

Sun Bears' Surprising Stand-Up Act

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. disguise (Verb) /dis'gaɪz/: To hide or change the way something or someone looks so they aren't recognized.
Example: The spy decided to disguise himself as a waiter to sneak into the party.
2. scribe (Verb) /skraɪb/: To write something down, like taking notes or recording information.
Example: The historian would scribe the important events of the day in his journal.
3. viewpoint (Noun) /'vjuː.pɔɪnt/: A way of seeing or thinking about something; a person's opinion or perspective.
Example: Her viewpoint on the matter was quite different from mine.
4. ponder (Verb) /'pɒndər/: To think deeply and carefully about something, often taking your time.
Example: He needed to ponder the decision before choosing the best course of action.
5. pretend (Verb) /pri'tend/: To act as if something is true, even though it isn't, usually for fun or make-believe.
Example: Children often pretend to be pirates searching for hidden treasure in their games.



In eastern China, there is a zoo that has bears. Some people saw pictures of these bears standing up like humans and thought they might be people **disguised** as bears. But the zoo says they are real bears.

These bears are called sun bears, and they come from Malaysia. They are smaller and look different from other bears. The zoo, called Hangzhou Zoo, told everyone on July 31 that the

bears are real. They **scribed** a letter from the **viewpoint** of a sun bear called Angela saying, "Some people think I stand like a person. It seems you don't understand me very well."

People on the internet saw the pictures and **pondered** if the bears were real or if they were actually humans **pretending** to be bears. The Hangzhou Daily newspaper also talked about this.

Sun bears are the smallest bears in the world. They are about the size of a big dog and can stand up to 1.3 meters tall on their back legs. This is much shorter than North American grizzly bears, which can be up to 2.8 meters tall on their back legs. Some Chinese zoos have been in trouble before for trying to trick people by using dogs made to look like wolves or painted donkeys that look like zebras.

DISCUSSION

1. If you were in charge of a zoo, what fun and creative ways would you come up with to prove that the bears are real and not people in costumes?
2. Imagine you could have a conversation with one of the sun bears at the Hangzhou Zoo. What questions would you ask, and what do you think the bear might say?
3. In a playful way, what do you think the bears might be trying to communicate when they stand up like humans?
4. If you could visit the Hangzhou Zoo to see the sun bears, what special precautions would you take to make sure you're not fooled by people in disguise?
5. What other animals at a zoo do you think could be mistaken for something else if they acted in peculiar ways, and how would you explain their behavior?
6. If you were a zookeeper, how would you ensure that all the animals in your zoo have a fun and interesting environment to live in, while also educating and entertaining visitors?