

**SAVE THE EARTH: IT'S EVERYONE'S HOME!**  
**LESSON 5: Grades 4-6**  
**ENDANGERED ANIMALS NEED YOU!**

**Show Me Standards:**

*Academic Goals:* 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.10, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7

*Knowledge Goals:* Comm. Arts: 1, 3, 4, 6; Science: 3, 4 & 8; Social Studies: 3, 4, 5 & 7;  
(if videos are made: Fine Arts: 1 & 4)

**Objectives:**

1. Students will comprehend the concepts of cause and effect and how it relates to environmental issues.
2. Students will analyze the impact that different human-caused environmental destruction has on the environment and ultimately endangered animals.
3. Students will work cooperatively to create a brochure that educates others about the effects caused by their actions.

**Materials:**

- Research materials (internet, books, magazines, science journals, etc.)
- Paper
- Computer
- Video camera, props, video tape (optional)

**Method:**

1. Begin by writing the following choices on the board or saying them out loud and ask the students to share what they predict will happen as a result of these choices.

- Not studying for a test = \_\_\_\_\_
- Not brushing your teeth every day = \_\_\_\_\_
- Choosing not to make your bed = \_\_\_\_\_
- Neglecting to water your plant = \_\_\_\_\_
- Choosing to eat junk food and not exercising = \_\_\_\_\_

Explain that each one of these is an **action** (whether or not they choose to do or not to do something it is considered an action) and the result is a **reaction**. This is also caused a **cause** and an **effect**. The cause is the choice and the effect is the result of that choice.

2. Ask them to brainstorm some more daily actions/causes and their possible reactions/effects. Write these on the board to help reinforce the concepts.

3. Explain that our daily choices sometimes affect the environment and the animals who share it with us. Because of this, we have animals in this world whom we have impacted to a point that their lives were or are in danger. This is mostly due to habitat destruction such as deforestation, water pollution, air pollution and the “development” of land. According to the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF), 25,000 plant species and more than 1,000 animal species are threatened with **extinction**. Unfortunately there are some animals who no longer exist in this world because every member of their species has died and they are called **extinct**. Ask the students if they can think of any animals that have become extinct and write them on the board (Dinosaurs, Mountain Mist Frog, Dodo Bird, Labrador Duck, Red Colobus Monkey, Woolly Mammoth, etc.).

4. Explain that although nothing can be done to save these animals, there are thousands of animals that are on the verge of extinction that we call **endangered** and can still help if we act now! Ask them to help you list any animals that they know of who are endangered and write these on the board (African and Asian Elephants, African Wild Dog, Big Horn Sheep, Black Lemur, Blue Whale, Bottle-Nose Dolphin, European Otter, Cheetah, Indiana Bat, Gray Wolf, Guadalupe Fur Seal, Grevy's Zebra, Key Largo Cotton Mouse, Mariana Fruit Bat, Ocelot, Muskox, Persian Leopard, Rice Rat, Snow Leopard, Tree Kangaroos, West Indian Manatee, etc.). \*\*\*For a comprehensive list of endangered and extinct animals, please refer your students to [www.extinctanimal.com](http://www.extinctanimal.com)

**5. Re-emphasize that extinction is forever and endangered creatures still have hope!**

Explain that humans, plants and animals need four things to survive: shelter, food, water and living space and all of these make up a **habitat**. We humans and our carelessness is destroying habitats, including our own! What can we do to help the environment and the endangered animals? We can help educate people about the effects of their actions! Most people aren't aware that their actions have devastating results on animals and if we help them become aware and give them earth-friendly alternatives, they will likely choose them. Together, we can do it!

**Call to Action:**

Write the following types of habitat destruction and cause of endangerment on the board and divide the class into five research teams that will become "experts" on their topics. Assign each team to one of the following topics (1. River, stream and sea pollution, 2. Air pollution, 3. Deforestation, 4. Purchasing Products made of Animals, 5. Wild and Exotic Pets and 6. Circuses that use animals acts) Each group will be responsible for finding accurate answers to the following five questions and creating a brochure about their topic that can be distributed to others to help make them aware of the issue at hand.

- A. How is the destruction caused?
- B. Why?
- C. How is it harmful to the habitat, plants and animals?
- D. What can YOU do to help?
- E. Where can people get more information? (provide your sources here)

Discuss number 6 as an example and explain that you did the research to arrive at the answers. Explain that you can then use the following information to create a brochure.

### **Circuses:**

- A. Destruction is caused to the environment when wild animals such as elephants, tigers, monkeys, etc. are captured and taken from their natural environments.
- B. These wild animals are taken so that circus companies can make money using them for entertainment.
- C. This is extremely harmful to the animals (many of which are endangered) because they are taken from their families, kept in unnatural surroundings (cages), spend a significant amount of time traveling to the different locations, are often trained to do unnatural acts through force and abuse, often do not receive the medical care they need, become lonely and depressed and ultimately their freedom is taken away. It also sends a message to people that keeping wild animals for our entertainment is an acceptable thing to do. Wild animals in captivity live much shorter lives than those who live in their natural habitats.
- D. You can help by not attending circuses that have animal acts! You can also educate others by telling them what you know and encouraging them not to attend as well. If a circus is coming to your town, you can write a letter to the editor of your local paper educating others about the living conditions of circus animals and encourage people not to attend. If a circus that doesn't use animal acts comes to your town, write a letter praising them and encouraging people to attend!
- E. You can get more information about this topic by contacting the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) at [www.hsus.org](http://www.hsus.org) or People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) at [www.peta.org](http://www.peta.org)

Create and monitor deadlines for the project including editing, copying and distribution. Schools, libraries, community fairs, etc. may be willing to display your brochure.

**You are helping animals and the environment through education which raises community awareness! You are getting others “In the Know and On the Go” to help animals!**

### **Follow-Up Activities:**

- Arrange a school assembly where each expert team presents their information.
- Be aware of current events in your community that affect animals and the environment and attend city council meetings to be the voice for animals!
- Make a video that presents your issue and educates others. Be creative and approach community organizations and schools that have editing equipment that may be willing to help you edit and formulate the video. Make copies to sell and donate the money to an organization that works for animals or keep the money for a future project that promotes your cause!

**Web sites:** For recommended animal-related web sites visit [www.apamo.org](http://www.apamo.org) and choose “Animal Issues” from the left-side menu, then choose “Links” from the top of the page. Or [click here](#) to launch your browser and link directly to the list.

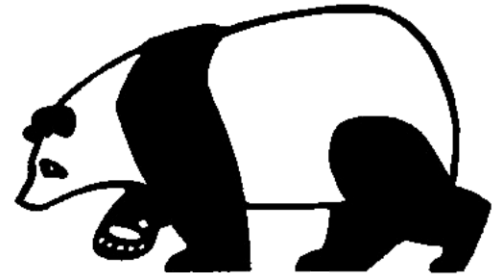


KIND Name \_\_\_\_\_

## There's A Reason

Why do animals become endangered? There are many reasons. Read about some of them in (A-G) below. Then read the sentences about endangered animals. What are the reasons each animal has become endangered? Match the reason with the animals described in the sentences by putting one or more letters in each blank.

- A. Is harmed by animals that were brought to the habitat by humans
- B. Has only one or a few babies at a time. The baby develops for a long inside the mother's body before being born.
- C. Is prized by collectors or consumers
- D. Eats only one kind or a few kinds of food
- E. Is hunted by people
- F. Lives in only one place or in a habitat that is in danger
- G. Is harmed by human activities



- .....
1. \_\_\_ Aye-eyes are rare primates found only in forests on an island of Madagascar. As villages grow, forests are destroyed.
  2. \_\_\_ A few countries, such as Japan and Norway, still hunt whales. Whales' ocean habitats have also become polluted with trash, chemical wastes, and nuclear products.
  3. \_\_\_ Scarlet macaws are rain forest birds collected and sold as pets.
  4. \_\_\_ Giant pandas, found in the bamboo forests of China, eat only certain kinds of bamboo. As bamboo forests are cut down, there is less land and food available for pandas.
  5. \_\_\_ In the summer, piping plovers nest on seacoasts in the United States. People use the birds' nesting grounds for camping, boating, and driving on the beach.
  6. \_\_\_ A baby African elephant develops inside the mother for 22 months before birth. Elephants have been hunted for their tusks, and their habitats have been turned into farmland.
  7. \_\_\_ Piranhas are fish native to South American lakes. Many were brought to Hawaii and kept as pets. When people no longer wanted them, they released piranhas in Hawaiian waters. Piranhas have eaten endangered Hawaiian fish.
  8. \_\_\_ The Queen Alexandra birdwing butterfly lives in the rain forests of Papua New Guinea. Rain forests are being cut down.



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