

Oral Reading Test

- She was born in 1934, in London, England, but Jane Goodall found her life's purpose in the steamy, sub-Saharan African jungles of Tanzania. "I have been interested in animals since before I can remember," she once said. When she was a toddler, her father gave her a chimpanzee toy, which she has kept her whole life.

At the age of 23, Goodall made her first trip to Africa. She met groundbreaking paleontologist and anthropologist Dr. Louis Leakey, who became her mentor. Leakey recognized that her patience, determination, and lack of formal training would be an advantage as she made her observations.

She was hired as his assistant and invited on a fossil-hunting expedition. Digging up fossils helped Goodall realize that her true calling was to "find a way to watch free, wild animals living their own, undisturbed lives ... to learn things that no one else knew."

In 1960, Goodall arrived at Gombe National Park, Tanzania to study wild chimpanzees. Through quiet observation, Goodall learned more about how chimpanzees hunt, socialize, and communicate than anyone before her. Her studies gave us new insights into their world. The studies forced scientists to accept that chimpanzees and humans were more alike than previously believed. That research continues to this day. It is one of the longest ongoing studies of animals in their natural surroundings.

In 1977, Goodall founded the Jane Goodall Institute for Wildlife Research, Education and Conservation. The institute is committed to protecting chimpanzees and their habitats and promoting research. She also advocates for chimpanzees in captivity, for example, in zoos and rescue sanctuaries. Among her many honors, Goodall was named a United Nations Messenger of Peace in 2002. In 2003, she was made a Dame Commander of the British Empire. These days, Goodall spends most of her time traveling, giving speeches, and raising awareness to help others, the chimpanzees, and the environment.