

**Worksheet 1. Reading: *Texting Elephants***

Read the passage about elephants in Kenya. Then review the glossary and complete the exercises that follow it.

1 Elephants in Kenya have been sending text messages. National park rangers in
2 Kenya have installed mobile phone cards in the collars of elephants in order to track
3 the movements of the great beasts. The tracking is necessary because these
4 elephants normally have a habit of wandering away from the conservancy where
5 they live. Before the phone cards were installed in their collars, they used to go to
6 nearby farms, where they destroyed the crops of many farmers. The farmers who
7 had lost their crops to the elephants become devastated economically. Now with the
8 phone signals, the rangers have been intercepting the animals before they can cause
9 any damage to the crops.

10 This technological step forward began in 2006, after Kenyan Wildlife Services had
11 shot five elephants that had been raiding nearby crops continually. No one had
12 wanted to kill them. A conservation group tried to find a way to break the elephants
13 of the wandering habit, so they experimented with the phone cards. They installed
14 one in a collar around the neck of a huge male elephant named Kimani, who had a
15 bad history of raiding crops. They then set up a virtual “geofence,” using a global
16 positioning system that marked the conservancy boundaries. Whenever Kimani
17 neared a prohibited area, the device in his collar sent a text message to the rangers,
18 who then intercepted him. The experiment worked.

19 Since then, rangers have intercepted Kimani countless times. Kimani used to wander
20 out frequently and had been raiding the crops every night. However, he has not
21 ventured near farmland for a long time, not since he has been wearing the collar
22 with the mobile phone. Elephants learn from each other, so tracking and controlling
23 this one elephant — the one that habitually raided the crops — has made a whole
24 group change its habits.

25 It's a huge relief to the small farmers—who have been relying on their crops for food
26 and cash for decades—that the elephants are not coming around anymore. A thirty-
27 year-old mother of two who lives a stone's throw from the conservancy fence tells
28 this story: She and her neighbors used to drum on pots and pans all night in

**Worksheet 1 (page 2)**

29 front of flaming bonfires to frighten the elephants away, but the elephants kept
30 coming back. Now, since the elephants have stopped wandering into their
31 neighborhood, her two young children play safely under the banana trees in the
32 evenings. Nobody has worried about the elephants since technology arrived.

Glossary

Line 1 *text messages* — messages sent by wireless phones

Line 4 *conservancy* — an area to protect natural things such as animals, plants, forests, etc.

Line 15 *virtual geofence* — an invisible fence around a specific geographic area

Comprehension practice**1. Check all the statements that are true, according to the reading.**

- a. The elephants in Kenya wander off to another country.
- b. The elephants used to destroy crops on nearby farms.
- c. The elephants send signals when they are in pain or distress.
- d. The phone signals are sent when the elephants wander outside their living area.
- e. Elephants copy each other.
- f. The elephants set fire to several homes.

2. Check all the statements that are true by inference.

- g. People don't want to hurt the elephants.
- h. Elephants can cause economic hardship.
- i. Technology helps protect farmers in Kenya.
- j. Elephants can be taught to call on cell phones when they are hungry.
- k. Kenyans use elephants on their farms.
- l. Children often play happily with elephants.