

# Nature Vocabulary and Idioms Worksheet

## - GENTLE GIRAFFES -

### A) FUN FACTS

Fill the gaps with the following words:

*brain calves grasp lethal pattern predators resemblance saliva spread swallow trait twigs*

Each giraffe has a unique **a)** \_\_\_\_\_ of spots just like humans have distinct fingerprints.

The second part of their scientific name '*giraffa camelopardalis*' originated from their **b)** \_\_\_\_\_ to a camel crossed with a leopard.

Just the neck of a giraffe is taller than most humans at about 2m. In order for the blood to be pumped all the way up to the **c)** \_\_\_\_\_, the giraffe has very high blood pressure, double that of humans.

Giraffes can comfortably walk at 15km/h and when they run they can reach speeds of up to 55km/h.

Giraffes have a rather curious way of walking: both legs on one side of the body move forward together and then the legs on the other side. This is a **d)** \_\_\_\_\_ shared by cats and camels.

Since they are such large animals giraffes need a lot of fuel so they spend most of the day eating. They eat around 30kg of food a day - acacia leaves, **e)** \_\_\_\_\_, fruits and flowers.

Like cows they are ruminants - their stomach has four compartments. They chew their food, **f)** \_\_\_\_\_ it and then they regurgitate it (= bring the food back up into the mouth) to chew it again.

Giraffes produce a sticky **g)** \_\_\_\_\_ which helps protect them from any thorns they might swallow when eating.

Despite their size, giraffes only need to drink water every few days which is fortunate as drinking from a watering hole is quite tricky because they have to **h)** \_\_\_\_\_ out their front legs so that they can reach down to the water. Giraffes are also able to get water from the vegetation they eat.

Not only do giraffes have extremely long necks and legs but they also have a seriously long tongue - around 50cm. Their tongue is prehensile which means it is able to dexterously **i)** \_\_\_\_\_ leaves and buds and pull them off.

Giraffes get by on very little sleep, just a couple of hours a day. They tend to sleep standing up as lying down makes them very vulnerable to **j)** \_\_\_\_\_. They take short naps, sometimes lasting only 5 minutes!

Giraffes have a gestation period of about 15 months and they give birth standing up. The **k**) \_\_\_\_\_ are already around 1.8m tall and are able to stand within an hour of being born!

Not known for being aggressive creatures they can defend themselves, however, with an extremely powerful kick which can be **D**) \_\_\_\_\_.

## B) Idioms with NECK

*Underline the correct word to complete the expression.*

1. Sorry, I can't meet you for a coffee, I'm **down / up to my neck** in housework as we have guests coming to stay tonight.
2. I need to buy a better pillow. It's too high and I have a **crack / crick in my neck** every morning.
3. You can pick your toys up off the floor please. I'm going to **break / stick my neck** one of these days.
4. I'm going to be **in your neck of the hoods / woods** this weekend. Do you fancy meeting up for lunch?
5. I'm not going to the party if Jeff is going to be there. That guy is a **pain / sore in the neck**.

## Answers

A) a) pattern b) resemblance c) brain d) trait e) twigs f) swallow g) saliva h) spread i) grasp j) predators k) calves l) lethal

B) 1) up to my neck (with a huge amount) 2) a crick in my neck (a stiff or painful neck) 3) break my neck (=hurt myself badly) 4) in your neck of the woods (in your area, where you live/work) 5) a pain in the neck (= really annoying)