

UNLESS CONTEST ACTIVITY #3 / TEACHER LED PROJECT

Thank you for participating in the UNLESS Contest! To continue engaging your group in helping wildlife, we ask that you participate in the following activity. This activity should take only 20 – 30 minutes to complete. We suggest reading over the entire activity before facilitating it in front of your class. After the activity, please fill out the following questionnaire about your students' responses.

1. Present the following photo and keep it visible during the entirety of the activity.

Note: Do not share with the students the name of the animal or anything about it. It is possible some students will be familiar with the animal, but please do not confirm or deny their guesses.



2. Ask the students the following questions, and invite them to use their observation skills and to make inferences about the animal in the photo.

Note: It is okay to provide clarity for students if they don't understand the question, but try to avoid any leading language and avoid confirming or denying any inferences students may make about the animal.

- a) Can you describe what the animal looks like?
- b) What are some unique features (or adaptations) of this animal?
- c) Why do you think this animal has these features (adaptations)? What do you think they help the animal to do?
- d) Can someone describe to me what you think is happening with the animals in this photo? Why do you think that's happening?
- e) Based on all the observations we just made, how do you think the animals feel in this photo? Why do you think that?

3. **Read the following explanation to your group, detailing some of the specific conservation threats facing the animal in the picture.**

This is a gharial. Gharials are reptiles that are distantly related to animals like crocodiles. Gharials live in the rivers of India and Malaysia, spending most of their time hiding while hunting for food. That long pointy jaw helps them catch and eat fish. The rivers gharials live in face many challenges including pollution from toxic waste. The toxic waste, such as chemicals, causing the pollution are deadly to people and animals, making it a hard place for gharials and other wildlife to live. In fact, gharials have become critically endangered, with only about 650 left in the wild. There are many ways that rivers become polluted from human activity, in this case from the construction of pipes, bridges, and buildings. These structures are important for many every day needs in a community, and are often made of materials that are legal, affordable, and easily accessible. However, some of these materials, like lead, can also be toxic and make the rivers an inhabitable place to live.

4. **Ask the students: What are some conservation strategies that can help Gharials? Facilitate a conversation about potential solutions for the described species.**

Note: Again, this should be student driven, so please avoid leading your students towards any specific conclusions. Invite the students to share:

5. **Upon concluding the activity with your group, please answer the following questions based on your students' responses.**

1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – slightly disagree, 4 – neutral, 5 – slightly agree, 6 – agree, 7 – strongly agree

a) *Students demonstrated an understanding of the animal's basic needs (food, water, habitat etc)*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

b) *Students made detailed observations about the animal in the photo*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

c) *Students compared and contrasted themselves to the animal in their observations*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

d) *Students imagined themselves 'in the animal's shoes' to gain better insight into the animal's needs*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

e) *Students asked questions to further their understanding of the animal*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

f) *Students were able to make an inference about the animal's emotional state*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

g) *Students provided justification for their prediction of the animal's emotional state that was based on an understanding of the animal's needs*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

h) *Students showed concern/interest for animals well being*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

i) *Students were able to identify the key elements of the conservation threat needed to generate potential solutions*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

j) *Students generated potential conservation solutions for the animal that were specific to the described threat*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Please provide examples of the conservation solution your students designed

If there were any behaviors, comments, or discussions that you feel were important that the questionnaire did not address, please share below.
