



THIS IS NATHAN



THIS IS DANTE



THIS IS GUMU

LOOK CLOSELY . . .

at the pictures above and below to identify Nathan, Dante, and Gumu, three zebras at the Smithsonian's National Zoo in Washington, D.C. The answers are hidden somewhere on this page.

HARD TO TELL THEM APART?

There's a reason for that. A zebra's stripes are confusing to lions and other predators. A lion moving toward a herd of zebras sees a big mass of stripes, like a huddle of referees on a football field. The lion has a hard time deciding which set of stripes—which uniform—to focus on.

Smithsonian Institution
WHO'S WHO
at the national ZOO
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UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS

Stripes give zebras a uniform appearance, but also mark them as individuals. Just as each of us has a unique pattern of fingerprints, each zebra has a unique pattern of stripes. This helps family members, and members of a herd, identify each other. As with fingerprints, it takes a close look to find the pattern.

ZEBRA SPECIES

There are three species of zebras. Gumu, Nathan, and Dante are all Grevy's zebras, named for a French president, Jules Grevy, who received a gift of one of them from the emperor of Abyssinia (now Ethiopia) in 1882.

The other two species are mountain zebras and plains zebras. Grevy's zebras are the most donkey-like of the three. The other species look more like horses.



HERE'S GUMU AGAIN.

Try to reproduce his unique stripes as you draw him.

WHO IS THIS? _____



WHO IS THIS? _____



WHO IS THIS? _____



ANSWERS: ZEBRAS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: GUMU, NATHAN, DANTE. PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANN BARTHOPE AND MEGHAN MURPHY, SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL ZOO. © 2009 SMITHSONIAN CENTER FOR EDUCATION AND MUSEUM STUDIES