

What can we tell from the picture?

What do you think this story is about?

Syllabification

- do – main
- or – ang – u – tang
- bon – o – bos
- chim – pan – zee
- con – ven – ient – ly

- ac – com – plish
- fran – tic – all -y

Vocabulary Development



- orangutans
- bonobos
- domain
- carousel;
- accomplished
- sleek
- migrate
- forage
- frantic
- Stalking

A **bonobo** is a small chimpanzee of swamp forests in Zaire; a threatened species



A **domain** is territory over which rule or control is exercised.



A **Carousel** is a large, rotating machine with seats for children to ride or amusement.



Migrate move from one country or region to another and settle there



Sleek- having a smooth, gleaming surface reflecting light

Forage- to collect or look around for (food)



Use this card after each paragraph.

Stop-and-Think Card

- Do I understand what that was about?
- Were there any parts I did not understand?
- Could I explain what I have just read to someone else?
- What might the next part be about?
- Are there any questions I need to have answered?

**Congratulations!
Read ON!**

The One and Only Ivan

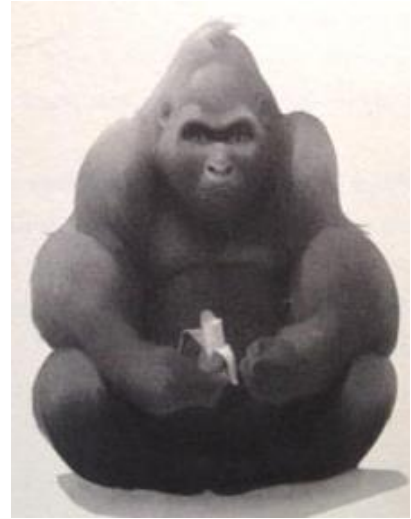
I am Ivan.

I am a gorilla.

I used to be a wild gorilla and I still look the part. I have a gorilla's shy gaze, a gorilla's sly smile. I wear a snowy saddle of fur, the uniform of a silverback. When the sun warms my back, I cast a gorilla's majestic shadow.

I'm mightier than any human, four hundred pounds of pure power. My body looks made for battle. My arms outstretched, span taller than the tallest human. My family tree spreads wide as well. I am a great ape and you are a great ape and so are chimpanzees and orangutans and bonobos, all of us distant and distrustful cousins.

I live in a human habitat called the Exit 8 Big Top Mall and Video Arcade. We are conveniently located off the I-95, with shows at two, four and seven, 365 days a year. Mack says that when he answers the trilling telephone. Mack works here at the Mall. He is the boss. I work here too. I am the gorilla. At the Big Top Mall, a creaky-music carousel spins all day and monkeys and parrots live amid the merchants. In the middle of the mall is a ring with benches where humans can sit on their rumps while they eat soft pretzels. The floor is covered with sawdust made of dead trees. My domain is at one end of the ring. I live here because I am too much gorilla and not enough human. Stella's domain is next to mine. Stella is an elephant. She and Bob, who is a dog, are my dearest friends. At present I do not have any gorilla friends.



My neighbours here at the Big Top Mall know many tricks. They are an educated lot, more accomplished than I. One of my neighbours plays baseball, although she is a chicken. Another drives a fire truck although he is a rabbit.



I used to have a neighbour, a sleek and thoughtful seal, who could balance a ball on her nose from dawn till dusk. Her voice was like the throaty bark of a dog chained outside on a cold night. Children wished on pennies and tossed them into her plastic pool. They glowed on the bottom like flat copper stones. The seal was hungry one day, or bored, perhaps, so she ate one hundred pennies. Mack said she'd be fine. He was mistaken.

Mack calls our show "The Littlest Big Top on Earth". Every day at two, four and seven, humans fan themselves, drink sodas, applaud. Babies wail. Mack, dressed like a clown, pedals a tiny bike. A dog named Snickers rides on Stella's back. Stella sits on a stool. It is a very sturdy stool.

I don't do any tricks. Mack says it's enough for me to be me.

Stella told me that some circuses move from town to town. They have humans who dangle on ropes twining from the tops of tents. They have grumbling lions with gleaming teeth and a snaking line of elephants each touching the limp tail in front of her. The elephants look far off into the distance so they won't see the humans who want to see them.

Our circus doesn't migrate. We sit where we are like an old beast too tired to push on. After our show, humans forage through the stores. A store is where humans buy things they need to survive. At the Big Top Mall, some stores sell new things, things like balloons and T-shirts and caps to cover the gleaming heads of humans. Some stores sell old things, things that smell dusty and damp and long forgotten. All day I watch humans scurry from store to store. They pass their green paper, dry as old leaves and smelling of a thousand hands, back and forth and back again.

They hunt frantically, stalking, pushing, grumbling. Then they leave, clutching bags filled with things – bright things, soft things, big things – but no matter how full the bags, they always come back for more.

Humans are clever indeed. They spin pink clouds you can eat.

But they are lousy hunters.

Questions

1. What type of animal is Ivan?
2. Name three members of the ape family.
3. Where does Ivan live?
4. Name the other animals that live with him?
5. What tricks could the other animals do?
6. How many shows take place each day?

Exercise B

7. Why does Ivan say that humans are distrustful cousins?
8. What do you think happened to the seal?
9. Why does Ivan say that humans are lousy hunters?
10. What do you consider to be the most appropriate environment in which to keep a gorilla?
11. Why do you think the author wrote this story from the perspective of the gorilla?

