

## Meerkats

Meerkats are small omnivorous mammals and they are from the mongoose family. They live in underground cities in Botswana and South Africa. They live in groups of between twenty and fifty individuals. Each group has a king and a queen. An adult meerkat weighs about three quarters of a kilo and is about 30 cm long with a long tail. They have brown noses and small ears which close when they dig tunnels. Their normal expression is friendly and thoughtful at the same time.

Meerkats mostly eat insects such as centipedes but also eat plants, eggs and snakes. Meerkats are friendly and very clever. When the group hunts or plays, two meerkats watch for danger. They start barking when they see danger and all the meerkats run into the tunnels. They have special cries which mean 'eagle' and 'snake'.

Meerkat parents teach their children how to eat scorpions and they sometimes have babysitters so they can go out. When the young leave the tunnels for the first time, the whole group comes to celebrate the occasion.

There is now a famous TV series called *Meerkat Manison*. It is about the adventures of a real meerkat group in the Kalahari Desert in Botswana. The show is very popular in Australia, the US and Britain and there are now three series to watch.

221words

Grammar: the present simple tense

### Some Questions

1 Where do meerkats live?

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2 What do meerkats eat?

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3 When do meerkats have a celebration?

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4 What is the name of the famous TV show about meerkats?

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