

**BECAUSE  
OF THEM  
WE CAN**

**BOX**

**JUST FOR KIDS**

# BECAUSE OF MARY J WILSON

AGES 5-8



# MARY HAD MANY ANIMALS INSTEAD OF A LITTLE LAMB

*Instructions: Answer the questions, using quotes from the text to explain your answer.*



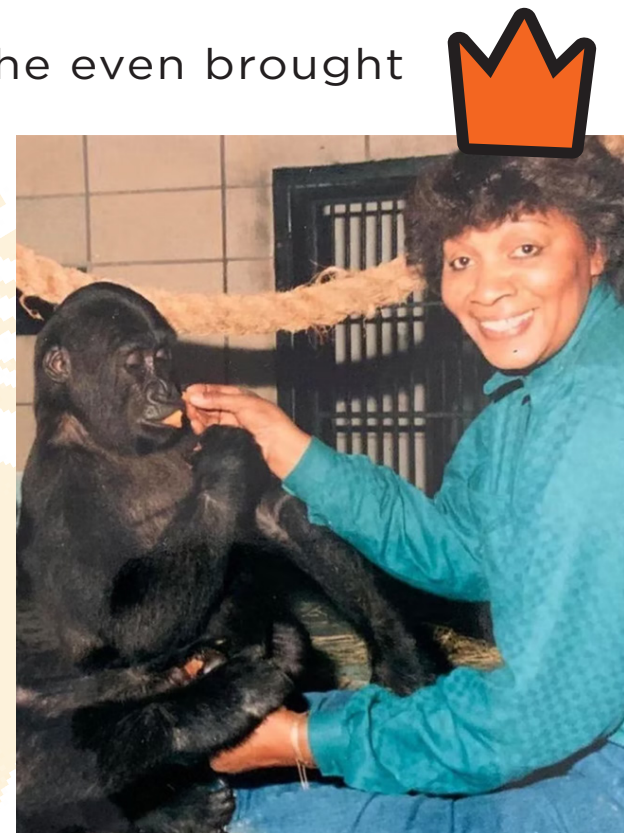
Mary J Wilson was born in Baltimore, Maryland on January 2nd. She graduated with a **high school diploma** and realized she had a huge love of animals. She started out working at the Maryland Zoo in 1961. Wilson was the first Black senior **zookeeper** in Baltimore.

Most women who were working at the zoo at that time either worked with birds or baby animals, but Wilson worked with **mammals** like gorillas and elephants.

One of the people she worked with said that elephants were her favorite. described her as **fearless**.

She loved her work so much that sometimes she even brought work home with her. She would care for the baby animals at her home - like monkeys, gorillas, and snakes. There are many stories about her getting animals back in their cages, even really **dangerous** animals like leopards. Her daughter heard a story about

a time where she was able to get a bear back into the right place. The door was left open and the bear walked through. Mary J Wilson stood there with apples calling his name, Junior, until he walked back into his habitat. She did not show fear but instead stood there with just apples.



She worked at the zoo for 38 years and retired in 1999.

Years later, her daughter was the first Black zookeeper at Omaha city zoo. Mary J Wilson died of Coronavirus in 2020 but the memories, her passion, and the impact of her work live on.





# READ & RESPOND

1. What was Mary like? How do you know?

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2. Why did Mary take animals to her house?

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3. When did Mary realize that she had an extreme love for animals? Use the text to support this statement.

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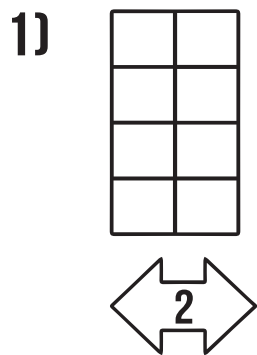
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# HABITATS

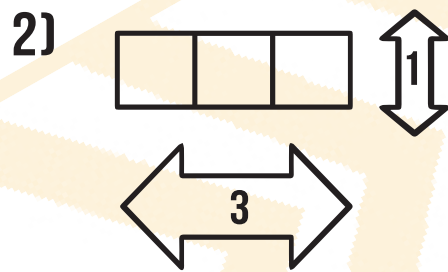


There are many different animals at the zoo and they are kept in separate areas. Animals in a zoo need space to move around. Bigger animals need more space. To make sure this happens you are going to think like a zoo director. Find the area of each of the animal habitats! Count the squares



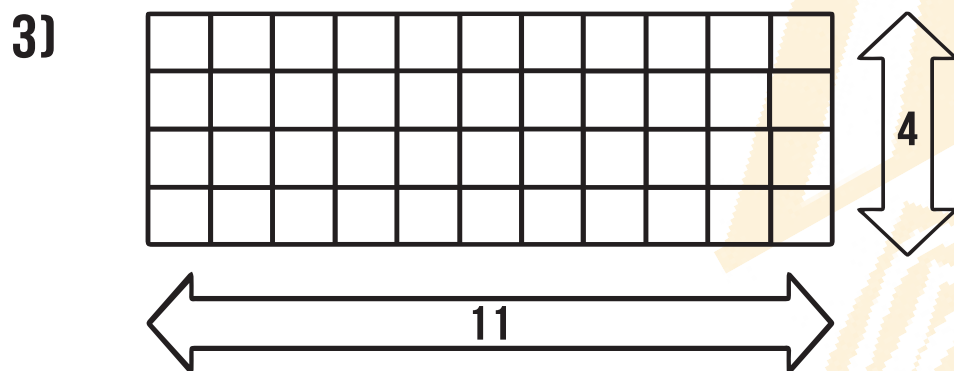
What is the area?

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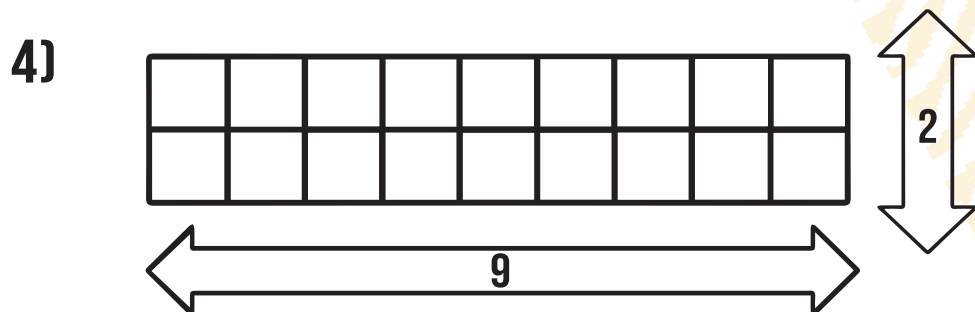
What is the area?

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What is the area?

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What is the area?

\_\_\_\_\_



MATH ANSWER KEY:  
(1) 8 (2) 3 (3) 44 (4) 18

HIDDEN ANIMAL ANSWER KEY:

"IT'S LIKE BABY-SITTING, ONLY MORE SO,  
AND YOU CAN GET JUST AS  
ATTACHED TO YOUR WORK..."

- MARY J. WILSON



# MARY & WILSON

*There are two River Otters at the Maryland Zoo named after Mary J. Wilson - Mary and Wilson! Color the otters in, and add what other kinds of life you can think of that would live in the river with otters, such as fish, bugs, plants...whatever you can imagine!*



## GLOSSARY

**High school diploma** - document which shows that a person has finished a course of study or has graduated from a high school

**Zookeeper** - a person who takes care of the animals in a zoo

**Mammals** - a type of animal that feeds milk to its young and that usually has hair or fur covering most of its skin

**Fearless** - not afraid : very brave

**Dangerous** - able or likely to cause injury, pain, harm, etc.

**Covid 19**- an illness caused by the coronavirus, is like the flu and can cause a person's body to feel sick

# HIDDEN ANIMALS

Instructions: Find all of the hidden objects. The images of the animals you need to find are on the left.



## TAKE THE PLEDGE

**I WILL HONOR**  
THE SACRIFICES OF  
MY ANCESTORS.

**I WILL BELIEVE**  
IN ME.

**I WILL PURSUE**  
MY DREAMS.

**I WILL HELP**  
OTHERS ALONG  
THE WAY.