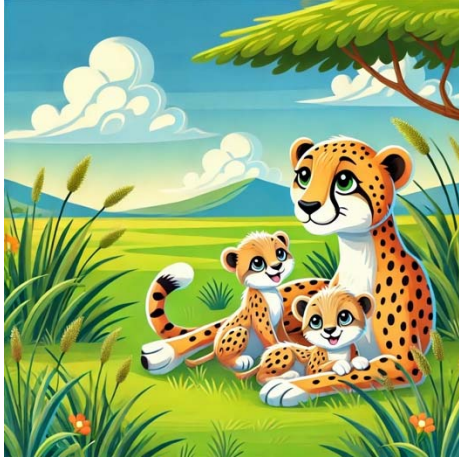


Name \_\_\_\_\_



## How Does a Cheetah Reproduce?

Cheetahs have unique mating behaviors and ways of caring for their young. Male cheetahs do not stay with the females after mating. Female cheetahs are responsible for raising the cubs alone.

When a female cheetah is ready to mate, she will leave scent marks and vocalize to attract males. After a brief courtship, the male and female mate. The gestation period, or pregnancy, lasts about 90 to 95 days. During this time, the female finds a safe and hidden place to give birth.

A female cheetah typically gives birth to a litter of three to five cubs, though larger litters can occur. The newborn cubs are born blind and completely dependent on their mother for warmth, food, and protection. The mother nurses her cubs for several weeks before introducing them to solid food.

Caring for cubs involves keeping them safe from predators like lions, hyenas, and even eagles. The mother often moves the cubs to new hiding spots to avoid detection. She teaches her cubs important survival skills, such as hunting and stalking prey, by demonstrating and encouraging them to practice.

Cheetah cubs stay with their mother for about 18 months. After this period, they become independent and leave to find their own territory. The female may have another litter within the next year.