

Endangered Species

Teacher's Guide



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ENDANGERED SPECIES

SUBJECT:
Science

GRADES:
2, 3 & 4

**CURRICULUM
CONNECTIONS:**

Grade 2:
**Assess the
interdependence of
humans and animals in
natural and constructed
environments**

Grade 3:
**Analyze the
interdependence among
plants, individuals,
society, and the
environment**

Grade 4:
**Investigate the
interdependence of
plants and animals,
including humans, within
habitats and
communities.**

OVERVIEW:

What does it mean to be an endangered species? What do animals need in order to be successful in their environment? We'll discuss a few endangered species in Saskatchewan and what may have caused them to become a species at risk.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will learn that an endangered species is at risk of becoming extinct.
2. Students will brainstorm why animals become endangered
3. Students will learn that it is important to maintain biodiversity for the health of our planet
4. Students will discuss ways in which they can help ensure species have a healthy environment in which to live.

KEY VOCABULARY:

Endangered: at risk of extinction

Habitat: a habitat is where an organism makes its home and it has everything it needs for its survival

Pollution: introduction or presence of a substance in an environment that is poisonous or harmful

Climate Change: long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns that is either natural or human-induced.

Poaching: illegal hunting

Enrichment: improving or enhancing the quality of something (in the case of our animals at the Zoo, it would be enhancing their environment to keep them mentally and physically stimulated)

Vulnerable: Species at risk of becoming endangered

Threatened: Species likely to become endangered

Extinct: gone forever

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Across the world, we are losing species at an alarming rate. While it is natural to lose some species throughout the decades, the rate at which we are losing them today falls on us, as humans and is extremely alarming. It is worth noting that we are an animal species that relies on the same healthy environment to survive as the rest of the animal species.

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Activity One

Read or have the students read (or listen to it being read on YouTube) the story “Don’t let them Disappear” by Chelsea Clinton. This book mentions several endangered species and where they are from. See if the students can remember which ones are from Canada. Print out paper copies of the pictures of the animals mentioned in the story. Using a large map talk about the various continents and where the endangered animals are from. Hand out the animals to students in pairs. Can they place their animal on the correct continent. Are there more animals from one continent than others? Why do students think that may be the case?

Activity Two

Share the following saying with your students: “the more you learn, the more you’ll understand. The more you understand, the more you’ll care”. Indigenous peoples have always had an interconnectedness approach to care for, live in harmony with and to respect all animals in the natural world. Introduce the Seven Sacred Teachings. Each animal honours one of the basic virtues for a full and healthy life. Have the students learn about these seven animals and show how they represent the seven virtues in their life. Hopefully, the more they learn about animals, the more likely they are to care about them and the environment in which they live.

POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Activity One

In the program, we mentioned a few animals in Saskatchewan that are species at risk. See if the students can remember any of them (Black-tailed Prairie Dog, Black-footed Ferret, Swift Fox, Great Plains Toad, Lake Sturgeon, Grizzly (Brown) Bear, Whooping Crane, Burrowing Owl) and if not, have them research which species are at risk of becoming extinct in Saskatchewan. Have them make up a diorama (older students) to illustrate their habitat and prepare a brief report on their chosen species. For younger grades, have them make a poster using animal printouts where they can draw the animal's habitat and put on a call to action to help protect the animal (such as reduce, reuse, recycle).

Activity Two

Reducing our reliance on material items and reusing what we already have are two fantastic ways to help save habitat for our animal friends. Have the students create an art project using recycled items. For example, you may want them to make an animal out of scrap material, scrap boxes, etc. See if they can challenge themselves to use as many different items as possible. Perhaps they can team up and create one large animal.