



Study Skills **Kick Start**

Student Activity Pack

Putting the skills into practice.

Article 1

Honey badgers : the world's most fearless creature?

Who would win a fight between a badger and a lion? Most people would not hesitate to say a lion. However, the honey badger, despite its sweet name, is not your standard badger and gives the 'King of the jungle' a run for its money every time. Weighing in at a small twelve kilograms, this is not the type of animal you would expect extreme aggression from. However, the honey badger is one of the most feared creatures across southern Africa, Southwest Asia and the Indian subcontinent.

Strength and resistance

Honey badgers are notoriously strong creatures who can often escape from potentially dangerous situations. The strength of the honey badger is a massive physical advantage, as is its persistence. So strong are honey badgers' claws, that they have been known to burrow through walls and rip up wooden hen houses in order to eat the chickens inside! Another physical advantage that honey badgers possess is that they are much less vulnerable to poison than other creatures: there are examples of honey badgers being bitten by venomous snakes and surviving. Some experts claim it is because they have been exposed to small amounts of venom throughout their lifetime due to the close contact they come into with bees and snakes. As a result, honey badgers are more than happy to take on snakes.

Courage

Commonly viewed as one of the bravest creatures around, honey badgers will take on any animal, big or small if they need to. Indeed, they were listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the 'most fearless' animal in the world. Although they will usually steer clear of potentially dangerous predators, as soon as their own safety is threatened, they will fight back with a serious viciousness. Honey badgers have been known to fight off up to seven lions, just to protect their food. On top of this, their name comes from the fact that they will often raid bees' nests in order to find their favourite food: larvae. They endure the stings of literally thousands of bees, just to source their favourite dinner!

Self defence

As well as being physically very suited to survival, honey badgers also possess certain self defence mechanisms which mean they are not scared of predators. Similar to skunks, they have a small pouch beneath their tail which contains a strong smelling liquid. Although this is normally used to mark the honey badger's territory, when they are faced with danger, they release the liquid, and with it, an absolutely disgusting smell! This puts off potential predators as they instantly move away from such an odour, allowing the honey badger to escape. Their skin is very loose and allows them to move freely, meaning that when they are attacked, they can wriggle into a position where they can fight back by clawing or biting their aggressor. The safest place to grip a honey bear is by its neck, a hold from which it finds it difficult to escape. The skin is not only loose, it is also very thick. Predators find it very difficult to penetrate because some parts of the body are covered by layers as thick as 6mm. It is said that spears and arrows cannot pierce honey badgers' skin and they can withstand multiple bee stings.

So if anyone ever asks you to pick a winner between a lion and a badger, make sure you think twice!

Dynamic Reading Exercise

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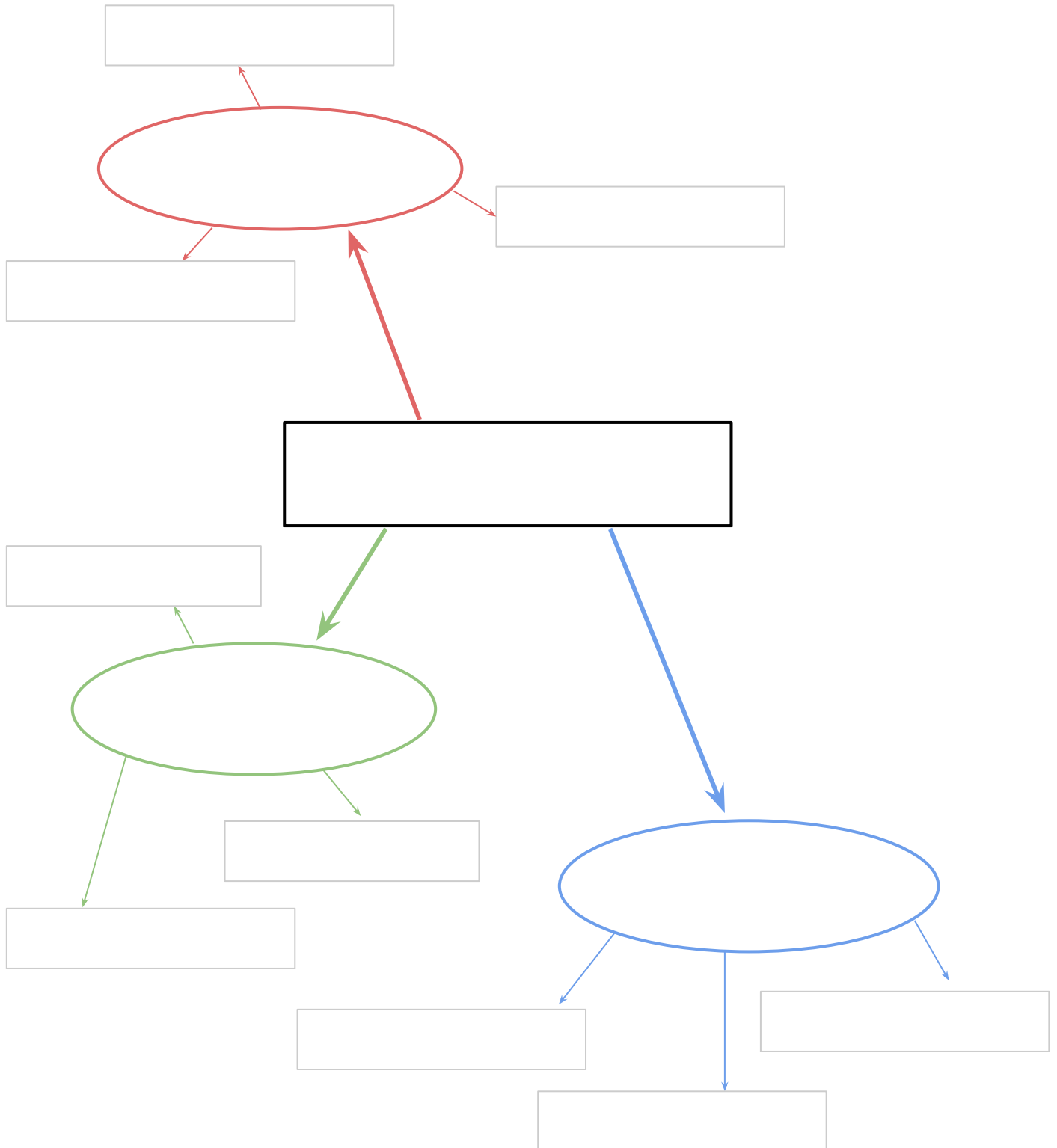
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Create Your Own Mind-Map



Article 2

What personality type are you?

Have you ever wondered why you do the things you do? Why you love some things whilst disliking others? Have you wondered why one of your friends always wants to pick an argument with someone, whilst another always sticks up for their friends? Well psychologists say that there is a reason for all of these things happening. They say it is because each of us has a specifically personality type, and this leads us to act in a certain way. They say that there are four main personality types and that if you know someone's personality type you can understand them better and even guess how they will behave. The question is, which personality type are you?

How to pick a creator

The first personality type is called the "creator" and researchers say 35% of the entire population fall into this category. The creator has a few clear traits, which make it easy to identify if this could be your personality type. First and foremost creators are people that like doing things. They are driven by new sensations and want to experience as many new things as possible. These are the kind of people who if you are going on a road-trip, or plan to do something different or a bit out there like skydiving, they will be the first people to say "yes". Secondly, because creators are so open to new sensations, they are also, just as the name would imply, very creative. These people tend to make great artists. Famous creators include people like Eddie Murphy, Madonna and Bart Simpson.

How to pick if you are a protector

Our second personality type is the "protector". Researchers say that the majority of the population, 43% of people in fact, fit into this category. We can pick a protector because they also have a number of key traits. The first and main characteristic is that they are very stable people, they like continuity and hate change. When they like something, they will continue liking it. The second characteristic of the protector is that they are very responsible. They are the kind of person who would try and talk you out of going sky diving by explaining each of the risks one by one. Finally, you can pick a protector because they are highly organised, punctual and enjoy routines. They even probably have a really clean room! Famous protectors include the Queen and Monica from Friends.

How to pick if you are an intellectual

Our third personality type is the "intellectual". This is the smallest category, made up of only 10% of the population. These people are easy to pick, first and foremost because they love to argue. To them an argument isn't a fight, but rather a test of how much you know about a subject. Some of these people will argue for something they don't even believe in, simply to test the other person's knowledge of the subject! We all know someone like that don't we! Intellectuals are also quite hard to offend. They are less sensitive than a lot of people, especially creators and visionaries. Intellectuals are also very good problem solvers. They love solving problems, whether it is a Maths problem or a question of how to tune the TV into the DVD player. Finally intellectuals are very curious people. They love finding out why things happen, lending them to ask a lot of questions. Intellectuals include Bill Gates, Tom Hanks, Gandalf from Lord of the Rings and Mr Burns from the Simpsons.

Article 2

What personality type are you? (Continued)

How to pick if you are a visionary

Our final personality type is the “visionary”. This group makes up 12% of the population. The easiest trait to identify in a visionary is that they are sensitive, caring and compassionate people. The visionary is the person who hates to see someone get picked on in the playground. Consequently, they can often be quite sensitive and unlike an intellectual they can be easily upset. The visionary might think the intellectual is rude and the intellectual may think the visionary is super sensitive. The second key characteristic of the visionary is that they are idealistic and support good causes. These are the people who will sponsor a child in Africa, do the 40 Hour Famine etc. Famous visionaries include Johnny Depp, Ben Stiller and Oprah Winfrey.

Now that you have had a chance to look at these personality traits, which personality type do you think you are? Are you a creator, a protector, an intellectual or a visionary? Which personality type would you put your friends into?

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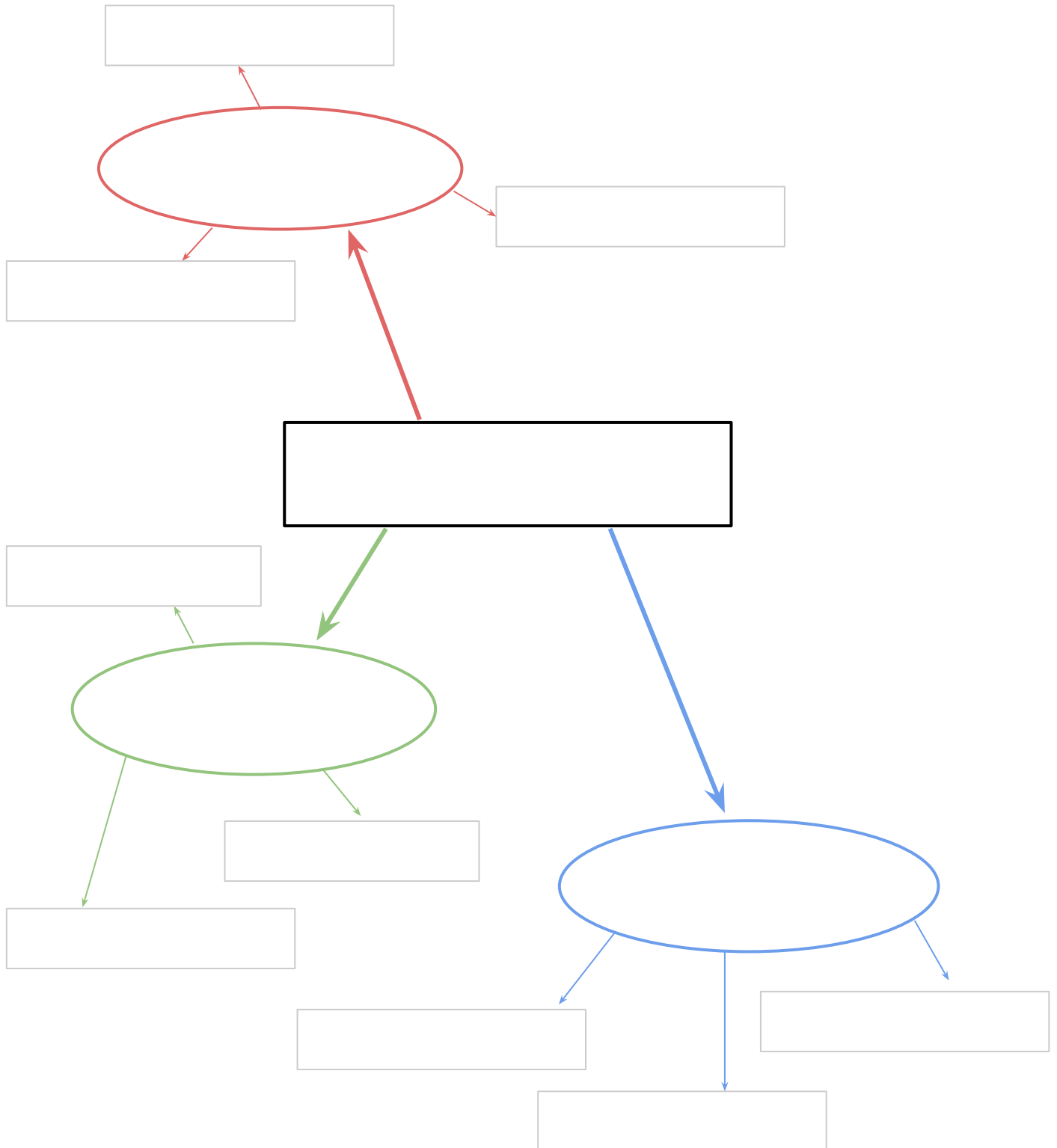
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Article 3

What can we do about Climate Change?

You would have been living under a rock if you hadn't heard the growing protest and concern about climate change. Climate change has gone from being an issue only scientists discussed, to being a leading social issue. The problem is, with all of this talk of Global Warming, many people get lost or overwhelmed. Many people are left pondering the question, "What can I do? I am only 1 person. What kind of difference can I make?" The good news is that every single person makes a difference. You don't need to be a government or a big corporation. We can all make small changes, which, when added up, become giant leaps in saving our planet. Here are a few small things we can all do.

Conserve Electricity

Global warming means that the temperature of the earth's atmosphere is increasing. Scientists believe that the principle cause of this increase in temperature is the increase in greenhouse gasses.

There are a number of greenhouse gasses but the important one is Carbon Dioxide or CO₂. CO₂ enters the atmosphere every time we burn fossil fuels such as coal in order to make electricity. And the problem for the world is, the more energy we need to live our lives, light our homes, cook, travel etc. the more fossil fuel we need to burn and more CO₂ is released into the atmosphere. The solution seems quite simple then. Reduce the amount of energy we use, then we reduce the amount of coal we burn and presto – reduce the amount of Carbon Dioxide entering the atmosphere. And this is a really easy thing for anyone to do, because at the end of the day, we all know we have been guilty of needlessly wasting electricity. So, why not use the washing line instead of using a dryer? By switching off our dryers it is estimated we would save 700 pounds of Carbon dioxide every year. How about this for a simple action tip: switching off appliances at the wall. Even though your video or TV may be turned off, if it is on standby, it is still consuming electricity. It is estimated that 5% of total energy consumption goes into powering appliances that are off but plugged in! By unplugging these appliances we would save 18 million pounds of carbon dioxide a year. And when we buy appliances, why not only buy appliances with only the highest energy rating? If everyone in the US bought the most energy efficient appliances it is estimated that the US would save 175 million pounds of carbon dioxide a year.

Recycling

Recycling is another effective way to cut down the amount of energy used to produce the goods we need. By simply keeping a regular bin and a recycling bin and taking the time to sort our plastics and paper from the normal rubbish we can make a big difference. Recycling plastic reduces the amount of energy needed to make a drink bottle by 40% and recycling paper cuts down the energy needed to make an exercise book by 70% as compared to using raw materials. We can also support recycling by purchasing recycled goods wherever available.

Take Action

Finally we can all make a change by taking action. Taking action doesn't have to mean joining a protest or chaining yourself to a tree. We can take action by choosing to support environmentally aware companies where ever possible. A lot airlines let you pay to carbon off-set flights, so for a few extra Pounds, your flight is carbon neutral. Why not take action, by voting green. Vote for the party you think will do the most to reduce greenhouse emissions, search for clean energy sources etc. Finally, take action by making a noise. Speak to your friends and speak to your family.

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