

Endangered Species

3-5 Pre-Activity

Lesson Summary

Students categorize animals as threatened, endangered or extinct, and consider the experiences of an extinct animal.

Objectives

Students will be able to identify animals as threatened, endangered or extinct and consider reasoning

Students will be able to demonstrate empathy while considering the experience of another animal

Essential Question

What is an endangered species?

Materials

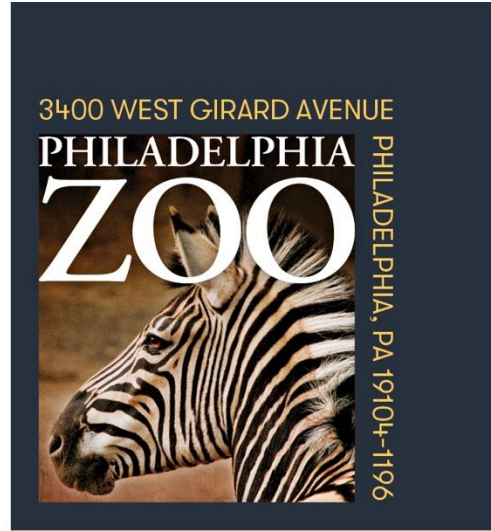
- Photos of different animals (examples provided at end of lesson)
- Vocabulary words (provided at end of lesson)
- Scrap paper (or worksheet such as provided at the end of the lesson)
- Access to the [Philly Zoo website](#) (or other research resources)
- Writing utensils
- Coloring utensils

Prep

1. 1 week before: Select photos to present to students.
2. 1 day before: Print and cut out photos for students. Prepare as many sets of media as there will be groups. Print worksheets as needed as well.

Key Terms

- **Species:** a group of living things that can mate with one another but not with those of other groups
- **Population:** a grouping of the same species
- **Community:** all the plants and animals that live together in the same area
- **Habitat:** the natural environment of an animal or plant, where that living thing can find their food, water, shelter, and space
- **Resources:** materials in the environment necessary for organism health and wellbeing, such as food, water, and shelter
- **Competition:** the process of trying to get something that others are also trying to get
- **Safe:** free from the risk of harm or endangerment
- **Threatened species:** species at risk of harm or endangerment
- **Endangered species:** species of plant or animal that is in danger of becoming extinct
- **Extinct:** species that are no longer existing
- **Conservation:** the study of nature and how to protect it



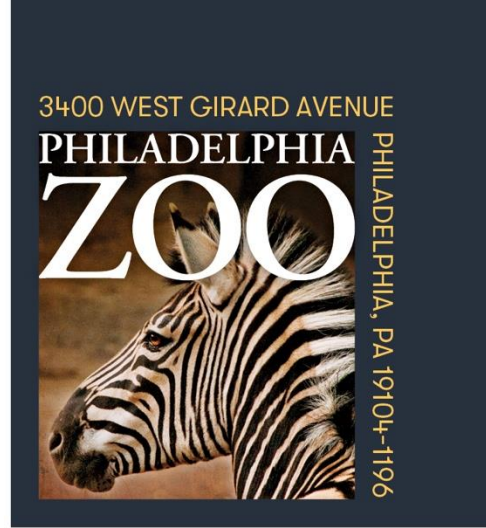
Background

All living things need air, food, water, shelter and space and these resources must be present for a species to survive in its habitat. Within that habitat, animals need to share those resources amongst their species and will other animals that may also require those resources. When those resources become diminished due to habitat loss, introduced species, pollution, population size and overharvesting, animals become threatened, endangered, or even extinct. All of us have the opportunity to protect endangered species through our choices, our voices, and our collective actions.

The IUCN is the International Union for Conservation of Nature and they gather data and work on field projects to assess species across the world, designate their conservation status, and inform others on the global extinction risk status of animals, fungus and plants. Each species they have researched and studied is given a status and that informs conservationists, scientists, governments and the general public information about what species need help.

Implementation

1. Excite: Ask students to share if there was anyone in the world that they could have dinner with (celebrity or not), who would it be and why.
2. Explore: Invite students what comes to mind when they hear of the word endangered. Are there some examples of endangered species that they might be familiar with? If they are able to, ask them to share what threats that might experience that would cause them to be endangered.
3. Ask students to share if there was any animal they could meet and talk to, which would it be and why? Remind students that there are many animals that live on the planet, there are some animals are no longer around, some animals might not be around forever.
4. Explain: Remind students that all living things need air, food, water, shelter and space to live but when those resources are not all available, these animals become threatened or endangered and could eventually go extinct. Some disappeared because of natural disasters but others went extinct due to humans. Today, there are many endangered species that could one day become extinct if we do not find ways to help them.
5. Review the vocabulary words of threatened, endangered, and extinct. Then, provide students photos of the threatened, endangered species, or extinct animals. Either in groups or as a whole class, ask students to spend some time placing the animals into one of the categories. As they do this, ask students to consider why students believe those animals belong in that category. Then, review as a whole group.
6. Elaborate: Have students then take a look at the examples of extinct species list and pick an animal from the list. Have students do a little bit of research to learn more about that animal, why they became extinct, and if there are other animals that experiencing similar threats.
 - a. For instance, several species of dinosaur went extinct due to a large meteor hitting the earth. Not all were directly hit by this meteor, but many were impacted by changes to the environment that occurred because of the meteor. Many animals today are facing changes in their habitat that could lead to their extinction if nothing changes.



7. Then have students consider what it would be like to meet this animal. What do they think this animal would be like? What do you think this animal's experiences would be like? How would you be feeling? What do you think you would learn from the animal? Is there anything you would want to tell that animal? Invite them to write a story about this meeting.
8. Evaluate: Have students share their responses in pairs, groups, or as a class.

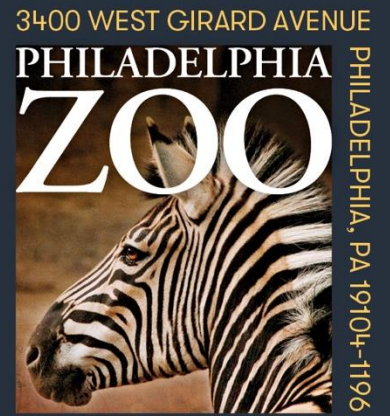
Expansion

To further this lesson, students can pick an animal from the endangered species list and learn about the threats it faces and learn about what conservation groups, zoos or other organizations are doing to prevent that species from extinction.

Alternatively, students can select one extinct or endangered species to do a deep dive on and learn about as a class.

Curriculum References

4.1.3.C, 4.1.4.C, 4.1.5.C, 4.1.3.D/4.5.4.D, 4.5.5.D, 4.3.3.A, 4.3.4.A, 4.3.3.B, 4.3.4.B, 4.5.3.A, 4.5.4.A, 3-LS4-3, 3-LS4-4, 4-ESS3-1, 5-ESS3-1



EXTINCT

ENDANGERED

THREATENED

Threatened Animal Photos:



Inca Tern



Andean Bear



Humboldt Penguin



Snow Leopard



Cheetah



Prehensile-tailed Skink



Maned Wolf



Dwarf Crocodile



Hippopotamus

Endangered Animal Photos:



Black & White Ruffed Lemur



Reticulated Giraffe



Giant Otter



Red Panda



Golden Lion Tamarin



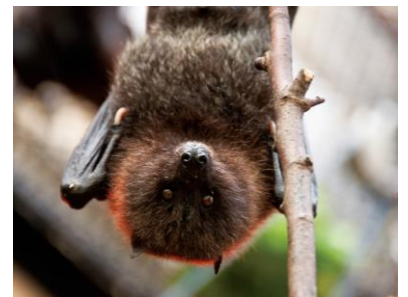
Galapagos Tortoise



Western Lowland Gorilla



Guam Rail

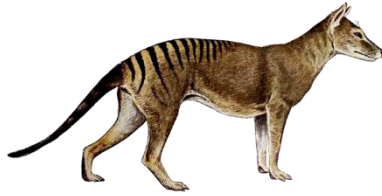


Rodrigues Fruit Bat

Extinct Animal Photos:



Dodo Bird



Tasmanian Tiger



Woolly Mammoth



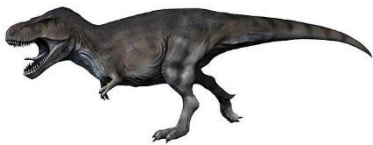
Passenger Pigeon



Stegosaurus



Quetzalcoatlus



Tyrannosaurus Rex



Triceratops



Giant Ground Sloth

Name: _____

Date: _____

Think about an animal that has gone extinct. Imagine you were given the opportunity to meet this animal. What would it be like? How would you be feeling? Tell a story of this meeting below.

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