DAVID SHEPHERD WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

Teacher Guidance

Living with Elephants



Image credit: Andrew White

The Art of Survival: FIGHT • PROTECT • ENGAGE

The aims of this lesson

The aims of this lesson:

- Learn about the lives of those living amongst elephants in Zambia
- Consider the challenge of promoting the protection of elephants
- Write a well-reasoned, balanced argument for protecting elephants in the form of a persuasive speech
- Role-play an interaction between a ranger and a victim of animal-human conflict

The main tasks

- Comprehension of the text
- Planning and writing a speech
- Role-playing a tense interaction

Guidelines for each task

These timings are just guidelines - if you are having a valuable discussion during any of these tasks, this should always be encouraged.

Starter Activity

5 mins

3-4 mins Students to answer three questions based on their journey to school

1-2 mins Teacher to gather some answers on these questions for a class discussion

1 min

Talk through some new/key vocabulary for the lesson

Introduction to topic

5 mins

Explanation of the real-life experiences of children walking to school in the rural areas of Zambia (and other areas of the world).

Some questions to ask the students:

- How early do you think you would have to wake up in order to walk 10 miles to school? (this takes just under 3.5 hours for an adult)
- How well do you think you would do at school if you had to wake up at 4am just to get here on time?
- Imagine walking 6 miles in the dark, tired and thinking about your school day, and then you see a dangerous wild animal. How would you feel?

Mind map

5 mins

3 mins Students to write down their ideas
2 mins Teacher to gather ideas together, verbally or written on the board

Annelia's story

5+ mins

Read the information about the reality of living with elephants on the slide and then read the story to the students.

Comprehension questions

10 mins

Students to answer comprehension questions based on what they have just read

1-2 mins Students can then mark this themselves, with the answers on the following slide

3 mins Students are given the task of writing a speech to persuade Monde's family not to have the elephants found and killed. They have 2 mins to write down their ideas.

2-3 mins Read through the facts and statistics with the students from GRI and DSWF, which is available in their workbook.

Speech guidance

1-2 min

If you have been teaching a mnemonic/system for persuasive writing, such as DAFORREST, then this would be the time to recap that information.

Write the speech

10-15 mins

Students have guidance on their sheet of each section they need to cover in their speech, but they must use the facts and statistics from GRI and DSWF.

Think - Pair - Share

3 mins

2 mins How is this conversation likely to go in real life? Students are to discuss the challenges one might face trying to have this discussion with a real-life victim of animal-human conflict, whose emotions are understandably heightened.

1 min Teacher to gather the thoughts of the class

Note If you only have an hour to teach, this can be the end of the lesson. If you have longer, then students can do the following task:

Role play

2 mins

Students are to be put into pairs: one ranger and one wife of the victim (if you have a group of three, they can be an additional family member and can "pipe in" as needed)

Before they begin, they must consider how someone like Monde's wife would actually feel and behave after their husband has been attacked.

You can ask them:

- Is she likely to be calm? Is she likely to be willing to hear what the ranger has to say?
- Do you think she will be able to remain silent while the ranger speaks? Or will she interrupt with arguments against their point?
- Why is it important for the ranger to remain calm and professional the whole time, even if they are frustrated?

During their role play, there may some students who are willing to "perform" for the whole class, this would be a good opportunity for everyone to reflect on how this interaction is likely to go.

After they have role-played, encourage students to reflect on how they felt during the interaction. For example, did all the rangers succeed in remaining calm? Did they manage to say everything they wanted to say? Were the wives convinced of the ranger's arguments, or did they feel even more frustrated and hurt?

Final thoughts

Students write down their own brief ideas on this question:

Would you want to live among elephants? Why/why not?

Image credit: Matt Armstrong-Ford

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DAVID SHEPHERD WILDLIFE FOUNDATION 2025

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