

Preparing You For Your Education Session: Zoos & Conservation

Location: Schools' Education Centre

Duration: Approx. 50 mins

Syllabus links

AS/A2 Biology

Discuss and evaluate the methods used by zoos in the conservation of endangered species and their genetic diversity.

Session content

This session gives students the opportunity to find out about and discuss the role of zoos in the 21st century.

Using case studies from ZSL, we look at four methods used by modern zoos to conserve endangered species and their genetic diversity: scientific research, breeding, reintroduction programmes and education.

During the sessions students will:

- Listen, take notes and ask questions
- Work in groups
- Discuss issues
- Make observations in the zoo
- Meet a live animal (where possible)

Using the Zoo to support this session

Whilst in the Zoo, students might like to:

- Make a list of all the different types of people working in the Zoo. Ask staff for their job titles and put these people into groups depending on their role.
- Observe Zoo Keepers at work in the animal enclosures. Record the number of different types of activity they are involved in, e.g. cleaning, feeding, maintenance, enrichment, etc. Think about how these activities contribute to the care of captive animals.
- Look at the social groupings of animals in the Zoo. Think about how the zoo staff manage the breeding of animals. Think about how they identify individuals, know their sex and recognise when animals are pregnant.
- Use Gorilla Kingdom to find out about some of the people involved in the protection and conservation of a species like the Gorilla.

Suggested classroom activity (for before your visit)

- Ask the class to prepare a list of questions to bring to the session to ask the speaker.
- Ask students to plan a route to take around the Zoo that allows them to see the animals and exhibits that they would like to focus on.