



## LESSON 1 • EVERYTHING COUNTS ACTIVITY

How important is it to save endangered species? What is the impact of losing a species on the eco-system?

Read the following paragraphs and then follow the directions below.

The mountain lion had left her two kittens hidden in a cave high in the canyon wall. As she hunted for food, she suddenly caught the scent of people and dogs. Before the hunters saw her, the big cat swiftly climbed the rocks of the canyon, moving silently and keeping out of sight of her enemies. When the mountain lion was certain that she had not been followed, she returned to her kittens and curled her warm body around them. Tomorrow, she would take them far away with her and go deeper into the wilderness, far away from the humans who hunted with dogs and guns.

Once the mountain lion's range covered most of North, Central, and South America. This big cat is known by many names, including cougar, panther, and puma. Some Indians worshiped the cat. "Puma" comes from the language of the Inca Indians of Peru. It meant courage and power.

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- With a marker, cross out all the "t"s in the two paragraphs. Can you still determine the meaning without the "t"s?
  - Cross out all the "e"s in the article. Can you still make sense of the article? What is the impact of eliminating two of the letters from the text?
  - Cross out all the "r"s in the article. Can you still make sense of the article?
  - How many letters can you eliminate before the text is incomprehensible? Equate the elimination of letters with the elimination of species in our eco-system. Write a one page summary of this activity and your belief of how this compares to the elimination of a species.

Summary: