ANIMAL LEARNING CENTER · NOT CURRENTLY AT THE ZOO

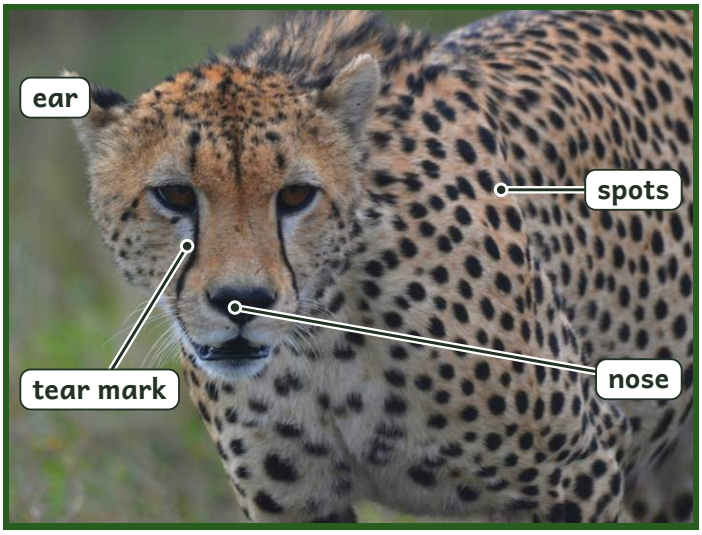
CHEETAH

Acinonyx jubatus

GRADES K–2

Teacher & Student Fact Sheet · © 2026 Plumpton Park Zoological Gardens Inc.
Teachers may copy and share this sheet freely as long as they credit Plumpton Park Zoo.

Teachers: read this page aloud, one part at a time (about 5 minutes). Children follow along and say the bold words.



A cheetah in Tanzania, in Africa.

Its body

A cheetah is a slim cat.
It has black spots.
It has a long tail.
The tail helps it steer.

Its home (habitat)

Cheetahs live in Africa.
A few live in Iran.
They live in open land.



■ Lives in parts of this area ★ Plumpton Park Zoo, Rising Sun, MD

Its food

K-LS1-1

It hunts mostly by day.
It eats gazelles and impala.

Its babies (life cycle)

1-LS1-2 1-LS3-1

A baby cheetah is a **cub**.
A mother often has 3 or 4 cubs.
Cubs have long gray fur.
Their mother raises them.

Fun facts

It runs up to 70 miles an hour!
Brothers may live together.

Words to know

cub: a baby cheetah
hunt: to catch animals for food
steer: to turn while moving

Talk about it

1-LS3-1

1. How does a tail help a cheetah?
2. How fast can a cheetah run?
3. What do young cubs look like?

Learn more: plumptonparkzoo.org/mammals/cheetah/ · **Sources:** IUCN Red List; Mammalian Species 771; Durant et al. (2017); Wilson et al. (2013); Marker (2002); Cheetah Conservation Fund; Animal Diversity Web.
Standards, MD and DE (NGSS) and PA (STEELS): K-LS1-1 (3.1.K.A) › Its food · **1-LS1-2** (3.1.1.B) › Its babies · **1-LS3-1** (3.1.1.C) › Its babies · Talk 3
Plumpton Park Zoo · 1416 Telegraph Rd, Rising Sun, MD 21911 · (410) 658-6850 · plumptonparkzoo.org · a 501(c)(3) nonprofit zoo · Photo: ian hoff on Unsplash

CHEETAH

Before and after you read

 © 2026 Plumpton Park Zoological Gardens Inc.
Teachers may copy and share this sheet freely as long as they credit Plumpton Park Zoo.

PLUMPTON PARK ZOO

GRADES K–2

Name _____ **Date** _____

Before you read · 5 minutes

K-LS1-1

What do you think? Circle **YES** or **NO**.

1. A cheetah is a slow runner. **YES** **NO**
2. A cheetah has spots. **YES** **NO**
3. A cheetah eats only plants. **YES** **NO**
4. A baby cheetah is a cub. **YES** **NO**

Look closely · with a partner

Look at the photo on page 1. Check each one you see.

- ☐ spots
- ☐ tear marks
- ☐ whiskers
- ☐ nose
- ☐ ears
- ☐ eyes

Where does it live? Find the dark part of the map, then circle.

Africa · Asia · Europe · Australia

After you read · 10 minutes

Draw a cheetah running fast. Show its spots and long tail.

Draw here

A cheetah can _____

I learned that _____

ADJUST IT Kindergarten: read everything aloud; children talk and draw, and an adult writes their words. **Grade 2:** children read page 1 on their own. **Grades 3–5:** use the regular cheetah sheet on Teacher Resources. **Second source:** read about this animal in your class database or a library book too, then ask what both said and what was new. **Answers:** 1 no, 2 yes, 3 no, 4 yes. Map answer: Africa (a few live in Asia, in Iran).

Learn more: plumptonparkzoo.org/mammals/cheetah/ · Page 1 of this sheet has the words and picture this page refers to.
Science standards (NGSS · PA STEELS): K-LS1-1 (3.1.K.A) › Before 3 · **1-LS1-2** (3.1.1.B) › page 1 · **1-LS3-1** (3.1.1.C) › page 1
Reading and writing, grade 1: Maryland and Delaware: RI.1.1 · RI.1.7 · RI.1.9 · W.1.8 · Pennsylvania: CC.1.2.1.B · CC.1.2.1.G · CC.1.2.1.I · CC.1.4.1.W
Reading, grade 2: Maryland and Delaware: RI.2.1 · Pennsylvania: CC.1.2.2.B