

Plan(et) B

DISCOVERY ACTIVITY

ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

- To identify how we can help protect the natural habitats of wild animals
- To describe some of the harm that humans inflict on wild animals and the consequences for the planet
- To recognise that meeting the needs of wild animals in captivity can be difficult, and sometimes not possible

KEY QUESTIONS

- Should progress for humans cause suffering to animals?
- What can we all do to help wild animals?
- Should we keep animals in captivity for our entertainment?
- Why should we have compassion for wild animals and our planet?

RESOURCES

- Interactive PDF 'Plan(et) B' to guide pupils through the activities
- Images of animals affected by pollution, littering and destruction of their habitats: examples can be found on slides four to six

This resource is predominantly aimed at Key Stage 2 pupils. Due to the topics covered in the Compassionate Class programme, it is important to consider how different children may react. For more information on creating a safe teaching and learning environment, see guidance on pages six to eight of the Teacher Overview downloadable at: rspca.org.uk/ccresources.



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STIMULUS:

**15
MINS**

Newspaper article about wild animals

This session will help children to understand that because animals are so different, there are incredible and surprising things about all of them. Whether beautiful birds, fluffy rabbits, tiny insects or giant elephants, they all have feelings and are part of the food chain. Humans can harm wild animals by dropping litter or in car collisions. They can also harm animals indirectly by breaking up or destroying habitats with building work, or through pollution.

Start by asking the class: What can we do to help wild animals? Why should we have compassion for our planet? Record their thoughts in the box on slide two or print the slide for pupils to write on. This can be used as a baseline assessment to capture pupils' initial understanding and we encourage you to revisit these thoughts at the end of the session.

To get children thinking about the consequences of a lack of human compassion towards wild animals, show slide three and read the fictional news story and headline as a class.

Highlight the date of the article, and ask children how it is possible that this event has happened. Slides four to six show images of pollution and human-made rubbish. Print and distribute them or display them on screen, and encourage children to discuss what they can see in the pictures.

For lower ability and younger children, you could add an explanation sentence with each picture e.g. this seal has been caught in some litter so won't be able to swim properly and catch fish to eat.

Ask them to share ways that we can prevent this headline becoming true.

**SLIDE
2-6**

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INTRODUCTORY DISCUSSION

**5-10
MINS**

What does the RSPCA think about caring for wild animals and the planet?

Ask children to suggest wild animals they have seen in their local area, or when spending time outdoors. Ask them to think about how these animals rely on each other and on plants to survive, using the categories of producer, prey and predator. Apart from food, what else do some of these animals need to be happy and healthy?

Suggestions might include trees and nesting material for birds, earth to dig underground for rabbits and badgers, safe hiding places for mice. Show slide seven and explain what the RSCPA thinks about wild animals.

After a few minutes, ask: how do human actions affect the welfare of animals? Use the text box on slide eight to record their ideas. Once they have made some initial suggestions, use the prompt questions to draw out further responses.

PROMPT QUESTIONS

- What can we do to reduce the numbers of wild animals that are hurt or injured through human actions?
- Is there an impact on other creatures when one species' numbers decline?
- Is the answer to keep wild animals in captivity?

**SLIDE
7-8**

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WILD ANIMALS FACT BOX

- The RSPCA considers 'wild animals' to be those that are not domesticated; this ranges from badgers to birds, seals to pet snakes
- The RSPCA's concern for wild animals is based on how they are treated and whether humans cause suffering
- Human activities such as building new houses on top of wildlife habitats and littering can cause suffering or affect wild animals in many different ways
- Giving wild animals what they need in captivity e.g zoos, can prove challenging. The best captive environment mimics elements of an animal's natural surroundings in the wild
- In some captive environments, it's best not to keep certain wild animals at all, as their needs cannot be met. This includes primates as pets, large animals such as elephants and marine wildlife such whales or dolphins
- All animals, including wild animals, should be safe from harm and suffering
- The RSPCA believes wild animals should not be kept in circuses or for entertainment purposes as their needs cannot be met in these situations
- How we live our lives affects wild animals around us
- Animals and their habitats on land and sea should be protected from pollution and destruction
- The RSPCA treats injured, orphaned and sick wild animals in its wildlife centres and aims to return them to the wild

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TASK

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10-15
MINS

Split the class into groups, and give each group a picture of an animal in its natural habitat. Use slide nine for examples.

Each group should discuss what habitat/s their animal lives in and what their needs are.

Children should then consider what would happen to that animal if their habitat was taken away from them. If they have seen this animal up close, encourage them to think about whether this was in the habitat in the picture. It may well have been in captivity, or in an urban environment.

In what ways might this alternative habitat not be suitable for the animal? Each group should make notes to help them remember their ideas, before sharing their thoughts with the rest of the class.

You could model an example using slide ten before they get started: a squirrel needs trees, materials to make a dray (nest) and places to forage for seeds and nuts.

The fact box on page four can be printed for children, and more detailed information on wild animals and their habitats can be found in the **RSPCA's 'Living with' leaflet series.**

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SLIDE
9-10

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CLASS DISCUSSION: PROTECTION



10-20
MINS

Ask children to arrange themselves into a thinking ring. Remind children to listen respectfully to each other, without interruption and to build on the ideas and questions.

KICK OFF QUESTION

- Do we have a responsibility to protect wild animals and our planet?

PROMPT QUESTIONS

- Should we keep animals in captivity for their own protection?
- Which is more important, money or the planet?
- Why do humans constantly want to make progress – like building new houses and roads, introducing new technology?
- What would the world be like without humans?
- Who owns the planet?
- What do wild animals give us?

SESSION SUMMARY



5
MINS

Invite the pupils to revisit their initial responses recorded on slide two. Ask each pupil to think of a thought or question from the session that they would like to explore further, or something new they have discovered today. Encourage pupils to share these with the rest of the class and record them under their initial ideas from the start of the lesson. By saving the PDF, you can return to these thoughts in another session.

Encourage children to think about the ways that wild animals add to our experience of the outdoors, as well as how animals like insects can impact upon the food chain and our lives such as bees making honey and insects pollinating crops.



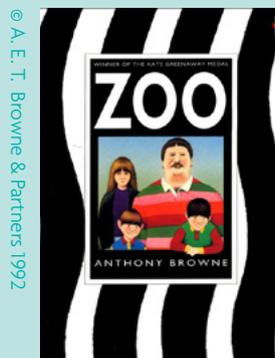
SLIDE
2

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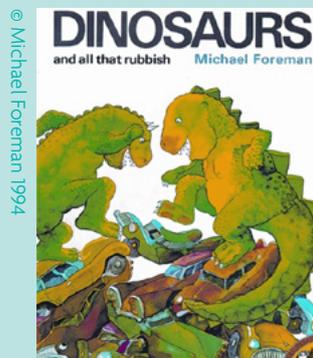
EXTENSION RESOURCES

To take the learning from this discovery session further, you could explore our suggested extension activities.

Books



Zoo
by Anthony
Browne



**Dinosaurs
and all that rubbish**
by Michael Foreman



**The Paperbag
Prince** by
Colin Thompson

Online Resources

- Explore the effects of pollution and rubbish on wild animals such as badgers, gulls, seals and hedgehogs by watching this **RSPCA video**. Consider organising a litter pick with your class. Use the **RSPCA's 'Living with' leaflet series** to look at ways that humans and wild animals can share habitats, and learn how to meet the welfare needs of specific wild animals
- Explore the RSPCA's resources about **animals kept in captivity** and find out about their views on **circus animals**. Children could write and perform a TV advert or create a poster to demonstrate their understanding
- If you want to inspire your class with more films about animal welfare, take a look at the RSPCA's YouTube channel **[youtube.com/rspcauk](https://www.youtube.com/rspcauk)**



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WHAT NEXT?

If this is your first Discovery activity, pick another stimulating activity to complete with your pupils.

If you've already completed at least two Discovery activities, choose an Advocacy activity that will provide your pupils with an entry for the Compassionate Class competition. We have included suggested Advocacy activities below which link to this Discovery activity.

Advocacy activities

IF YOU LIKED THE 'PLAN(ET) B' DISCOVERY ACTIVITY, WHY NOT TRY THESE ACTIVITIES



MINI ME

Ask the class to consider differences in the way we would have to live if we were the size of insects? Why are insects important? Then, either;

- Children research, imagine and design a world where humans are the size of insects. Create miniature clay people and stage photos of them with everyday objects or write stories or drama productions using them
- Share images of miniature models and materials on the school website and ask viewers to consider the human impact on animals, and how imagining themselves in miniature has helped them view insects differently

A WETTER WORLD

Imagine what would happen if the land flooded. Work together to create an underwater city. How will humans, land animals and sea creatures all exist and live together in the same environment?

- Consider ways of communicating the dangers that humans can pose to wild animals to the school community. Ideas could be expressed through creating a giant mural, cardboard scene with recycled materials, diorama, or writing a play

