

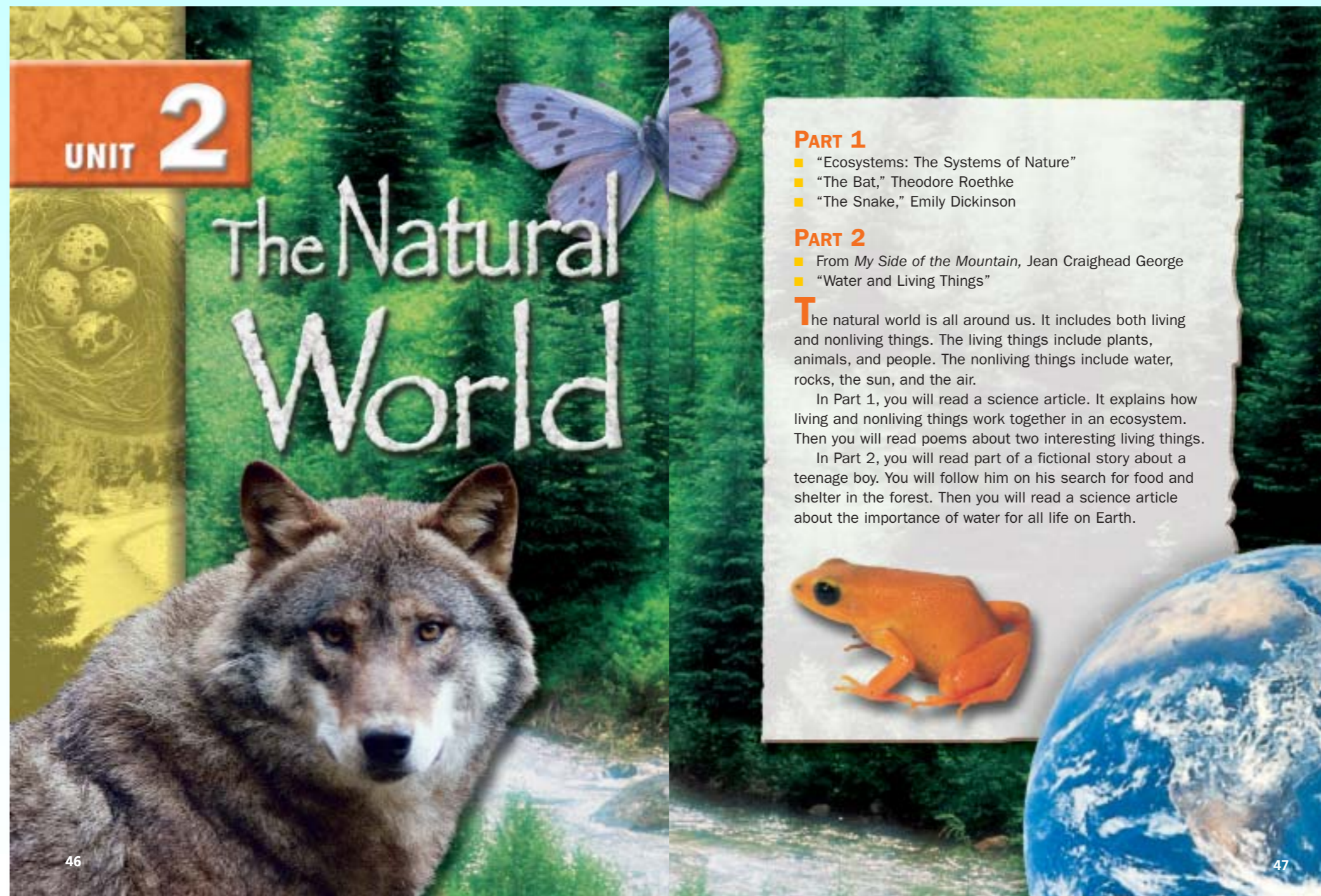
UNIT CONTENT

Part 1 of this unit includes a science article, "Ecosystems: The Systems of Nature," which explores ways in which all living things are connected to one another and to the nonliving things around them. The article is followed by two poems about two intriguing creatures: "The Bat" by Theodore Roethke and "The Snake" by Emily Dickinson.

Part 2 includes an excerpt from *My Side of the Mountain* that describes the challenges of wilderness survival for a young boy. It is followed by "Water and Living Things," an article about Earth's most valuable resource.

Viewpoint

Have students look at the art on the unit opener. Ask them to name and describe things in the collage that are living, including the wolf and the frog. Then have them name and describe things that are nonliving, such as the pebbles and the nest.



PART 1

- "Ecosystems: The Systems of Nature"
- "The Bat," Theodore Roethke
- "The Snake," Emily Dickinson

PART 2

- From *My Side of the Mountain*, Jean Craighead George
- "Water and Living Things"

The natural world is all around us. It includes both living and nonliving things. The living things include plants, animals, and people. The nonliving things include water, rocks, the sun, and the air.

In Part 1, you will read a science article. It explains how living and nonliving things work together in an ecosystem. Then you will read poems about two interesting living things.

In Part 2, you will read part of a fictional story about a teenage boy. You will follow him on his search for food and shelter in the forest. Then you will read a science article about the importance of water for all life on Earth.

DISCUSS THE THEME

Have students read the unit title. Discuss the meaning of the word *natural*. If necessary, explain that *natural* often refers to something that exists in or is made by nature, without the help of human beings. Ask a volunteer to name some things that exist in nature, such as plants, rivers, and birds. Tell students to think about the natural and artificial things they see on their way to school. Which are made by nature? Which are created by human beings? Ask students to name:

- living things
- nonliving things from the natural world
- nonliving things made by humans

QUICK WRITE



Have students list ten living things and five nonliving things.

WORKSHOP PREVIEW

Listening and Speaking
Students will give a presentation about a step-by-step process that occurs in the natural world.

Writing
Students will write an expository essay about living and nonliving things in their environment.

PROJECTS PREVIEW

Projects for this unit include:

- writing a nature poem or a skit
- making a poster to describe the local ecosystem or to compare two animals
- writing and performing a dialogue
- making a photographic display
- performing a song

TEACHING RESOURCES

- Lesson Plans** pp. 17–30
- Summaries** pp. 23–30
- Graphic Organizers** 1–20
- Audio Program** CD1/6–9; Cass.1/B
- Workbook** pp. 29–56
- CD-ROM** Unit 2
- Video** Segment 2
- Tests** Part Test, pp. 37–44
Unit Test, pp. 89–97

REACHING ALL STUDENTS

LANGUAGE LEVELS

Beginning: Describe for students general characteristics of living things, such as *grows, changes as it ages, uses nutrients, uses oxygen, and reproduces*. Name several things from nature, and have students say "living" if the thing is living, and "nonliving" if the thing is not.

Advanced: Have partners create a skit about two friends walking in a park. Explain that their conversation should focus on the living and nonliving things they see. Suggest that partners describe their reactions to what they observe. After rehearsing, pairs can present their skit to the group.

LEARNING MODALITIES

Kinesthetic: Ask a volunteer to pantomime a favorite thing from nature for group members to identify. Encourage students to name the features that helped them guess correctly, such as spreading arms to indicate the branches of a tree.