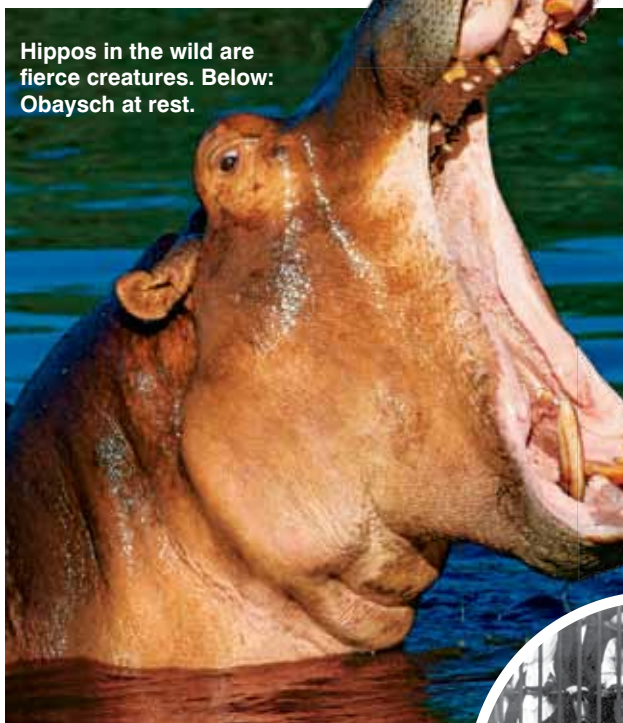


# YESTERDAY &



Hippos in the wild are fierce creatures. Below: Obaysch at rest.

## YESTERDAY

### Obaysch the Hippo

In 1850, a lonely hippo was a huge attraction

**O**n May 25, 1850, a celebrity arrived in London, England: Obaysch, a baby hippopotamus. The adorable creature had been captured in East Africa. After a months-long journey down the Nile and across the Mediterranean Sea, he had arrived on the shores of England, where he was brought to the London Zoological Gardens.

The London Zoo was the world's first modern zoo. It held dozens of animals from

around the world, including an orangutan from Indonesia and an Arabian oryx. Obaysch's arrival caused great excitement.

Like the other zoo animals, Obaysch lived in a cage by himself. Every day, thousands of visitors paraded past. Children shouted his name and threw candy to him. If he was sleeping, visitors might toss a twig between the bars to wake him. Collectors bought toy models of him. Even Queen Victoria was charmed.

Everyone was thrilled that Obaysch was at the London Zoo. Everyone, that is, except for Obaysch himself. He soon became **vicious** toward zookeepers. He broke a tooth trying to bite through his cage.

Zookeepers were **perplexed**. Even the best animal scientists of the day gave little thought to an animal's happiness; few believed that animals had feelings at all. The mission of the London Zoo, like most zoos of its day, was to exhibit animals to curious crowds.

Over time, interest in Obaysch cooled. He spent his days sleeping and eating cornmeal mush. Some visitors felt he acted more like a barnyard hog than a wild animal.

In 1854, the zoo **acquired** a female hippo, Adhela. No longer alone, Obaysch's temper improved. After many years, Adhela gave birth to Miss Guy, the first hippo born in captivity and successfully raised by its own mother. The three lived together until Obaysch died in 1878, at the relatively young hippo age of 28.

Over a century later, the London Zoo is in the midst of **renovations**. Most zoo visitors no longer want to see animals in cramped cages.

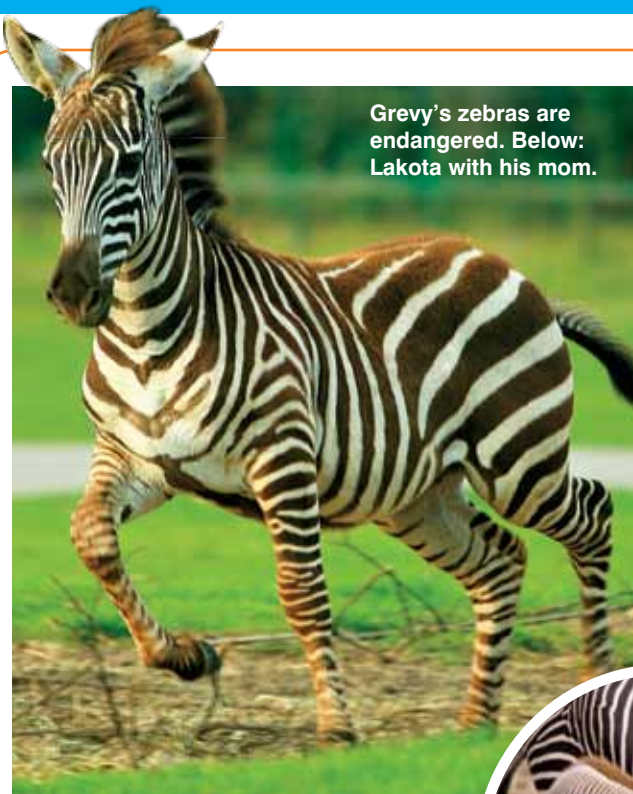
Surely, Obaysch would agree. ■



**DIRECTIONS:** 1. Read both articles. 2. Write down five facts each about Obaysch and Lakota. 3. On a separate piece of paper, write a paragraph that explains how the two animals are alike and how they are different.



**LOOK FOR WORD NERD'S 8 WORDS IN BOLD**



Grevy's zebras are endangered. Below: Lakota with his mom.



**TODAY**

## Lakota the Zebra

A new baby gives hope for an endangered species

**I**n November of 2009, officials at the Denver Zoo announced the birth of Lakota, a male Grevy's zebra. The shy foal was an instant celebrity at the zoo, which has more than 4,000 animals in its collection. But for Denver Zoo scientists, Lakota is not just another cute zoo attraction. His birth is part of the zoo's mission to save one of the world's most endangered species. There are only 2,000 Grevy's zebras in the wilds of Africa today. The

zoo has spent millions to study and protect Grevy's zebra in the wild. One Denver Zoo scientist even lives in Kenya, working with local people to protect the **dwindling** herds.

The Denver Zoo is one of dozens of respected zoos trying to save the world's most threatened animals. Since 1996, the Denver Zoo has worked on 495 conservation projects in 54 countries. From golden frogs in Panama to orangutans in Borneo, animals around the world are benefiting. Zoo entrance fees and profits from gift shops help fund this scientific work.

As the mission of the world's top zoos has changed, so has the way they exhibit their animals. Animals live in habitats that are designed to closely **resemble** their native ranges. At the Denver Zoo's Predator Ridge, 50 animals representing 12 African species – including lions, spotted hyenas, and crowned cranes – roam across rocky formations and grassy areas. Many animals **forage** for their own food, and live tusk-to-tusk or wing-to-wing with other species from their native homes.

Scientists believe these types of exhibits make for healthier and more contented animals; most animals in captivity live longer than their wild counterparts. Strict rules **forbid** human visitors from annoying the animals.

There might never be a perfect solution for keeping wild animals in captivity. And too many animals are still kept in cruel conditions in small zoos, circuses, and private collections. But zoos like Denver's are striving to make their animals feel closer to their wild homes.

And Lakota and family? They are thriving. ■