

# Animal Care

## 3-5 Pre-Activity

### Lesson Summary

Students research a specific animal's basic needs to design a habitat for that animal in a Zoo setting.

### Objectives

Students will be able to research specific details about animal needs  
Students will be able to design an animal's habitat based on specific criteria

### Essential Question

What does an animal need to survive and how does a zoo provide that?

### Materials

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

### Prep

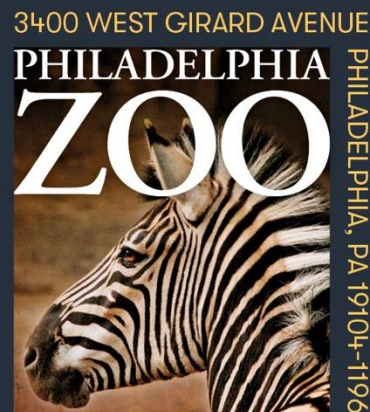
1. 1 Day before: Explore Zoo website for familiarity. Print any materials needed.

### Key Terms

- **Zookeeper:** The person/people responsible for the daily care animals that live at the zoo for conservation purposes
- **Veterinarian:** A doctor for animals.
- **Habitat:** the natural environment of an animal or plant, where that living thing can find their food, water, shelter, and space
- **Basic Needs:** All living things including animals need food, water, and shelter to survive and these are called their basic needs. Different animals have different types of specific needs.
- **Diet:** The specific types and amounts of food and drink eaten and drunk by an animal.
- **Enrichment:** Practices or items that improve the quality care for animals, by encouraging natural behaviors and simultaneously exercising the bodies and minds of the animals.

### Background

Animal Care is a full team effort. Many people are involved in making sure every animal is taken care of in a safe and healthy environment, is given all of the necessary basic needs, and is provided enrichment as well. Although many people think of zookeepers and veterinarians as the main animal caretakers at a Zoo, many different people and careers are important. This also includes nutritionists, curators, scientific researchers, maintenance, and many more!



Those that work in animal care are animal advocates and protectors, striving to give these animals the best life possible in the name of conservation. They work together and collaborate to make sure that their animals basic needs are met every day, but also their mental wellbeing. They take observations to make decisions on how to maintain safety for the animals, proper type and amount of food, hygiene, and enrichment.

### Implementation

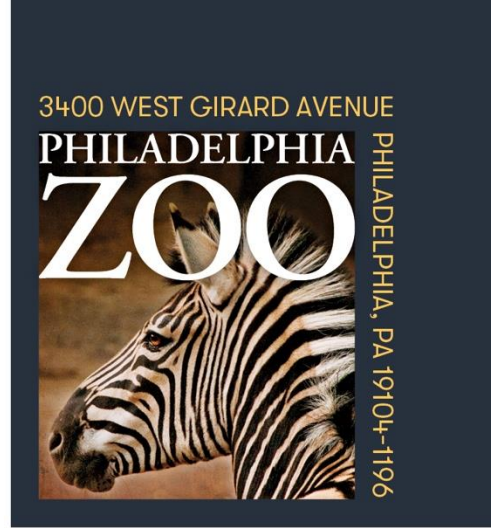
1. Excite: Ask students to share what their favorite animal is.
2. Explore: Ask the students if they would know how to take care of that animal if they were a zookeeper. How would they take care of it? How would they know if the animal was happy and healthy? How would they know if they were taking care of the animal properly? Invite students to share in pairs or groups, then share out with the group.
3. Explain: Share with the students that a Zoo habitat is designed to make sure the animal has everything it needs, just as they would get from their natural habitat. This includes what the animal eats, how it gets water, how much space it needs, how to make sure the animal is secure, who that animal will live with, if anyone the type of shelter it will need, if the animal should live inside or outside, what temperature or humidity an animal needs, etc.
4. Elaborate: Share with students that they will be conducting research to find these answers for a specific animal. Research can be done through a variety of sources, but the [Philly Zoo website](#) might be a good place to start.
5. After finding the answers for that specific animal's needs, they should design and draw a Zoo exhibit that would allow this animal to meet all of it's needs in a Zoo setting.
6. Point out that not only does an animal's home at the zoo include everything it needs to survive, but it should also include enrichment. Once they draw out the habitat they create, have them add features and items that would help the animal engage in some of its natural behaviors.
  - a. There are many different forms of enrichment and can include toys, ropes for swinging or climbing, scents like perfume, or even access to a trail, like the Philly Zoo's 360 Trails.
7. Evaluate: Have students get in groups or share aloud with the whole class some of their habitat designs and features and how those features help the animal.

### Expansion

After students design and draw a habitat for their chosen animal, invite them to build that habitat using items that are found in the classroom.

### Curriculum References

3.1.3.A2, 3.1.4.A2, 4.3.3.B, 4.3.4.B, 4.1.4.C



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Pick an animal. Research their specific basic needs, and record this information. Consider this information to think about what kind of habitat would allow the animal to get all of the things they need in a Zoo setting. Design and draw a habitat for them.

Chosen Animal: \_\_\_\_\_

How much space does this animal need? \_\_\_\_\_

What type of shelter does this animal need? \_\_\_\_\_

What type of food does this animal eat? \_\_\_\_\_

How does this animal get its water? \_\_\_\_\_

Does this animal like to be with others? \_\_\_\_\_

What natural behaviors are important for this animal's survival? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

