to a watery death.

The idea of the mermaid as a dangerous singer probably came from the Greeks. They told tales of Sirens, monsters who were half bird and half woman. Their beautiful songs lured sailors to crash their ships on the rocks.

Sailors who "saw" mermaids may have combined a glimpse of a real animal with wishful thinking. The most likely "real mermaid" is the seal. Seals often sit on rocks in humanlike poses.

Tropical "mermaids" or "mermen" may have been other animals called sea cows. Slipping through the water, their long, dark bodies might have looked like those of mermen or mermaids.



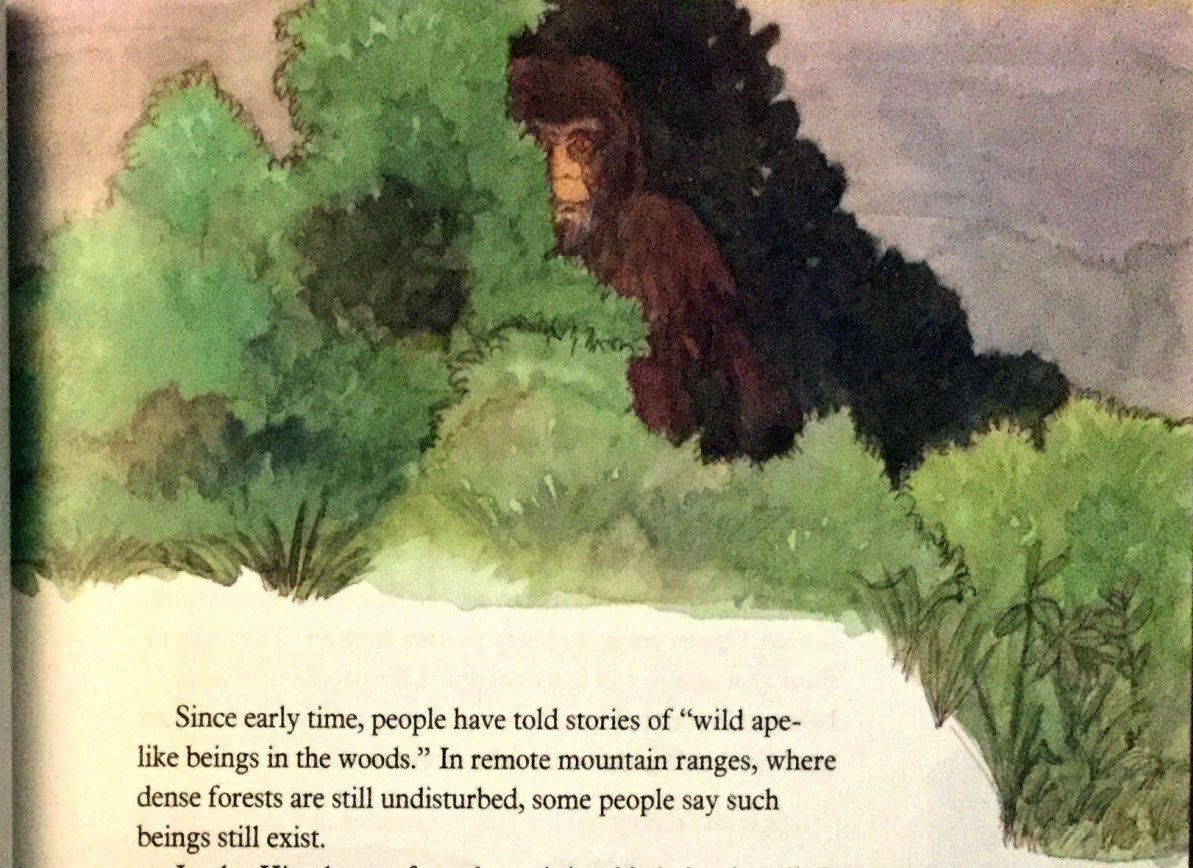
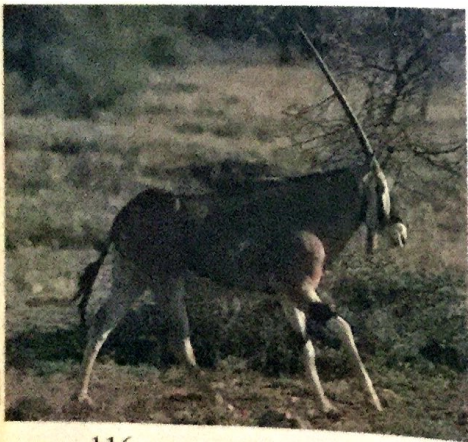
Another animal who is not real is the unicorn. It was just as pleasing as the mermaid. In Europe during the Middle Ages, the unicorn was pictured as a beautiful white, horse-like animal with a horn on its forehead. People believed the horn could make any poison harmless.

The Chinese had their unicorn, too. They called it *ki-lin*. They said it was so gentle that it would not even step on a piece of grass.

Travelers' tales probably started many unicorn stories. The *rhinoceros*, which some people saw in India, has one horn on its nose. Some Asian rulers drank from rhinoceros horn cups because they believed the cups would find and take away poison. In fact, the material in rhinoceros horn does foam when it touches some kinds of poison.

Wild antelopes such as the Arabian *oryx* (or-iks) and the Tibetan mountain *antelope* added to the unicorn legend. These animals have two horns, but they may seem to have only one if seen from the side.

Narwhal (NAR-wehl) or "sea unicorn" probably caused much of the misunderstanding about the existence of unicorns. The narwhal is a dolphin-sized whale that lives in Arctic seas. The male narwhal's left tooth grows into a spiraling ivory "horn." Most "unicorn horns" sold in Europe as protection against poison were really narwhal teeth.



Since early time, people have told stories of "wild ape-like beings in the woods." In remote mountain ranges, where dense forests are still undisturbed, some people say such beings still exist.

In the Himalayas of southern Asia, this being is called the *Yeti* or *Abominable Snowman*. Native legends in America's Pacific Northwest tell of *Sasquatch* or *Bigfoot*. Bigfoot is said to be seven or eight feet tall, hairy, with long arms and sloping brows.

No one knows whether "Bigfoot" is real. Nobody has ever caught a "Bigfoot." A man named Roger Patterson took a short movie of what he said was a Bigfoot in 1967, but scientists disagree about what the film shows.

Stories and sightings of lake monsters are just as common as those of Bigfoot. Just about every cold, deep lake seems to have its monster.

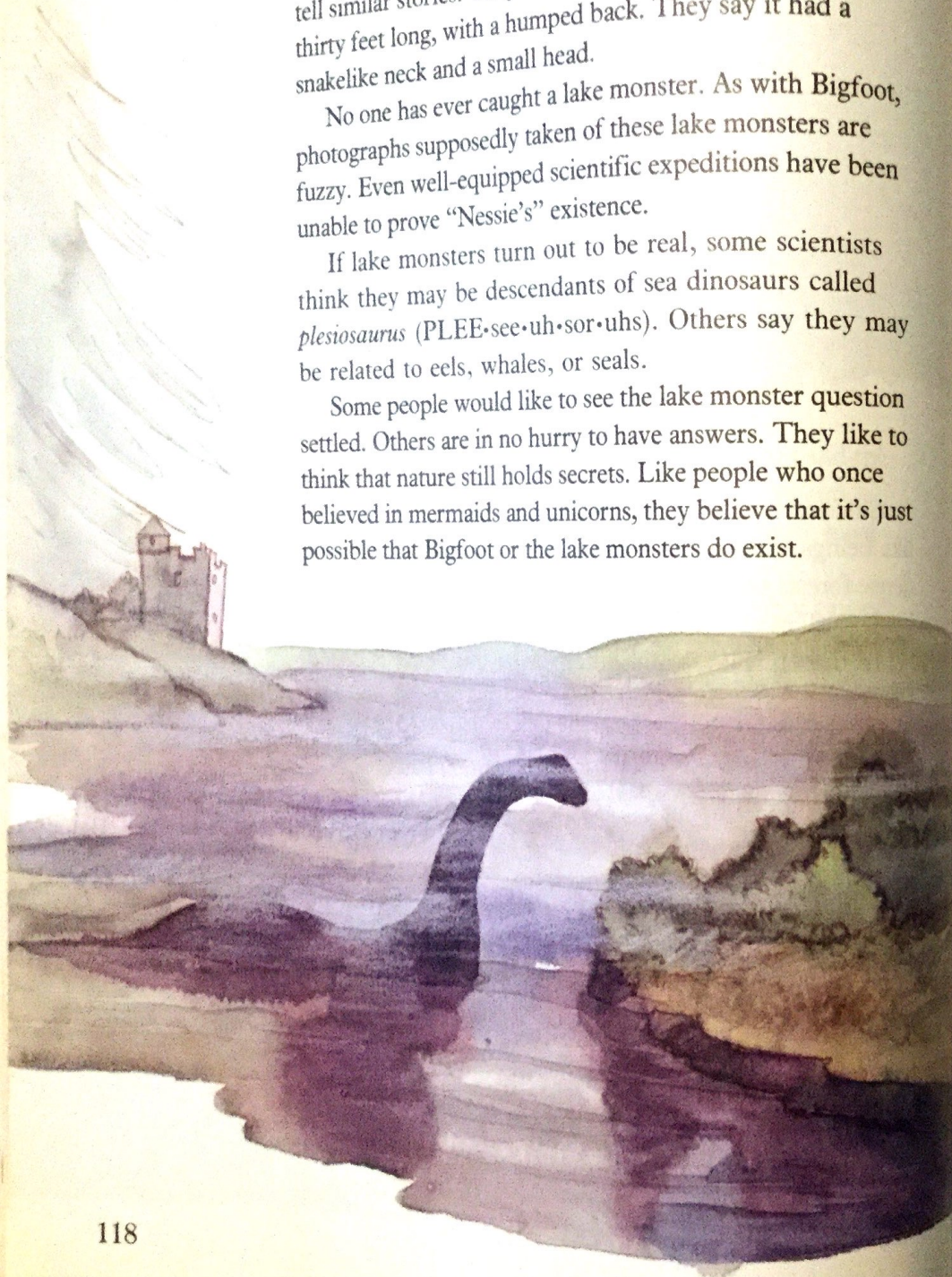
The best-known lake monster is "Nessie," which is supposed to live in Scotland's Loch Ness. Lake Okanagan in Canada has Ogopogo. Chesapeake Bay has "Chessie." Australian lakes have their *bunyips*.

Most people who claim to have seen these lake monsters tell similar stories. They describe the monster as twenty or thirty feet long, with a humped back. They say it had a snakelike neck and a small head.

No one has ever caught a lake monster. As with Bigfoot, photographs supposedly taken of these lake monsters are fuzzy. Even well-equipped scientific expeditions have been unable to prove "Nessie's" existence.

If lake monsters turn out to be real, some scientists think they may be descendants of sea dinosaurs called *plesiosaurus* (PLEE-see-uh-sor-uhs). Others say they may be related to eels, whales, or seals.

Some people would like to see the lake monster question settled. Others are in no hurry to have answers. They like to think that nature still holds secrets. Like people who once believed in mermaids and unicorns, they believe that it's just possible that Bigfoot or the lake monsters do exist.

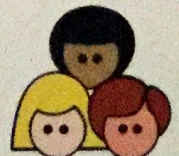


Think about the information article and the notes you made on your chart. Then answer the questions.

1. Use your chart. Which animals named in the information article are real? How do you know this?
2. Do you think any of the mythical animals on your chart are real? Explain your answer.
3. What do you think it would take to prove that a mythical animal is real?
4. Use your chart. Which animals have the same details? Why might a mythical animal and a real one have the same details?
5. Why does this information article belong in a unit about amazing talents?
6. Would you like to see the mysteries in this information article solved? Tell why you feel as you do.
7. The strangest animals in the article come from either a "distant land" or from under the sea. Why do you think this is so?
8. What might a mysterious animal from another world look like?

Talk about what makes "mysterious" creatures so popular in books, movies, and toys. Ask questions about what your classmates say. Discuss their answers.

Think and Discuss



WORK IN A GROUP

TALKING ABOUT THE SELECTIONS

You have read these selections.



Fast on Their Feet

Laughing Gas

A Hero's Promise

Animal Myths and Mysteries

Talk about the stories, the articles, and the poems. Tell which characters had the most amazing talents.

1. What advice do you think Mary Poppins would give to the characters in the limericks?
2. How do quatrains differ from limericks?
3. Which mysterious animal might live at the Bankses' house?
4. Which selection tells about the most amazing things? Why do you think so?

BOOKSHELF



The Secret Life of Dilly McBean by Dorothy Haas. Bradbury Press, 1985. When Dilly uses the mysterious power of his magnetic fingers, he is able to outwit the evil Dr. Knowit.

Fledgling by Jane Langston. Harper & Row, 1980. Georgie, the youngest child in her family, wants to learn how to fly. Despite her family's protests, she fulfills her wish with the help of an unusual goose.

The Dollhouse Caper by Jean S. O'Connell. T. Y. Crowell, 1975. The Dollhouse Family is worried about being thrown away by three boys in the Human Family. They hope to save themselves by warning the boys of a burglary that is about to happen.

The Mightiest of Mortals: Heracles by Doris Gates. Viking, 1975. Heracles, the superstrong, half-god, half-human son of Zeus, is forced to perform twelve labors in order to gain immortality.

Adventures with the Giants by Catherine F. Sellev. Little, Brown, 1950. These stories of the adventures of the Norse gods include Thor's great battle with the giants.

The Piemakers by Helen Cresswell. Macmillan, 1980. The Roller family of Danby Dale in England have been piemakers for generations. Yet never before have the Rollers made such an enormous meat pie—a pie to feed two thousand people, including the King.