



By Rudyard Kipling  
Adapted for the stage by Lynne Alvarez  
Directed by Andrea Urice

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By Rudyard Kipling  
 Adapted for the stage by Lynne Alvarez  
 Directed by Andrea Urice  
 Music & Lyrics by Joe Dryer

**Scenic & Costume Design**  
 Lou Byrd

**Stage Manager**  
 Daryl Vaughan

**Director of Education**  
 Marsha Coplon

**Associate Director of Education**  
 Kim Allen Bozark

**Artistic Supervisor**  
 Jeffery Matthews

The Company  
 (in order of appearance)

Rikki-Tikki-Tavi / **Nick Choksi**  
 Darzee, Chuchundra / **Gwendolyn Wotawa**  
 Nag, Father's voice / **Alan Knoll**  
 Nagaina, Mother's voice / **Sharon Hunter**  
 A special thanks to Hal Matthews as Teddy's voice and  
 musicians Saurabh Gayen and Shauvik Gayen

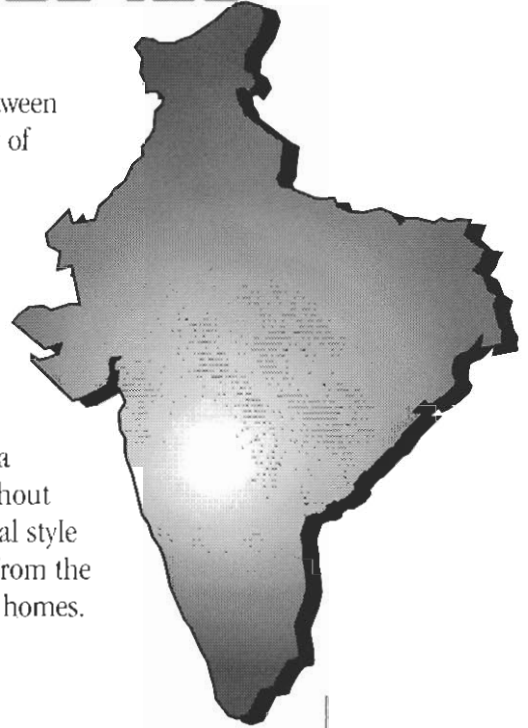
Financial assistance for this theatre has been provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency; the Missouri Arts Council, a stage agency; the Arts and Education Council of Greater St. Louis; and the St. Louis Regional Arts Commission.



## SETTING the SCENE

Rikki-Tikki-Tavi takes place in India, a country that alternates between intense heat and monsoonal rains. As a result, it holds a great diversity of animal life including the Indian cobra, Indian elephant, Indian mongoose, and Bengal tiger. It is the seventh largest country in the world and considered a subcontinent of Asia. It has a rich cultural history and many of the things we enjoy today are Indian in origin, such as the game Parcheesi and the pepper with which we spice our food. Even sugar may have first been discovered in India.

Rudyard Kipling published *The Jungle Book*, which includes the story of *Rikki-Tikki-Tavi*, in 1894. During this period India was under British rule, and many British lived in palatial villas throughout the country. These large homes, however, followed a British architectural style rather than that of the native Indians, whose homes were often raised from the ground. As a result, the native animals were often a problem in British homes. Rikki's adoptive family was representative of these colonists.



## WHO'S WHO

### **RIKKI-TIKKI-TAVI**

is an Indian mongoose blown into a family's garden by a storm.

### **Darzee**

is a tailor bird fond of singing, flying and sewing together intricate nests of leaves.

### **Kurait**

is a very small snake, but he possesses deadly poison.

### **CHUCHUNDRA**

is an easily startled muskrat. He is terrified of Nag and Nagaina.

### **CHOU**

the rat is Chuchunda's cousin.

### **Nag**

is a large, male king cobra.

### **Naina**

is also a king cobra. She is Nag's wife.

### **Teddy**

is a young boy who finds Rikki-Tikki-Tavi in the garden.

### **Teddy's Mother and Father**

adopt Rikki into their home to protect Teddy.



स्व				
अ	आ	इ	ई	
उ	ऊ	ए	ऐ	
ओ	औ	ऌ	ॡ	ऋ
व्यंजन				
क	ख	ग	घ	ङ
च	छ	ज	झ	ञ
ट	ठ	ड	ढ	ण
त	थ	द	ध	न
प	फ	ब	भ	म
य	र	ल	व	
श	ष	स	ह	
क्ष	त्	ज्ञ	ऊँ	

Many people in India speak English, but there are at least 16 different languages spoken throughout the country. The most popular one, Hindi, has very intricate letters.

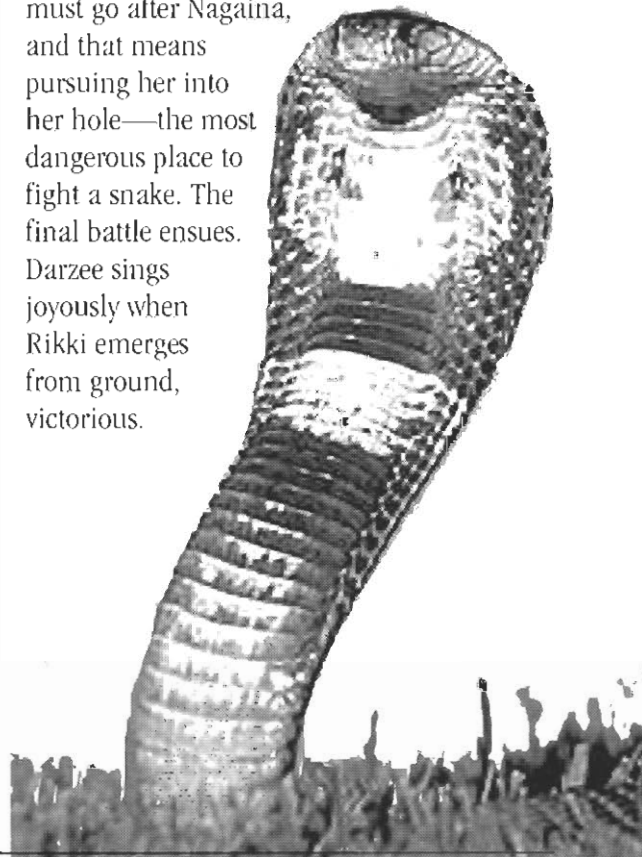
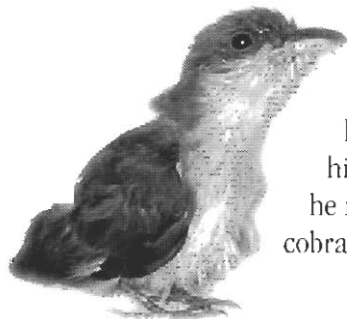
# What's the story?

A violent Indian monsoon deposits Rikki-Tiki-Tavi, a young mongoose, in the garden of a British family living in India. Teddy and his parents find little Rikki nearly drowned, and they decide to adopt him because mongooses are very good at killing snakes. Rikki soon meets Darzee, a tailor bird that lives in the garden and loves to sing, fly and sew nests of leaves. Darzee is a very nice bird, but not overly intelligent. He is beginning to tell Rikki about his fledgelings and how they were destroyed by two large king cobras, Nag and Nagaina, but the snakes strike before Darzee can warn him. Rikki narrowly escapes. Shortly thereafter, Rikki rescues Teddy from Kurait, a tiny snake but with deadly poison, and Teddy's parents decide Rikki should sleep in Teddy's bedroom as his protector.

That night Rikki meets Chuchundra, a very paranoid muskrat who is terrified of the cobras. While they are talking, Rikki discovers that Nag and Nagaina can get into the house through the drains. He then overhears the snakes discussing their plans to kill Rikki's new family and claim the garden for their own. He also learns Nagaina has a nest of eggs that will ensure the garden is soon overrun by cobras. Rikki catches Nag asleep in the bathroom, resting before his attack on the family. Although Rikki is afraid of Nag's size, he carefully weighs his options and decides attacking immediately is his best chance to save his new family. A tremendous fight ensues. The father arrives in the middle of the battle and shoots Nag. He declares Rikki a hero for saving the entire family from a huge king cobra. Rikki is quite proud of himself, but he does not rest: he knows he must find Nagaina and her nest of cobra eggs or the family will never be safe.

Darzee and Chuchundra agree to help Rikki with his plan to make the garden safe, although they are very afraid. Darzee does not want to reveal the location of the cobra nest, however, because he does not like the idea of destroying defenseless eggs. Rikki carefully explains that not all eggs become birds: Nagaina's eggs will turn into little cobras. Darzee finally understands and pretends to be lame in order to distract Nagaina while Rikki goes after her nest. The plan nearly backfires when she gets Darzee to look into her hypnotic eyes, but Chuchundra is able to shout a warning and Darzee escapes. While Rikki is destroying Nagaina's eggs, Darzee flies back to tell him that Nagaina has trapped Teddy and his parents on the porch. Rikki grabs the last egg and runs to rescue them. He uses Nagaina's last egg to lure her away from the family, but she recaptures it and escapes.

Rikki soon realizes he must go after Nagaina, and that means pursuing her into her hole—the most dangerous place to fight a snake. The final battle ensues. Darzee sings joyously when Rikki emerges from ground, victorious.



## Words to the Wise

**A mongoose** is a small meat-eating mammal with an elongated body, pointed muzzle, short legs and furry tail. Due to its quickness and thick skin, a mongoose can seize and kill venomous snakes. They are also able to ingest snake venom and suffer no harm. An Indian mongoose, like Rikki, is gray to brown in color, with gold flecks, and often has a bushy tail as long as its body. They are often kept as pets because they adapt well to humans and are quite effective in eliminating vermin from a household. However, many species are illegal to own in the United States.

**Tailor bird** is the name for a variety of colorful, singing birds that live in East India and Asia. They skillfully sew leaves together to build nests.

**A lilt** is a cheerful manner of speaking, often to a happy tune. When Darzee says he is proud of his "lilt", he is referring to both his singing and the lighthearted way he flies through the sky.

**A cobra** is a very dangerous, venomous snake native to Asia and Africa that can expand the skin of its neck to form a flattened hood. Nag and Nagaina are king cobras—the most dangerous type of cobra and capable of growing to eighteen feet in length.

**A weasel** is a small mammal that looks much like a mongoose, but they tend to be cunning and secretive rather than good fighters. When Nag refers to Rikki as a weasel he is insulting him.

**A fledgling** is a very young bird that has recently acquired its flying feathers.

**"Hooded Death"** is another name for the king cobra because of its deadly venom.

Darzee calls Rikki **red-eye** because his eyes flash red when he fights. He refers to Nag as **"wrinkly skin"** because of his flared hood, which does not scare Rikki.

**Featherbrained** is a description for someone that is not very smart. Rikki calls Darzee featherbrained because he does not realize that snake eggs eventually become little snakes.

Rikki calls Nagaina a **widow** to remind her that he killed Nag and to infuriate her into a fight.

**A muskrat** is a portly rodent about the size of a beaver, but it is actually more closely related to a field mouse. They love the water, being able to remain submerged for fifteen minutes and having teeth perfectly designed for underwater chewing. They usually build their homes with an underwater entrance. Chuchundra is a muskrat.



Try pronouncing these common words in Hindi

Hello  
nuh-muhs-tay

Yes  
jee-hah

No  
jee-nuh-hee

Please  
krih-pah  
hoh-gee

Thank you  
duhn-yuh-vahd

Chess  
shuht-ruhjn

Pepper  
mirch

Sugar  
chee-nee

## Read more about it

*Look What Came From India* by Miles Harvey. Franklin Watts, 1999. This book shows many things that are part of our lives here in the United States that initially came from India.

*India—A True Book* by Elaine London. Children's Press, 1999. This is a children's book with excellent pictures that explores all the different aspects of Indian culture.

*A Ticket to India* by Tom Streissguth. Carolrhoda Books, Inc., 1999. This book is another wonderful source of information on India written for children.

There is an activity on the conflict and rising action of Rikki-Tikki-Tavi on the website for Quia, a company that specializes in interactive web-based education.  
<http://www.quia.com/rd/4540.html>

Kamat's Patpourri (<http://www.kamat.com>) is a great site to learn about Indian history, art and culture.

<http://www.kipling.org.uk/> is the homepage for The Kipling Society, and their website contains a great deal of information about Rudyard Kipling.

The website "The Poetry Lover's Page" [http://www.poetryloverspage.com/poets/kipling/kipling\\_ind.html](http://www.poetryloverspage.com/poets/kipling/kipling_ind.html) has all of Kipling's poetry.

We encourage you to examine these topics in-depth by exploring the following books and Web sites.

"I Love India" (<http://www.iloveindia.com>) has a virtual jukebox of Indian songs you can listen too while viewing pictures of modern India.

<http://home.freeuk.net/elloughton13/india.htm> is an interactive website about India. It is designed for children age 7-9. It is maintained by the Snaith Primary School and has an interactive slideshow as well as stories for children.

# From the Director's Chair



This is how you pronounce the names of family in Hindi

Grandfather  
*dah-dah*

Grandmother  
*dah-deeh*

Father  
*pi-taah*

Mother  
*mah-taah*

Uncle  
*chah-chah*

Aunt  
*chah-cheeh*

Son  
*bae-tah*

Daughter  
*bae-teeh*

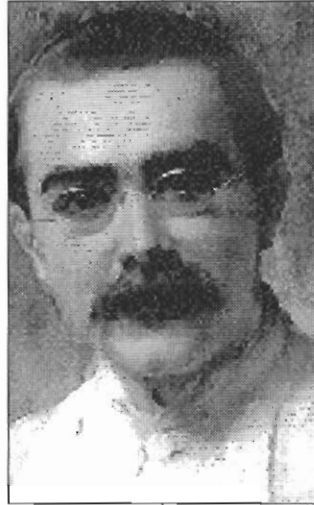
Brother  
*bhaa-ee*

Sister  
*be-ha-nh*

Rudyard Kipling's famed collection of animal fables, *The Jungle Book* and its companion, *The Second Jungle Book*, is best known for the "Mowgli" series: the story of a baby boy abandoned at birth, raised by wolves and educated by a panther, a bear and a python. But both *Jungle Books* contain other stories as well, the most beloved being *Rikki-Tikki-Tavi*. In this delightful tale, Kipling explores again a favorite theme of self-discovery as Rikki, the young and curious mongoose, takes on the frightening cobras and, with the help of a bird and a muskrat, restores peace to the garden of his human caretakers.

Much like *Alice in Wonderland* (1865) and *The Wind in the Willows* (1908), Kipling's animal fables, written around 1894, work well as stories told by adults to children. Like Rikki, the characters in these stories eagerly explore their worlds. Along the way they learn valuable lessons as they have fun, make friends and face menacing adversaries. As Rikki explores his new world in the garden and house of the humans, he encounters friend and foe. By being brave and loyal through several difficult tests, Rikki learns more about himself and, with his task accomplished, begins his new, grown-up life.

Playwright Lynne Alvarez has written a delightful adaptation of *Rikki-Tikki-Tavi* for the stage. The play contains abundant energy as the enchanting animal characters leap and scuttle and fly and slither their way across the stage. From the moment the storm blows Rikki into the garden we enjoy his swaggering charm. He meets Darzee, an endearingly dim-witted but well-meaning bird who becomes



Rikki's closest friend and ally. Next we encounter the intimidating cobra couple, Nag and Nagaina, who threaten peace in the garden and the house. Chuchundra, the quivering, timid muskrat, helps Rikki plot his strategy to rid the household of the cobras. While the humans are literally present in the short story, in the stage version they take the form of voiceovers, ceding all visual imagery to the wonderful animal characters and their point of view.

Kipling was born to English parents in India. He was educated in England but returned to India at the beginning of his

career as a journalist. It is interesting to note that Kipling wrote *The Jungle Books* while he was living in the United States. While these animal fables were created on American soil by an Englishman, it is India that permeates much of their environment, tone and characters. Since *Rikki-Tikki-Tavi* is set in an Indian garden and house, we chose to embrace that country's rich imagery for our production. The vibrant colors, fabric, clothing and sounds of India inspired us as we created the set, costumes and original music for the production.

Drawing upon another type of inspiration, the ingenious animal-costumes depicted onstage in *The Lion King* served as an imaginative source for us as we designed the headpieces and bodies of Rikki, Darzee, Nag, Nagaina and Chuchundra.

We welcome you and your students to Rikki's marvelous world!

**Andrea Urice**  
Director

# WRITING FOR PLAY

The story of any well-made play centers on dramatic conflict. Each character wants something specific and at least one obstacle is interfering with satisfying that desire. The character must find a solution by the end of the story even though the solutions do not always work. In *Rikki-Tikki-Tavi* each resident of the garden has a dramatic conflict and solution. Use the following unit to help students create their own stories with dramatic conflict.

1. Prime students by having them complete the following chart based on the play.

Character	wanted...	but...	so...
Rikki-Tiki-Tavi (the mongoose)			
Darzee (the tailorbird)			
Chuchundra (the muskrat)			
Nag (the male king cobra)			
Nagaina (the female king cobra)			
Teddy (the young boy)			
Teddy's parents			

2. Use a basic six-square idea box to brainstorm ideas with the class.

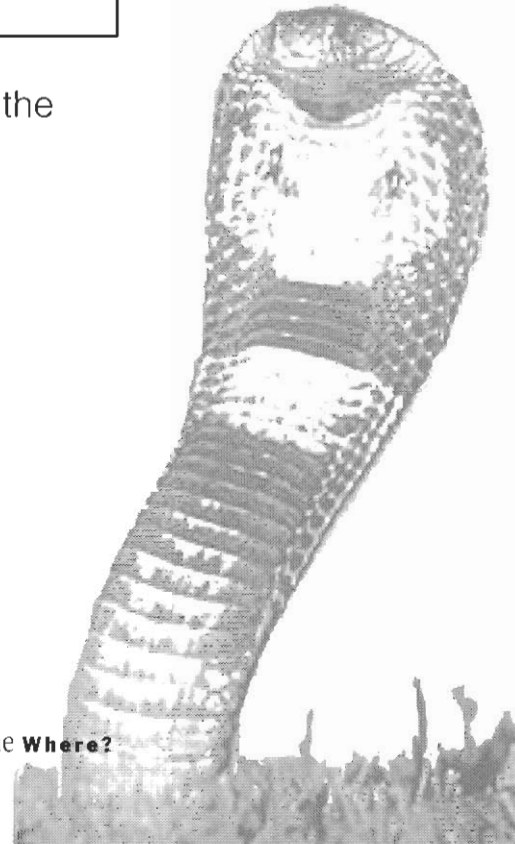
- ✓ Draw six large squares on the board. Label the boxes:  
Where? • Who? • Description words • Want • But • So

<b>Where?</b>	<b>Who?</b>	<b>Description Words</b>
<b>Want</b>	<b>But</b>	<b>So</b>

- ✓ Have the class brainstorm places in which a story may take place and list them in the **Where?** box. (example: castle, zoo, library)

Please feel free to adapt these materials to suit your classroom needs and save them for future use. The activities in these units address the following Missouri Knowledge Standards and Illinois Learning Standards.

MO: CA1, CA2, CA4, CA5, CA6, CA7, FA1, FA2, FA4, SC3, SC4  
IL: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 12, 26



- ✓ Have the class brainstorm characters that might be in any of the places listed in the **Where?** box. List these characters in the **Who?** box. (example: princess, dragon, tiger, mongoose, teacher, librarian, reader)
- ✓ Have the class create a list of descriptive words for places and characters listed in the first two boxes. Write these in the box for **Description Words**. (examples: dark, cold, sad, tiny, scary, brave, strict)

3. Use ideas from the first three boxes to create a beginning story idea.

- ✓ Have each student choose one place from the **Where?** box, at least two characters from the **Who?** box and as many **Description Words** as they want to use.
- ✓ Have students write a two-minute story based on their selections.
- ✓ Read the stories out loud.

4. Continue using the six-square box to establish elements of dramatic conflict.

- ✓ As a class, randomly choose a place and three characters from the first two boxes. Circle your choices. (example: the castle, a sad princess, a scary tiger and a tiny librarian)
- ✓ Have the class brainstorm what each of the chosen characters wants. List the ideas in the **Want** box. (example: the princess wants to move out of the cold castle, the tiger wants a playmate, the librarian wants to be bigger)
  - ✓ Choose one **Want** from one character and circle it. (example: the sad princess wants to move out of the castle)
  - ✓ Brainstorm what would keep the character from getting the want. One or both of the other chosen characters might be part of the problem. List the problems in the **But** box. (example: she is afraid of the tiger, she can't find a key to the doors, she doesn't want to leave her library books behind)
- ✓ Choose one **But** and circle it. (example: she is afraid of the tiger)
- ✓ Brainstorm some solutions to solve the **But** and list them in the **So** box. (example: the tiny librarian climbs in the tiger's ear and distracts it so the princess can get by him, she finds a recipe for tiger cookies in one of her books and uses the cookies to make friends with the tiger)
- ✓ Choose one **So**.

5. Class writes a thumbnail story based on the choices.

Extension:

- ✓ Students can write their own stories using other ideas from the boxes.
- ✓ Students can use the idea boxes to analyze stories from books.



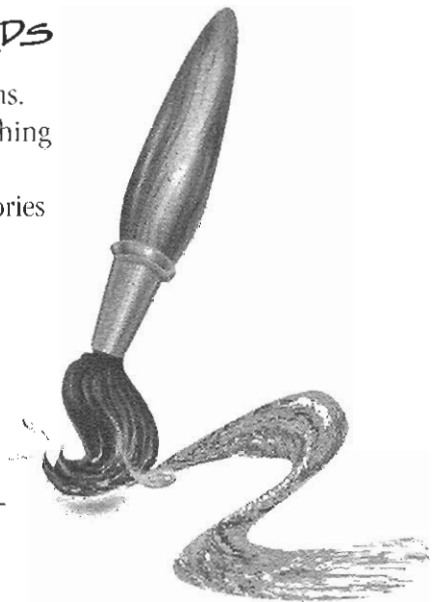
# PLAYING WITH WORDS

How many words can you make using only the letters in each of the following play-related words? Score one point for each 2 or 3 letter word, two points for each 4 or 5 letter word, and three points for each word of 6 or more letters. Making a word plural or adding a suffix counts as a new word. If you play with a friend, cross out all words that are on both lists before you score.

- BATHTUB
- GARDEN VERANDA
- SLITHERING
- SNAKELING
- HONORABLE
- POISONOUS
- BANG STICK
- GARBAGE DUMP
- FEATHERBRAINED

# PAINTING WITH WORDS

Adjectives are words that describe nouns. They may tell how a person, place or thing looks, feels, tastes or sounds. Rudyard Kipling used many adjectives in his stories to paint a picture for his readers. For each of the characters or places listed below, write at least five adjectives.



Rikki-Tikki-Tavi

---

---

Darzee

---

---

Nagaina

---

---

Chuchundra

---

---

The garden

---

---

The cobra's lair

---

---

# GETTING IT RIGHT

Find the 10 deliberate mistakes in the following passage. Some are misspellings or mistakes in grammar while others are factual errors.

"The boy is safe and it was I who catched Kurait by the hood last night in the kitchen. He fhrew me back and fourth and to and fro. But he could not shake me lose. It was I who killed him. He was dead befor the big man stepped on him. I did it? Come on Nagaina. Come and play with me. You won't bee a widow for long."

# HOW IS YOUR ANIMAL KNOWLEDGE?

Rikki-Tikki-Tavi, Darzee and Nag belong to different animal groups. Correctly label the pictures below using the words **bird**, **mammal** and **reptile**.

The facts below are true for one or more of these three animal groups. Fill in the circle below the picture belonging to the groups for which the statement is true. After you have finished, check your answers in a reference book to see how well you did.

	MAMMAL	REPTILE	BIRD
1. is warm-blooded	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. may have legs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. lays eggs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. may be a carnivore	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. is a vertebrate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. migrates	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. molts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. has ears	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. has nostrils	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. breathes air	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



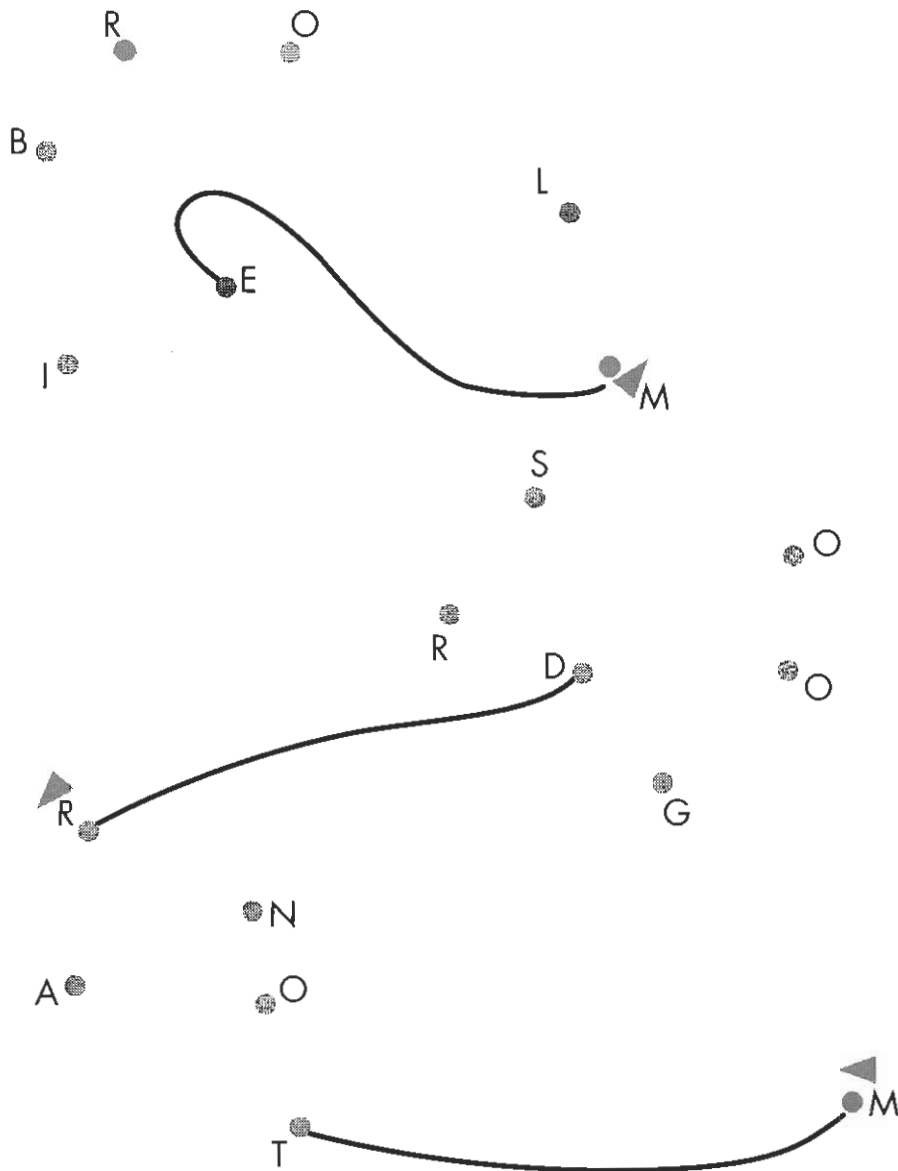
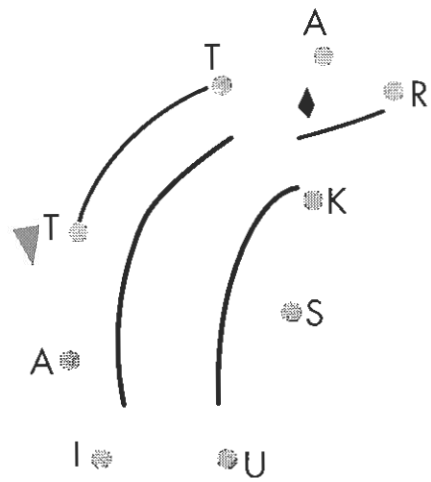
## BONUS QUESTIONS:

1. Can you name a mammal that lays eggs?

2. Can you name four birds that can not fly?

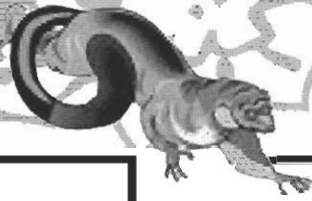
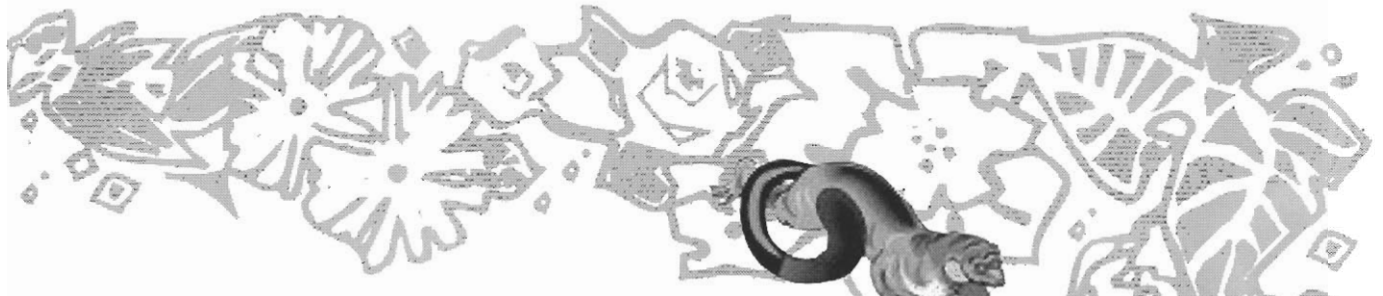
3. How does the shape of a snake's pupil indicate the probable period of its hunting activity?

# WHO'S IN THE GARDEN?



There are many animals mentioned in *Rikki-Tikki-Tavi*. Starting at each triangle, connect the dots in order to correctly spell one of the four animals listed. When the dots are connected you will see another garden resident. Who is it?

- MONGOOSE
- MUSKRAT
- TAILORBIRD
- RAT



Rikki is ready to go home and see Teddy, but he's lost! Can you help Rikki find the way back home?

