



Conservation Scientist for a Day!

Lesson Plan

Topic:

Conservation Scientists for a Day!

Grade(s):

Grades 3-6

Curriculum Objectives:

- Grade 3: E. Animal Life Cycles
- Grade 4: A. Waste in Our World
- Grade 5: E. Wetland Ecosystems
- Grade 6: D. Evidence and Investigation
- Grade 6: E. Trees and Forests

Outcomes:

- Students will act as Conservation Scientists and research the needs of an 'Endangered' or 'Critically Endangered' animal of their choosing.
- Students will also explore what the animal needs to thrive and what enrichment opportunities would benefit their wellbeing in a zoo setting.
- Students will seek conservation initiatives that support their chosen animal in the wild.
- Students will utilize ArcGIS Story Maps, an application used by Conservation Scientists, to present their findings.

Materials Needed/Resources:

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- Teacher Resource: 'Conservation Champions for a Day! Lesson Plan
- Student Resource: 'Conservation Champions for a Day! Instructions' Poster (Criteria for ArcGIS Story Maps)
- ArcGIS Story Map YouTube Tutorial: shorturl.at/eoqET

Resources Needed:

- ArcGIS Story Map Website: www.storymaps.arcgis.com
- Wilder Institute/Calgary Zoo Western Lowland Gorilla Story Map: shorturl.at/kpGNP
- IUCN Red List Website: www.iucnredlist.org

Conservation Connections:

The Wilder Institute/Calgary Zoo's Conservation Champions program invites young people to join us in our mission to sustain wildlife and wild places. As part of this, we're encouraging students to act as Conservation Scientists for a day and consider all the requirements animals need to survive. Western lowland gorillas are critically endangered requiring conservation strategies to try and help protect this species.

Through Story Maps, students will learn about this gorilla species, how we care for them in a zoo setting, and conservation projects that are helping protect this animal. The students will then make a Story Map of their own exploring an 'Endangered' or 'Critically Endangered' animal of their choosing and create a presentation about how they would care for them in a zoo setting.





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Activity:

Western Lowland Gorillas Story Map

- Explore the Story Map featuring Western Lowland Gorillas either individually or as a class. Learn about their lives in their natural habitat in Africa, how we care for them and provide enrichment activities at the zoo, and conservation efforts that benefit gorillas in the wild.
 - Wilder Institute/Calgary Zoo Western Lowland Gorilla Story Map: shorturl.at/kpGNP

Animal Research

- Next step is to choose an 'Endangered' or 'Critically Endangered' animal from the IUCN Red List of Endangered Species. Use the advanced button when searching for an animal on the IUCN website to specify animals on the red list that are 'Endangered' or 'Critically Endangered'.
 - You should include the following in your research:
 - Where does this animal live in the world (geographic location)?
 - What habitat does this animal live in?
 - Does the animal live on their own or in a group?
 - What is the diet of this animal?
 - What are their needs?
 - What are the threats this animal faces?

The title of your Story Map should be the animal's name and each section should address the questions above.

Enrichment

- Now you should research the animal and explore what has contributed to their threatened status and what conservation efforts are in place for the species in the wild and in human care.
 - You should include the following in your research:
 - Where will the animal sleep and rest?
 - How will the animal be engaged physically? (i.e., climbing structures, pools, rocks, dens, etc.)
 - How will the animal be engaged mentally? (i.e., unfamiliar textures [grass in a rocky habitat], unfamiliar scents [cinnamon], Nose-It balls [puzzle to get treats], etc.)
 - Will the animal need to be housed with other animals? (i.e., are they solitary like a Komodo Dragon or are they social like Meerkats?)
 - What training will the animal need for health checks? (i.e., how will giraffes get their hooves trimmed, how to check an animal's feet, etc.)

The title of this section in your Story Map should be Enrichment.

ArcGIS Story Map: Present your Findings!

- Finally, you will present your findings in an ArcGIS StoryMap, following the same general template as the gorilla example. You should mention natural habitat and threats, how to care for the animal (including enrichment), and conservation efforts that are working to protect your this animal. To make your Story Map engaging, you should include pictures, maps of where the animal lives in the world, and videos in addition to your text.