

## Bonobos

Have you ever heard of bonobos? No, not bananas. Bonobos!

Bonobos are a type of great ape. They live in central Africa in a place called the Congo Basin. They are found in forests and swamps.

Bonobos are similar to chimpanzees. Like chimps, they are related to humans. They are one of our closest animal relatives.

Bonobos are not as well known as chimps. For a long time people thought they *were* chimps. In 1929 scientists decided they were another species.

Scientists saw that the chimps lived on one side of the Congo River. The bonobos lived on the other side. They could not swim across.

Because they could not swim, they were separated when the river formed. That happened over a million years ago. That is how they developed into two different species.

Bonobos are smaller than chimps. They have darker faces. They walk on two legs more often. They sound different too.

But in many ways they are the same. They both eat fruit. They both live in big groups called troops.

Some people think the name bonobo was actually a mistake. They say it came from a misspelling of the town of Bolobo. Other people say that bonobo



comes from the ancient Bantu word for ancestor. Either way, learning about bonobos is interesting. They can teach us a lot about apes, and a lot about ourselves.



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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How are bonobos different from chimps?
  - a. They eat fruit
  - b. They live in troops
  - c. They are smaller
  - d. They have lighter faces
  
2. What is the bonobos habitat?
  - a. Desert
  - b. Arctic
  - c. Mountains
  - d. Forests
  
3. Why did chimps and bonobos develop into different species?
  - a. Because they have different names
  - b. Because they couldn't swim across the river
  - c. Because they live in different countries
  - d. Because one was put in the zoo
  
4. Why might the bonobo's name mean ancestor?
  - a. Because they are related to humans
  - b. Because they are different from chimps
  - c. Because they live in Africa
  - d. Because they cannot swim

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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