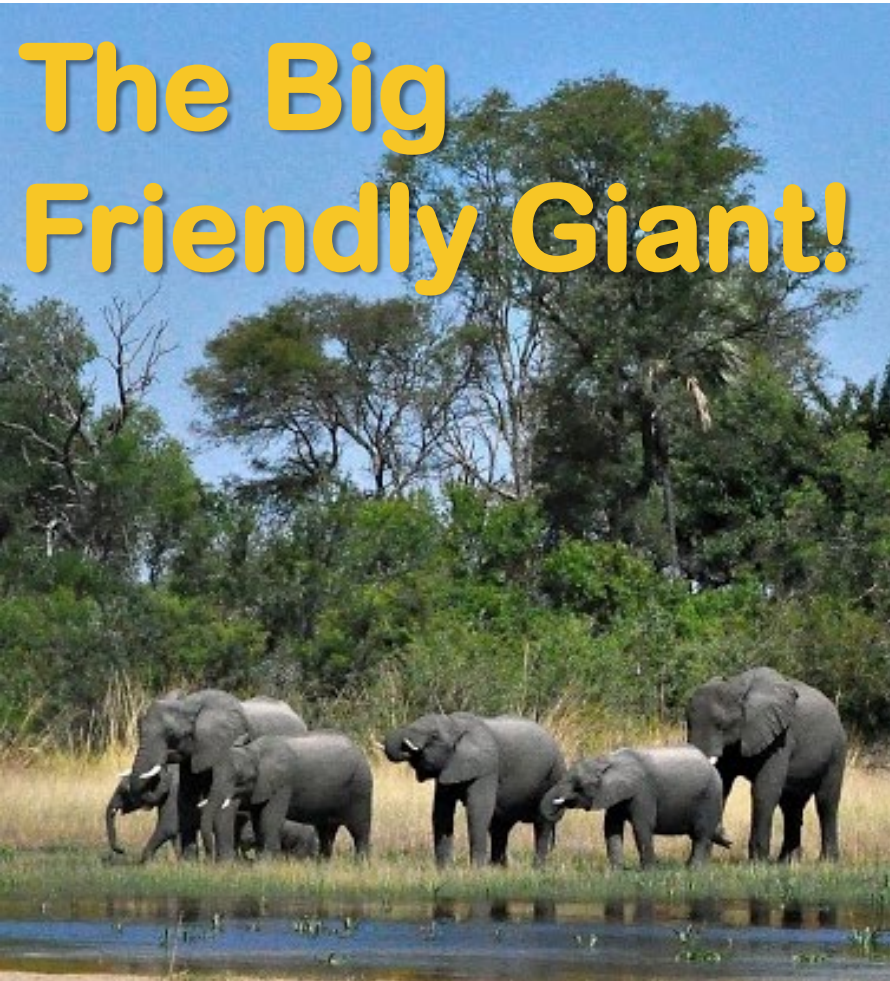




KIBALE EXPLORER

The Kasiisi Project & Kibale Forest Schools Program

The Big Friendly Giant!



It's a hot, sunny day on the African savanna and all the animals are desperate to find some cool water to drink. Just when all hope seems lost, the ground begins to shake and a herd of African Elephants appears on the horizon. The herd has traveled through this area countless times over the years and decides to take a break from their long journey to rest and cool off. A few elephants move towards a dried out riverbed, and begin to dig into the ground using their strong tusks. Within minutes, the elephants have broken through the surface, uncovering a vast supply of water lurking underneath. As they use their long trunks to drink, and pour water on themselves, other animals start crowding around the newly formed watering hole, reaping the benefits of the elephants' immense power. Just as quickly as they appeared, the herd is on the move again, leaving massive footprints in their wake.

Living Giants

African elephants are the largest land mammals on Earth; They can be up to 10 feet tall and weigh 4 to 6 tons, as much as 5 cars! To support their bodies, African elephants need to eat up to 18 hours a day.

Beyond their big build, African elephants are known for their long trunks. They use their trunks to pick up things, making trumpet-like noises, and suck up water for drinking or bathing. Male and female African elephants also grow extended teeth called tusks. Tusks can be used for protection, to gather food, and more.

African elephants live in complex social structures called herds that are matriarchal, or led by females. These herds consist only of females and baby elephants called calves. Male elephants tend to live on their own or in smaller groups of all male elephants.

Ecosystem Influencers

African elephants can be divided into two groups based on the habitat that they live in. Elephants in sub-Saharan Africa mainly live in savannas (open grassy areas with few trees), while elephants in central and western Africa mainly live in forests.

Regardless of where they live, African elephants are famous for their ability to shape their environment using their large bodies and strong tusks. In fact, elephants are known as a "keystone species" due to the importance of their presence to the health of their ecosystem. For example, elephants use their tusks to dig into dry riverbeds during the dry season to create watering holes, which can then be used by other animals living nearby. Elephants also create paths for smaller animals in the forest as they snack on tree bark and trample shrubs.

Amazing Elephant Facts



African elephants eat up to 18 hours a day to support their large bodies!



African Elephants disperse seeds through their dung and some animals may even eat elephant dung to get these tasty treats!



The elephant is the only mammal that can snorkel without any tools or equipment.



Herds use the same migratory paths for centuries. This is just one example of how amazing the African Elephant's memory is!



Help the Herd!

While the elephant's large size and herd structure protects them from most natural predators, they are vulnerable to habitat loss and poaching. Every year, tens of thousands of elephants are killed for their ivory tusks, which were historically seen as symbols of power. Even though the ivory trade has been banned in many countries around the world, poaching is still a serious threat to the Asian and African elephants.

The international movement to protect elephants against poaching is one of the main focuses of World Elephant Day. On August 12th, individuals from around the globe raise awareness about poaching threats and support conservation efforts to preserve elephant habitats. In Uganda, the Kasiisi Project also gives school children the chance to share their love and appreciation for elephants on Elephant Pride Day.



Explore:

Elephant Trivia!

There are three species of elephant: the African Savanna, the African Forest, and the Asian elephant. With the permission of an adult, use a computer to research the differences between these three species. Once you have done some exploring, try and answer the questions below:

True or False?

African elephants are the largest elephant species

True or False?

All African and Asian elephants grow tusks

True or False?

African elephants live in cooler climates than Asian elephants



Engage:

Trunks, Tusks and Tools

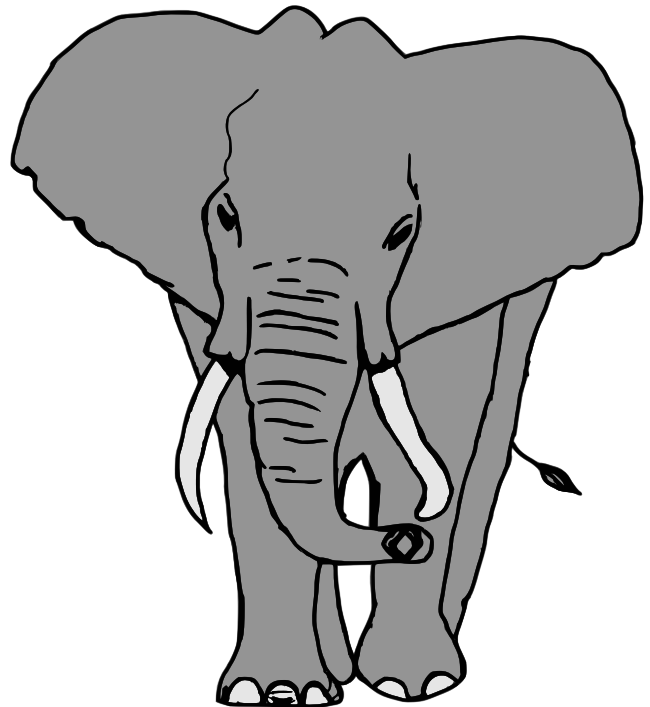
African Elephants are known to create tools using different parts of their body. These large mammals use their trunks to suck up water for drinking or bathing, their tusks to lift objects, and their feet to help detect where other elephants are in their environment. Just like elephants, humans create and use tools everyday. Take a moment to think about the tools you use to eat, make art, communicate, and live! How would you go about your day if you did not have access to these tools?

TRUNKS, TUSKS & TOOLS!

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

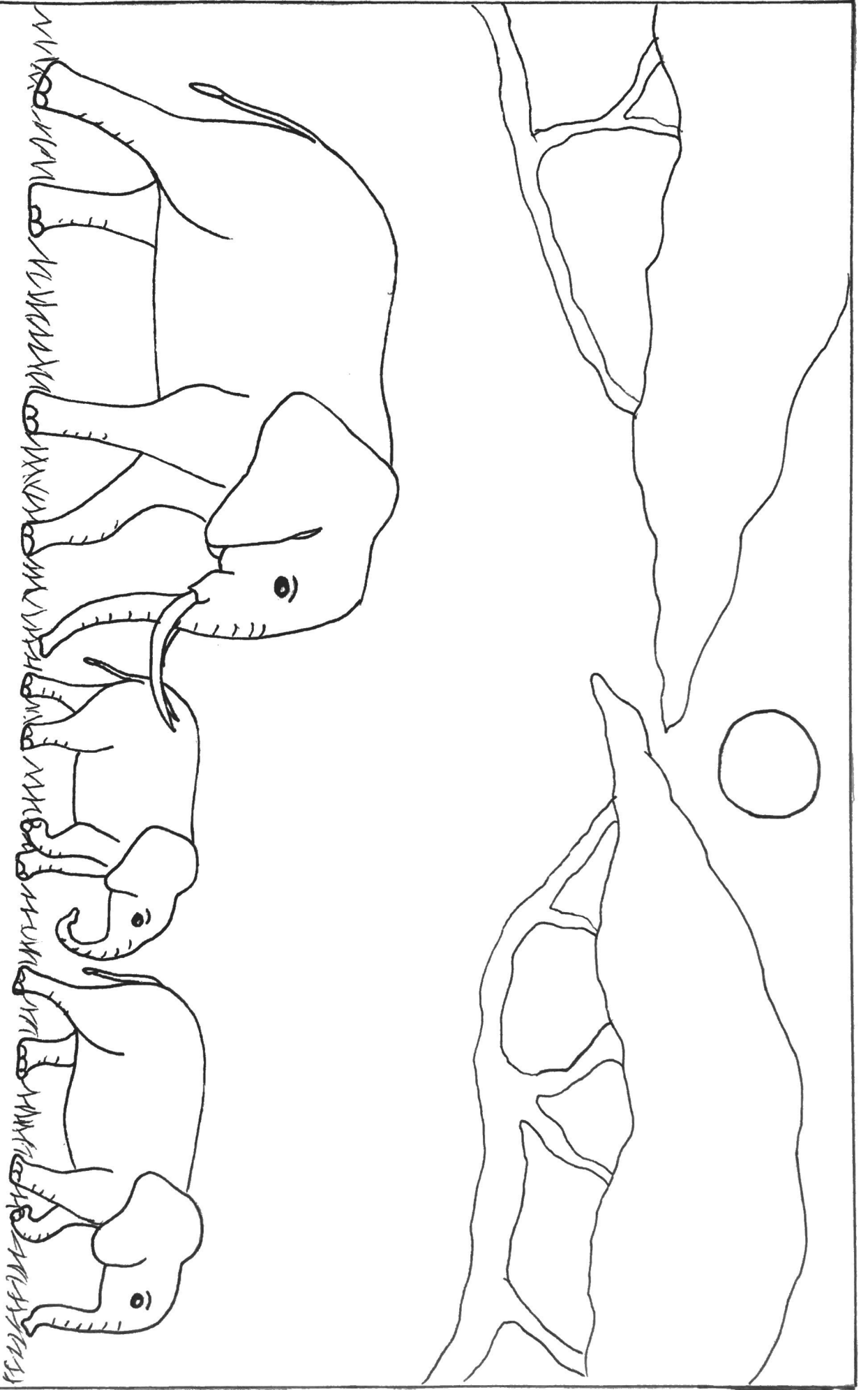
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▼ WHAT TOOLS DO YOU USE EVERYDAY?
MAKE A LIST BELOW:



► HOW WOULD YOU GO ABOUT YOUR DAY IF YOU DID NOT HAVE ACCESS TO THESE TOOLS?

IF YOU WERE AN AFRICAN ELEPHANT, HOW WOULD YOU USE YOUR TRUNK?



MOYA ML