

Finn Finity and the Wild Maths Zoo Adventure

Chapter 1: Feeding Frenzy at Penguins Rock

It was a bright, sunny morning when Finn Finity arrived at Edinburgh Zoo, ready for a full day of exploring. With his satchel over his shoulder, notebook and pencil at the ready, he stepped through the gates, curious to see where the day would take him.

Finn picked up a zoo map, and decided to head to Penguins Rock first. A cheerful zookeeper greeted him at the entrance. "Morning, Finn! I'm Lorna. We could really use your help. Feeding time's about to start, but we've hit a bit of a problem." Finn followed her to the enclosure where penguins squawked and waddled about, clearly ready for their breakfast. Nearby, a large bucket of fish sat on a table.

"Here's the issue," Lorna explained. "We have 60 fish to divide between the penguins, but our feeding chart got smudged in the rain yesterday. All I can remember is this..." She handed Finn a damp sheet of paper with the following notes written on it:

King Penguins: Half of the fish

Gentoo Penguins: One-third of the fish

Rockhopper Penguins: The rest

"Can you work out how many fish each group should get?" Lorna asked. Finn grinned. "Of course! Maths is my thing." He pulled out his notebook and began scribbling.

"I also need to record how many fish each individual penguin gets", Lorna added, handing Finn a second piece of paper.

King Penguins: 6 penguins in the group

Gentoo Penguins: 5 penguins in the group

Rockhopper Penguins: 5 penguins in the group

"If we share them out equally between the penguins in each group, can you work out what I should write down?" Finn gave her a thumbs up. "No problem!"

"Great work!" Lorna beamed when Finn showed her his calculations. "Let's see if the penguins agree." Together, they fed the penguins their portions. The penguins squawked happily, gobbling up their fish.

Lorna handed Finn two postcards. "Thanks, Finn - you've saved the day! These are for you, a little something to remember your visit. Why don't you head over to the giraffes next? I hear they could use a hand too."

[NOTE: Finn receives postcards showing the letters D and A]

Finn tucked the postcards safely into his satchel and consulted the map. Waving goodbye to Lorna and the penguins, he set off down the path, wondering what challenge awaited him next.

[PUZZLE 1]

Chapter 2: A Health Check for the Giraffes

Finn followed the winding path through the zoo, his map clutched in one hand. Next stop: the Giraffe House. He couldn't wait to meet the tallest animals in the zoo. The warm summer breeze carried the distant hum of chatter and the occasional call of lions and gibbons as he approached the enclosure.

Inside, a zookeeper was busy examining a clipboard. She looked up and smiled as Finn entered. "Hi, you must be Finn! I'm Penny. Thanks for helping out today. Finn adjusted his glasses and nodded. "What's the challenge?"

Penny gestured toward a group of giraffes nibbling at leafy branches. "These are Ronnie, Arrow, Gerald, Fennessy, and Gilbert. They're having their annual health check. We've measured their heights - but the numbers got all jumbled up. Think you can sort them?" She handed him the clipboard.

Finn studied the giraffes, then looked down at the list of jumbled numbers. He crouched on the ground, pencil in hand, and began matching each giraffe to its correct height, double-checking as he went.

A few moments later, Finn handed the clipboard back with a smile. "Well done!" said Penny, scanning his work. "You've saved us loads of time."

Finn glanced up at the giraffes. "I wonder how I compare?" he mused. Penny grinned. "You can find out - there's a giraffe height chart just over there!"

Finn stepped over to the colourful sign and stood beside the life-size silhouette. He laughed. "Looks like I've got some catching up to do!"

As he stepped back, Penny handed him two more postcards. "A souvenir from the tallest team at the zoo!" she grinned.

[NOTE: Finn receives postcards showing the letters I and T]

"Thanks!" Finn tucked them carefully into his satchel. The postcards were shaping up to be the perfect keepsake of his day out.

Waving goodbye to Penny and the giraffes, Finn picked up his map and headed off again with a spring in his step. Another puzzle complete - who knew what he'd find next?

[PUZZLE 2]

Chapter 3: Wild About Symmetry

Finn carefully made his way downhill from the giraffes, past the giant anteaters and the lions, until he reached the wildcat enclosure. He peered in, hoping to spot the elusive wildcats, Rusky and Rhu - but the habitat looked still and quiet. Wildcats were most active at dusk and dawn, so they were probably fast asleep.

He was about to move on when something caught his eye. The Wildcat sign was splattered with mud - most likely caused by the heavy rain the night before. Finn reached into his satchel, pulled out a handkerchief, and began wiping the mud away.

As the image underneath came into view, Finn paused. "Look at that," he murmured. "Perfect symmetry." The markings on the wildcat's face were nearly identical on both sides.

Inspired, Finn flipped open his notebook and began sketching. He carefully drew first one, then the other half of the wildcat's face, paying close attention to the mirrored patterns. "This will be perfect for my *Wild Maths* display back home," he smiled.

With his sketch safely tucked away, Finn wandered along the nearby Conservation Corridor. Colourful panels lined the path, sharing stories of the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland's work to protect endangered animals. One display made Finn stop in his tracks.

"One in three UK species have halved in number in the past fifty years," he read aloud. That was a shocking number. Curious to learn more, Finn pulled out his phone and visited the RZSS website.

Two of the conservation breeding programmes stood out to him - the Pine Hoverfly and the Dark Bordered Beauty Moth, both native species being reared at the Highland Wildlife Park.

"Both of them have beautiful bilateral symmetry too!" Finn said, jotting their names down for his next sketches. Another maths moment discovered - and another page in his notebook filled.

As he put his notebook and phone away again, something caught his eye in the bushes next to the path. "Who's been dropping litter in the zoo?" Finn said crossly, bending down to pick it up.

But it wasn't rubbish – it was another postcard. Someone must have dropped it by accident. "I'll add this to my collection," he thought, slipping it into his satchel.

[NOTE: Finn finds a postcard showing the letter W]

[PUZZLE 3]

Chapter 4: Monkey Business at Living Links

Where to next? Finn consulted his map. “Living Links sounds interesting,” he thought. He headed further downhill, passing through the kangaroo and wallaby enclosure, until he reached the Living Links Centre. A sign outside explained that this was home to both Squirrel Monkeys and Capuchin Monkeys.

Just then, a voice pulled him from his thoughts. “Can I help you? I’m Maurice, one of the Discovery Rangers here.” Finn smiled at the friendly ranger. “Hi! I was just wondering - why is it called Living Links?”

“It’s short for Living Links to Human Evolution,” Maurice explained. “We humans are primates too, so monkeys and apes are our closest animal relatives. They’re like living links to the ancestors we all share. Studying them helps us understand where we come from.”

Finn nodded in acknowledgement.

“You’ve actually come at just the right time,” Maurice added. “I could use an extra pair of eyes.” Finn was intrigued. “Sure thing,” he said. “What can I do?”

“We regularly count all the monkeys, but it’s tricky when they’re moving about. If you can help me tally up how many Squirrel Monkeys and Capuchin Monkeys we have today, that would be a big help.” Finn grinned and pulled out his notebook. “I’m on it!”

After carefully observing the lively monkeys - some swinging, some grooming, others munching on snacks - Finn handed over his notes. “It’s tricky keeping count when they won’t sit still,” he said. “But I think I got them all.”

“You did a solid job,” Maurice nodded, scanning Finn’s notes. “That kind of focus is exactly what we need around here. Looks like your maths and your monkey-watching skills are both top-notch.” Finn smiled, his eyes drifting back to the monkeys. “It’s a different kind of maths,” he said thoughtfully. “But I like it.”

Maurice reached into his pocket and pulled out two postcards.

[NOTE: Finn receives postcards showing the letters S and L]

“Here, consider these a little thank-you from the troop.” Finn laughed as he tucked them away. Slinging his satchel over his shoulder, he gave Maurice a wave. As he stepped back out into the sunlight, he checked his map again. There were still a few places left to explore, and he was ready for whatever came next.

[PUZZLE 4]

Chapter 5: Rainforest Habitats

Finn turned the corner from Living Links and, after treating himself to an ice cream, wandered over to the pygmy hippo enclosure. A crowd had gathered, cooing over baby hippo Haggis.

“Look, it’s Finn Finity!” a chorus of voices shouted. Startled, Finn nearly dropped his ice cream as a group of school children dashed over, wide-eyed and grinning. He smiled. “Hey there! What are you all up to?”

“We’re learning about the Rainforest,” one of them said, while others chimed in, “But we’re stuck! We don’t know which animals live where!” Finn looked around. The nearby enclosures all featured species from rain forest habitats around the world.

“Okay, okay - slow down!” he laughed. “Let’s see what you’ve got.” One of the children handed him their worksheet. Finn studied it.

There were four layers of the rain forest listed: Forest Floor, Understorey, Canopy Layer, and Emergent Layer. Their challenge was to figure out which animals lived in which layer of their respective forest - but to do that, they had to solve a set of clues first.

Finn’s eyes lit up. “This is right up my street,” he said, already pulling his notebook and pencil from his satchel. “I love a good logic puzzle!”

The children gathered round, and together they began working through the clues, matching animals to their rain forest homes one by one. Once they’d matched all the animals to the right layers, the group cheered. “You’re really good at this!” one of the children said. Finn chuckled. “Teamwork helps, too.”

The children thanked him and, before heading back to their teacher, handed him two postcards. “For you,” they said with a smile. Finn waved goodbye to them as they ran off.

[NOTE: Finn receives postcards showing the letters H and M]

Finn lingered for a moment, then he looked down at his notebook, filled with scribbles and sketches from his day. He thought about all he’d experienced. It had been quite the adventure.

[PUZZLE 5]

Epilogue

As Finn made his way towards the zoo exit, he passed a few final enclosures he hadn't had time to explore - there was always more to see. He paused to trace the path he'd taken through the zoo on his map: from penguins, giraffes and wildcats, to moths and monkeys, puzzles and patterns, logic and learning. Every stop had offered something unexpected. A challenge to solve. An animal to admire. A new way to see the world.

Back at home, Finn carefully pinned his notes and drawings to his bedroom wall. As he stepped back to admire the display, he remembered the postcards he'd collected at the zoo. He dug them out of his satchel and laid them out to have a closer look: nine cards, each with a different illustrated letter.

[NOTE: the letters are D, A, I, T, W, S, L, H, M]

He shuffled the cards around in his hands. Suddenly, an idea popped in to his head. "Wait a minute...I think I've got it!" he whispered to himself, rearranging the cards excitedly and pinning them above his display. "Now it's perfect!" he said with a grin.

What do you think Finn spelled out with his cards? Can you figure it out? Rearrange the letters from Finn's postcards to reveal a two-word phrase related to the story.

(If you get stuck, there is a clue in Chapter 3 where Finn mentions his display.)