

# *Saving the Mexican Wolves*

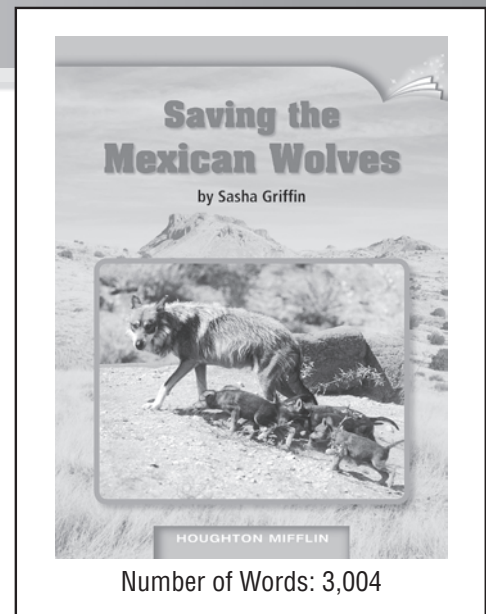
by Sasha Griffin

Fountas-Pinnell Level V

Informational Text

## Selection Summary

The conflicting needs of man and animal have resulted in the near-extinction of the once plentiful Mexican gray wolf. Despite the efforts of conservationists, the delicate balance between human and animal rights continues to be elusive.



## Characteristics of the Text

<b>Genre</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informational text</li> </ul>
<b>Text Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction prepares readers for the problem addressed by the text</li> <li>• Section heads organize information by sub-topic</li> </ul>
<b>Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zoological and environmental information about wolves</li> <li>• The destructive effects of misinformation and ignorance</li> </ul>
<b>Themes and Ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of understanding can cause great harm.</li> <li>• Wolves are an important part of the ecosystem.</li> </ul>
<b>Language and Literary Features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Latin and Spanish terms for wolf (<i>Canis lupus baileyi</i>, <i>lobo</i>)</li> <li>• Formal, scholarly language appropriate for informational text</li> </ul>
<b>Sentence Complexity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent parenthetical clarifications (e.g., <i>which usually mates for life</i>)</li> <li>• Many series of words and phrases</li> </ul>
<b>Vocabulary Words</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many animal and environmental science terms (e.g., <i>carnivores</i>, <i>ecosystem</i>)</li> <li>• Verbals (e.g., <i>endangered</i>, <i>adapted</i>, <i>misleading</i>, <i>connecting</i> (participles acting as adjectives); <i>barking</i>, <i>growling</i>, <i>whimpering</i>, <i>howling</i>, <i>trapping</i>, <i>shooting</i>, <i>poisoning</i> (gerunds acting as nouns)</li> </ul>
<b>Illustrations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photos lend authenticity</li> <li>• Food chain diagram provides necessary background information</li> </ul>
<b>Book and Print Features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eighteen pages of text, including a timeline at the end of the selection</li> <li>• Captions clarify photos and text</li> <li>• Timeline</li> </ul>
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by Sasha Griffin

## Build Background

Help students use their experience with animals to visualize the selection. Build interest by asking questions such as the following: *Have you ever seen a wolf? What do you know about wolves?* Read the title, author, and talk about the cover photograph of a rare wolf. Tell students that this article is informational text, which means that the author uses facts to teach readers. Explain that this article describes a current problem concerning the Mexican gray wolf.

## Introduce the Text

Guide students through the text, noting important ideas and helping with unfamiliar language and vocabulary so they can read the text successfully. Here are some suggestions:

**Page 2:** Tell students that this introduction describes a problem with the Mexican gray wolf.

**Suggested language:** *Look at page 2 of this book.* Read the last two sentences in paragraph 2: *The modern world has brought highways, homes, ranches, and livestock such as sheep and cattle to this once-wild region. Living near humans is not easy for wolves.* **Ask:** *What problems might the Mexican gray wolf have?*

**Pages 4–5:** Point out the photo and caption on these pages. Explain that **postures** include facial expressions as well as body positions. Read the first sentences of paragraph 2 on page 5: *The Mexican wolf is an example of an apex predator. An apex predator has no natural enemies.* **Ask:** *If the Mexican wolf has no natural enemies but is still at risk of extinction, who or what might exterminate, or kill, it? How does the photo help you figure out why?*

**Page 8:** Explain that many settlers moved to the West in the late 1800s and that some established cattle ranches. Read sentences 5 and 6 on this page: *For the first time, the lobos had to compete with large numbers of humans for their food. It became harder and harder for wolves to find enough deer and elk because so many were killed by people.* **Ask:** *How do you think the wolves solved their problem? What problem might this have caused for settlers?*

*Now turn back to the beginning of the selection and read to find out how the Mexican gray wolf made a comeback in the United States.*

## Expand Your Vocabulary

**apex** – the highest or topmost, p. 5

**captivity** – the state of being imprisoned, confined, or enslaved, p. 10

**carcasses** – dead bodies of animals, especially those slaughtered for food, p. 14


**coexist** – to live in peace with another or others, p. 2

**exterminate** – to get rid of by destroying completely, p. 9

**postures** – positions of the body or body parts, p. 4

# Read

Have students read silently while you listen to individual students read aloud. Support their problem solving and fluency as needed.

Remind students to use the Monitor/Clarify Strategy  **TARGET STRATEGY** and to notice what isn't making sense and find ways to figure out parts that are confusing.

## Discuss and Revisit the Text

### Personal Response

Invite students to share their personal responses to the selection.

**Suggested language:** *What reduced the Mexican wolves' food supply? How might the settlers have balanced their needs with the needs of the wolves?*

### Ways of Thinking

As you discuss the text, help students understand these points:

Thinking Within the Text	Thinking Beyond the Text	Thinking About the Text
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Mexican gray wolf was once plentiful in the United States.</li><li>• People killed the wolves out of fear and to protect their livestock.</li><li>• The wolf became extinct in the United States, but environmentalists reintroduced the wolf to the country.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Balancing the needs of two competing groups can be challenging.</li><li>• Sometimes people harm others out of ignorance and misinformation.</li><li>• All parts of an ecosystem have value.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The article presents factual information about the Mexican gray wolf.</li><li>• The article explains both sides of the conflict between humans and the Mexican wolf.</li><li>• The author includes information about groups such as the White Mountain Apache to persuade readers that the problem can be resolved.</li></ul>

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### Choices for Further Support

- **Fluency** Invite students to participate in choral reading. Suggest that they select an excerpt from *The Mexican Gray Wolf* that contains science terms, such as *mammal*, *vertebrate*, and *subspecies*. Remind them to recall what they have learned in science to help them recognize, pronounce, and decode these words.
- **Comprehension** Based on your observations of the students' reading and discussion, revisit parts of the text to clarify or extend comprehension. Remind students to go back to the text to support their ideas.
- **Phonics/Word Work** Provide practice as needed with words and word parts, using examples from the text. Explain that many English words are formed from Latin root words and affixes. For example, the vocabulary word *coexist* (page 2) derives from the Latin root word *existere* ("to come into being") and the prefix *co-* ("with" or "together").

# Writing about Reading


## Critical Thinking

Have students complete the Critical Thinking questions on BLM 10.9.

## Responding

Have students complete the activities at the back of the book, using their Reader's Notebook. Use the instruction below as needed to reinforce or extend understanding of the comprehension skill.

## Target Comprehension Skill

**Main Ideas and Details**  **TARGET SKILL** Remind students that most of the details in an article support the main idea. Some articles have more than one main idea. Model how to add details to the Graphic Organizer, using a "Think Aloud" like the one below:

### Think Aloud

*The author writes that Mexican gray wolves ate mainly elk and deer. The article then states that settlers killed many elk and deer. As a result, some wolves attacked ranchers' cattle. Then ranchers killed the wolves. List these details to support the main idea that animal and human needs sometimes conflict.*

## Practice the Skill

Encourage students to share an example of a main idea in another article and provide details that support that main idea.

## Writing Prompt: Thinking Beyond the Text

Have students write a response to the writing prompt on page 6. Remind them that when they think beyond the text, they use their personal knowledge to reach new understandings.

## Assessment Prompts

- The article is mainly about

\_\_\_\_\_.

- Which sentences in the article support the idea that wolves are not as dangerous as people think?
- What is the important message in the article?

# English Language Development

**Reading Support** Have students listen to the audio or online recordings. Make sure the text matches the students' reading level. Language and content should be accessible with regular teaching support.

**Cognates** Tell students that the informational text contains several cognates, including *habitat* (*hábitat*), *carnivore* (*carnívoro*), and *predator* (*depredador*). Ask students to find other cognates in the article.

## Oral Language Development

Check student comprehension, using a dialogue that best matches your students' English proficiency level. **Speaker 1** is the teacher, **Speaker 2** is the student.

Beginning/Early Intermediate	Intermediate	Early Advanced/ Advanced
<p><b>Speaker 1:</b> What is the topic?</p> <p><b>Speaker 2:</b> the Mexican gray wolf</p> <p><b>Speaker 1:</b> What is the wolf's prey?</p> <p><b>Speaker 2:</b> large-hoofed mammals, such as elk and deer</p> <p><b>Speaker 1:</b> How do wolves keep the herbivore population healthy?</p> <p><b>Speaker 2:</b> by hunting weak, unhealthy animals</p>	<p><b>Speaker 1:</b> How do wolves help the ecosystem?</p> <p><b>Speaker 2:</b> Wolves keep other animal populations under control.</p> <p><b>Speaker 1:</b> Why are folktales and fables unfair to wolves?</p> <p><b>Speaker 2:</b> Folktales and fables often show wolves as fierce, sly killers. Wolves do not eat humans as some stories suggest.</p>	<p><b>Speaker 1:</b> Why was it important that the Mexican wolves be reestablished in part of their original range?</p> <p><b>Speaker 2:</b> Mexican wolves needed to be reestablished in their original range because that was the habitat in which they had done well before humans arrived.</p>

### Responding

**TARGET SKILL** Main Ideas and Details What are the main ideas in *Saving the Mexican Wolves*? What details support the main ideas? Copy and complete the web below.

**Write About It**

**Text to World** Do you think efforts to restore the Mexican wolf population in the wild should continue? Why or why not? Write several paragraphs in which you state your opinion and give reasons to support your ideas.

19

Lesson 10  
BLACKLINE MASTER 10.9

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Critical Thinking

Read and answer the questions. Possible responses shown.

- Think within the text** Which details support the main idea that the White Mountain Apache have a good relationship with the Mexican wolf?  
The tribe agreed to let Mexican wolves roam on reservation land and joined with other agencies to oversee the wolves' recovery.
- Think within the text** What is an apex predator? Where does it fit on a food chain?  
a predator with no natural enemies; on top
- Think beyond the text** If the number of deer, elk, and other edible mammals fell significantly, what effect could it have on the Mexican wolf?  
The Mexican wolf would not have enough food to eat. The wolves might starve, become extinct, or have to eat something else.
- Think about the text** Identify the author's purpose and viewpoint. How well does the author support the main goal of the writing?  
Author's Purpose: to inform and persuade; Viewpoint: wolves need to be protected and people need to be re-educated about them. The author calms people's fears with facts: Mexican Wolf Recovery Project details and wolves' natural urge to stay away from people.

**Making Connections** What experiences have you had with wolves in movies, television shows, or in literature? Were wolves portrayed positively or negatively? Contrast their portrayal with what you have just learned about them.

**Write your answer in your Reader's Notebook.**

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# Saving the Mexican Wolves

## Thinking Beyond the Text

Think about the questions below. Then write your answer in two or three paragraphs.

Remember that when you think beyond the text, you use your personal knowledge to reach new understandings.

On page 9, the author writes, "In that moment, Leopold said he realized that wolves are as important to the wilderness as the wilderness is to the wolves." What do you think Leopold meant with these words? Do you think he was wrong to hunt the wolves? Why or why not? Support your answer with examples from the text.



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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Critical Thinking

**Saving the Mexican  
Wolves**  
Critical Thinking

Read and answer the questions.

1. **Think within the text** Which details support the main idea that the White Mountain Apache have a good relationship with the Mexican wolf?

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2. **Think within the text** What is an apex predator? Where does it fit on a food chain?

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3. **Think beyond the text** If the number of deer, elk, and other edible mammals fell significantly, what effect could it have on the Mexican wolf?

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4. **Think about the text** Identify the author's purpose and viewpoint. How well does the author support the main goal of the writing?

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**Making Connections** What experiences have you had with wolves in movies, television shows, or in literature? Were wolves portrayed positively or negatively? Contrast their portrayal with what you have just learned about them.

**Write your answer in your Reader's Notebook.**

# Saving the Mexican Wolves

## LEVEL V

**Saving the Mexican Wolves**  
Running Record Form

page	Selection Text	Errors	Self-Corrections
11	The Mexican Wolf Recovery Plan was approved by the U.S. and Mexico in 1982. The plan's main goal was to reestablish at least 100 Mexican wolves within part of their original range. Another goal was to make sure that the wolves did not create problems for people and livestock.		
12	Many of the region's residents were worried about the return of the wolves. Some people were concerned that the wolves would be dangerous to them and their pets. Ranchers were afraid that wild wolves would kill their cattle and sheep. Yet many others supported the wolf recovery plan.		
	Comments:	<b>Accuracy Rate</b> (# words read correctly/97 × 100) _____ %	<b>Total Self-Corrections</b> _____

Behavior	Code	Error
Read word correctly	✓ cat	0
Repeated word, sentence, or phrase	Ⓜ cat	0
Omission	̄ cat	1

Behavior	Code	Error
Substitution	cut cat	1
Self-corrects	cut <sup>sc</sup> cat	0
Insertion	the ^ cat	1
Word told	Ⓢ cat	1

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