

The Value of Animals

Suggested Grade Level: Middle School

Relative Subject(s): Social Studies

Objective

To understand why we value some animals higher than others. To realize that every creature has a purpose on this earth and we're all connected to one another.

Materials

- "The Value of Animals" worksheet

Activity

Preliminary Discussion

- How do we form our feelings about animals? For example, did a movie like *Jaws* or *Open Water* influence anyone to feel afraid of sharks?
- What past experiences in our lives have affected how we feel about animals?

Procedure

Students will, individually, rate the animals listed on the worksheet. After everyone has finished, discuss how they rated the animals and why they chose those ratings.

Post-Discussion

- In rating these animals, reflect upon what mankind depends upon some of them for (i.e. food and other products). Do we care about the welfare of these animals only because they provide us with something tangible?
- What about animals (like rats) that don't provide us with anything tangible, but must have a reason for their existence. Discuss the food chain and the web of life that connects us all.
- Should we protect animals even if we don't like them?

Extension Activity

Have each student choose an animal that they don't like. Have them study this animal and do a report on it, focusing on the positive aspects of this animal. Each student should share what they learned with the rest of the class.

The Value of Animals

Rate the following animals in order of importance, according to your personal opinions. Don't spend time reflecting upon your decisions, just go with your initial reaction. Once you've completed this, we'll discuss it.

Rating

1= most important

6= least important

_____ RAT

_____ DOG

_____ HUMAN

_____ WOLF

_____ WHALE

_____ COW

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