

Lesson Plan

Essays on the Endangered

Book: *Saving Earth's Animals*

Series: Saving Our Planet

Level: Pioneer

Objective

To help students use text on a website about endangered animals to participate in a shared research and writing project.

Supplies

- *Saving Earth's Animals* book
- “Endangered Animals” page on the DK Findout! website:
<https://www.dkfindout.com/us/more-find-out/special-events/endangered-animals/>
- Whiteboard
- Paper and pencils
- Computer access for six small groups of students

Before the Activity

Open the DK Findout! website on a computer or smartboard to show the class. Prepare six pieces of paper by writing the name of one animal from the website at the top of each page: Rhinoceros, Orangutan, Giant Panda, Tiger, Sea Turtle, and Stag Beetle. The gray parrot article will be used as an example.

Activity

Read *Saving Earth's Animals* out loud to students. This book describes how some animals become endangered. Today, students will learn more about a few animals that are endangered. Split the class into six groups and give each group one of the prepared sheets of paper. Then, help each group pull up the “Endangered Animals” web page on a computer. Students will use this website to answer four questions in their groups. Write these questions on the whiteboard:

- Where can this animal be found?
- Why is this animal endangered?
- What can be done to help save this animal?
- What's one fun fact about this animal?

Students should write one or two sentences to answer each question. Remind students that they may need to click the link to the animal's page to find some answers, such as where the animal lives. They can also use Chapter 4 (“Healthy Habitats”) from the *Saving Earth's Animals* book for help thinking of ways that people can help save animals.

As an example, click the “Gray parrot” label and read the text about this animal aloud to the class. Click the red link to go to the “Parrots” web page and read that text, too, including the text that pops up when you click the “African gray parrot” label. Then, walk through writing sentences to answer the four questions on the whiteboard:

Gray parrots are found in African rainforests. They could become endangered because they are caught and sold as pets. Many parrots die while being sent between countries. People can help make sure gray parrots don’t become endangered by not buying them as pets. Governments can make laws against catching the parrots. Gray parrots can copy many sounds. Some have learned to say hundreds of words!

Then, have students work in their groups to research their animals and write their responses.

Evaluation

Collect each group’s paper and use the attached answer key to give each group up to 5 points:

- 1 point for answering each question about the animal
- 1 point for using complete sentences

Standards

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards’ reading standards for informational text, grade 2 (RI 2.5), and writing standards, grade 2 (W 2.7, 2.8).

Answer Key

Answers will vary somewhat but should be similar to the following examples.

Giant Panda: Giant pandas are found in forests in China. Giant pandas are endangered because their homes are being destroyed. Humans cut down forests to clear more land and get timber. People sometimes hunt the pandas, too. To help save pandas, the government can set up reservations where pandas can live safely. People can stop hunting pandas and clearing land. The giant panda spends 12 to 14 hours a day eating!

Orangutan: Orangutans live in rainforests on the islands of Borneo and Sumatra in Southeast Asia. Orangutans are endangered because they are being hunted and losing their habitats. Rainforests are cleared for developments or chopped for wood. Some orangutans are killed so their babies can be sold as pets. To help save orangutans, people can stop buying orangutans as pets. They can also stop chopping down as many trees. An orangutan's arms can reach 7.2 feet (2.2 m) long!

Rhinoceros: Rhinoceroses are found in grasslands in Africa and Asia. Rhinos are endangered because humans hunt them for their horns. Some people use the horns for dagger handles. Some use them in medicine. To help save rhinos, the government can create safe areas where rhinoceroses can't be hunted. People can stop buying products that use the horns. Rhinoceroses are vegetarian!

Sea Turtle: Most sea turtles live in tropical oceans where the water is warm. Sea turtles are endangered for many reasons. They are hunted or caught by fishers. Poisonous chemicals that are dumped into the oceans can also hurt the turtles and their habitats. To save sea turtles, conservation groups can help clean chemicals out of the ocean. People can also be careful not to catch them when they fish. A green sea turtle can weigh 700 pounds (317 kg)! Its shell can be 5 feet (1.5 m) across!

Stag Beetle: Stag beetles are found in the UK. These beetles are endangered because they are losing their habitats. Humans are cleaning dead and decaying wood from parks and gardens. This means stag beetles have nothing to eat and no place to lay their eggs. To help save stag beetles, governments can set aside safe places for the beetles to live. Stag beetles have antler-like jaws that they use to fight. During fights, male beetles try to lift one another off the ground!

Tiger: Tigers live in South and East Asia. Tigers are endangered because people hunt them. People may sell their skin or body parts. Other times, tigers are killed just for sport. To help save tigers, governments can make laws against hunting tigers. They can also create safe spaces where tigers can live. A fully grown male tiger can leap 33 feet (10 m) in the air!