

# What is a Gorilla?

Difference between monkeys and apes

Monkeys and gorillas are primates. They look similar as they...

- have large brains, compared to their body size
- have binocular and color vision
- have opposable thumbs
- usually live in forests
- both eat fruits, leaves, and even sometimes insects and meat

Gorillas differ from monkeys as they...

- are larger and heavier
- do not have tails
- have more developed brains
- have a longer life span
- breed more slowly, not reaching adulthood before 10 years old for females and 15 years old for males, and having longer birth intervals (infants highly depend on their mother for several years)

Gorillas belong to the ape family. Apes are divided into...

- **lesser apes** (gibbons and siamangs in Asia)
- **great apes** (gorillas, chimpanzees, bonobos in Africa and orangutans in Borneo and Sumatra)
- **humans** (all over the world!)

Great apes are known for their outstanding intelligence, which allows them to...

- use tools (extract termites from mounds with blades of grass or sticks, open nuts with stone. "hammers")
- solve problems
- recognize themselves in a mirror
- express a full range of emotions (fear, joy, love, jealousy, shame...)
- form alliances to strengthen their positions or move higher up in the hierarchy

Read the texts below and try to connect them to the right species.

## ACTIVITY!

chimpanzee



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**1) Who am I?** With 200 kilograms (441 lb) for 1,70 m (5.6 ft) height, I am the largest of all primates. Most of my diet is composed of leaves, roots, and fruits. Every evening, I build a nest on the ground for sleeping. I defend my family from any threat by chestbeating, roaring, and sometimes by charging.

gorilla



**2) Who am I?** I am one of the smallest primates on Earth. I don't weigh more than 600 g (1.3 lb). My tail is very long and I have strong claws. I eat fruits, leaves, and insects. I usually give birth to twins. I keep jumping from one branch to another, foraging for food and exploring my territory.

golden lion tamarin



**3) Who am I?** I belong to the ape family. I live in large groups. I eat fruits and leaves but meat as well. During the night, I sleep in a nest built in trees and made of branches and leaves. I can be very noisy and sometimes aggressive: fights and displays are common between group members.

Resolution: 1) gorilla, 2) tamarin, 3) chimpanzee.