



Should Animals Be Kept In Zoos?

Should animals be kept in zoos? Our teacher asked us that question last week, and I'm still not sure how I feel about it.

I visited the zoo a while ago, and it wasn't exactly what you'd call thrilling. The tiger was asleep, the alligator didn't bother to come out of its water and don't get me started on the rhinos. But, I did notice that each animal had a display outside of its enclosure that gave information about their habitat, diet and country of origin. There was also a scale that showed how endangered they are in the wild. So many of the animals were classified as vulnerable, endangered or, even worse: critically endangered. How have we got to a point where so many amazing creatures are at risk? Surely, everybody can see how unacceptable that is?

One of the things that lots of zoos do well is to create breeding programmes for these animals. That seems like a great reason for keeping them open and for making them a home for some of the most endangered animals. These places seem to be one of the only chances these animals have. Imagine if we'd had these places when the dodo was alive, or the woolly rhino or the giant ground sloth. Would the woolly mammoth still be stomping around today if there had been a zoo to help breed them?

On the other hand, there are places out there that aren't concerned about animal welfare at all. All they are bothered about is making money. I've seen them on the news, with animals trapped in tiny cages or bare enclosures. What can we do about these places? Is it education? If they are told how to do it properly, will they? Or don't they care?

Sure, zoos are better now than they once were. In fact, one of the very last dodos on Earth died in a zoo in the 17th century. Animals are still mistreated across the world in places that don't care enough. This is a good argument for closing them all down. But you have to ask yourself, what chance do the animals have in the wild, if we do that?

There is a strong argument that the money which zoos spend would be far more effective if it was spent on conservation in the animal's own countries of origin. We might be better conserving tigers in Siberia than we are in a zoo, in England. On the other hand, most of the money that zoos spend comes from people

paying to visit these animals. If the animals go, will the money disappear as well?

I suppose that there are definitely good arguments against keeping animals in captivity, especially those that aren't endangered in the wild. However, there are equally good points that support using zoos (the good ones, at least) as part of our conservation efforts. In a perfect world, we'd all learn to respect and conserve habitats and the existence of each and every species of living creature would be prioritised. Then, zoos wouldn't be needed at all.

INFERENCE FOCUS

1. Does the author have a clear opinion on whether animals should be kept in zoos?
2. What made the author's visit to the zoo less exciting?
3. What is the author's opinion of zoos from the past?
4. Why might it not be necessary to keep animals in zoos if they aren't endangered?
5. Why might it have been a positive if better zoos were around in the past?

VIPERS QUESTIONS

R

When did the last dodo in captivity die?

V

Find a synonym for exciting in the text.

S

What are the author's main reasons that support keeping animals in zoos?

R

Find a phrase that suggests money might have more of an impact if it was spent elsewhere.

P

If you could add one animal to a zoo to make sure it was safe forever, what would it be? Why?

Answers:

1. No. They say they are not sure how they feel about it
2. The tiger was asleep, the alligator stayed inside and the rhino was a let down.
3. The author says zoos are a lot better now/they don't think older zoos were good
4. The conservation elements of the zoo won't applt to them
5. Animals such as the dodo and mammoth might still be alive today

R: 17th century

V: Thrilling

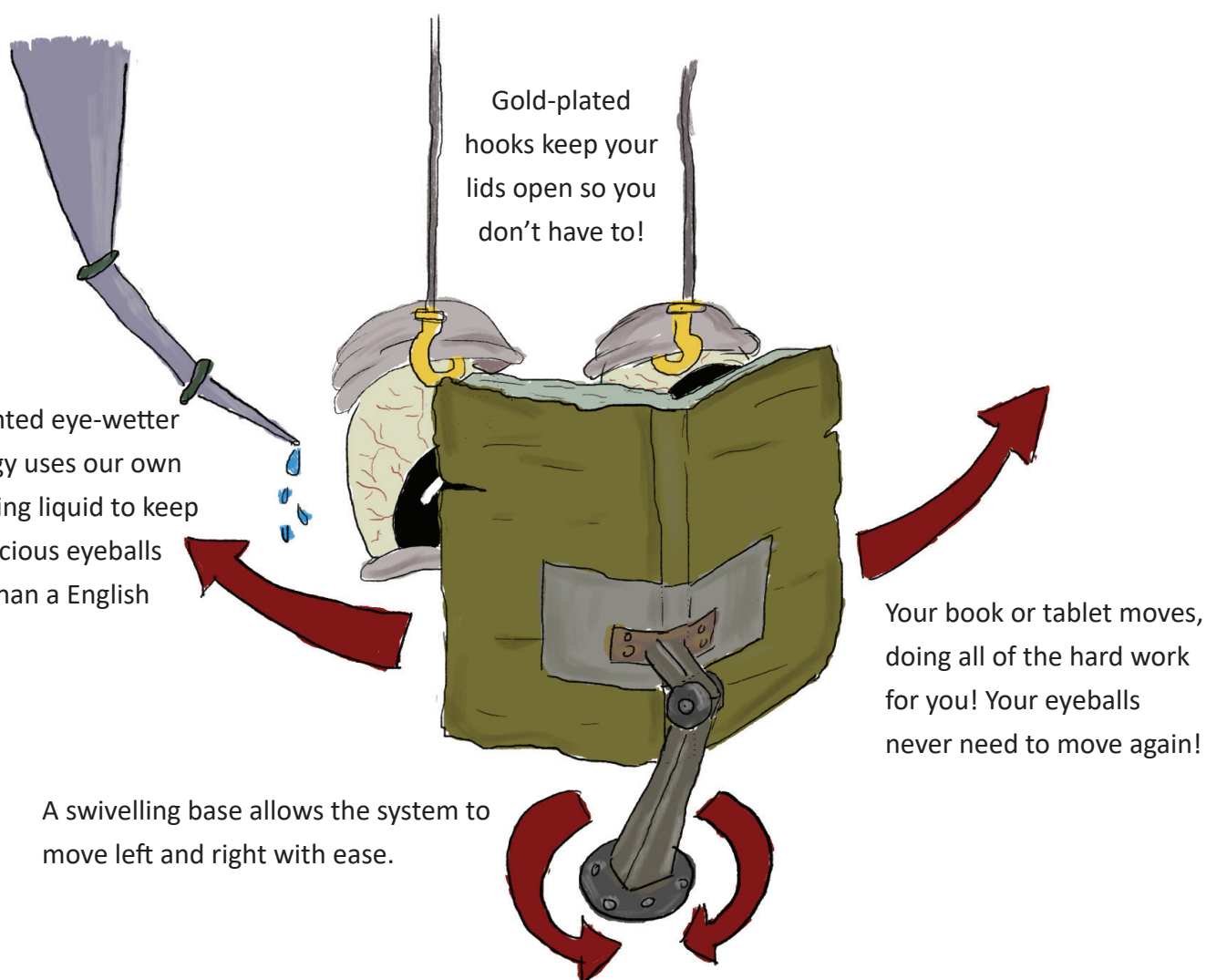
S: The money from visitors pays for conservation. This conservation helps to support endangered species in the wild

R: Far more effective

EeZeeEyeStrain-Remover

Do your eyes ever get tired when you're reading a book? What about when you're watching sport on the television? Don't you just hate having to move your eyeballs back and forth to follow the action?

Give your eyeballs a rest with the patented EeZeeEyeStrain-Remover 2.0. Forget the rumours that version 1.0 accidentally trimmed the nose hairs of 50% of the people who bought it. Ignore the cries from the older generations who say you're just getting lazy. Thousands of years ago, your ancestors had to go out and hunt a mammoth for their dinner. Now you can microwave a tiny tray of food. This is just the next step. Hundreds of years from now, people will look back and consider us foolish for moving our eyeballs at all.



If the amazing opportunities for eyeball rest aren't enough, the EeZeeEyeStrain-Remover 2.0 is an even better deal, right now. For the next 21 years, we are offering a fantastic opportunity to buy-one-get-one-free (offer only available on models for cats and dogs; human versions are not included in the deal).

That's not all! We are so incredibly generous here at EeZeeSolutions that we're including a free bottle of eye moisturiser. You'll be reading for so long and watching so much sport that you run the risk of Scaly Eye Syndrome. Our patented, never-before-tested eye moisturiser works by replacing important hyper-minerals and ridiculo-proteins. These are so dreadfully important and our technology so advanced that no other scientists have ever found them before!

Act now to take advantage of our stupendous offer. With an offer this good, we might not even be in business next week, so make the most of it while you still can!

***Warning: side-effects include wet eyes, people stopping and laughing, and painful neck syndrome caused by the excessive weight of the device. Not suitable for men, women or children or anybody from anywhere in the solar system. If you have any problems with your device, please do not contact us.**

***Another warning: hyper-minerals and ridiculo-proteins may not actually exist.**

RETRIEVAL FOCUS

1. What happened with version 1.0 of the product?
2. How long is the buy-one-get-one-free offer on for?
3. Which versions of the device are not included in the deal?
4. Why should you not wait around before taking up the offer?
5. True or false: If the device breaks, you should contact the company.

VIPERS QUESTIONS

S

How does the advert suggest we have moved on from our ancestors?

P

Why might no other scientists have found ridiculo-proteins and hyper-minerals?

V

Find a word that tells you the company thinks they are doing you a favour by giving you the deal.

I

How does the company feel about people moving their own eyeballs? How do you know?

P

Why might you not want to use the eye moisturiser?

Answers:

1. It accidentally trimmed the nose hairs of 50% of the people who bought it.
2. 21 years
3. Human versions
4. The company might not be around for long
5. False

S: We don't have to hunt mammoth anymore, we can just microwave our dinner.

P: Because they don't actually exist/they are made up by the company

V: Generous

I: They say people in the future will think them to be foolish

P: It is described as "never-before-tested".



Letter Home

Dear Mother and Father,

Thank you for your recent letter. It was lovely to hear about your travels to Europe and the amazing fun you are having at home without me. If I were to offer one thought, it would be that you might have considered what effect that would have on your daughter, locked away in a desolate prison.

This place is truly dreadful. I know you believed that you were sending me to one of the best boarding schools in the country, but I really cannot understand how they tricked you. Matron is an absolute beast who prowls the halls at night looking for any reason to send us to the cellars for the night. That's her favourite punishment for any indiscretion: leave us in that ice-cold pit until our teeth are chattering and our nightgowns are frozen stiff. Petunia was sent there a week ago, and we haven't seen her since. All she did was sneeze after lights out! Can you imagine living in those conditions? You have the ability to end this torment, simply by bringing me home!

Lessons are no better. Deportment is an utter nightmare. I'm not sure if my head just isn't flat enough or if the books are curved, but they just won't stay on my scalp. Time after time, Madam Berridge scolds me for my clumsiness, but I really am trying my hardest. Even as I write this letter, I have Great Expectations on my shoulders. Technically, it's on my head, but it's hurting my shoulders. You will notice a large smudge in the corner of the page where I dropped it very recently, and it toppled my ink well.

I do understand that you want your only child to get the best education you can provide, but I'm not entirely sure I'll live to use it. What use is knowing the finer points of Her Majesty's Empire, if I never get the chance to travel on a steamboat or visit the Indies?

I suppose I'd be happier if all they were filling our heads with was knowledge. But it's not. They are also intent on filling us up with what they laughably call "food". Perhaps I have grown soft on Cook's teacakes and delightful salmon tarts. Here, food is whatever Matron has scraped up from the garden, or so it seems. We've not had meat in weeks as Matron is convinced it's bad for the constitution. She squawks and hoots about it during her daily lectures to us. We've barely had enough food to give us the energy to keep going.

Delores was so hungry in Latin this morning that she swooned at the very thought of reciting any more on an empty stomach. There are rumours that she just disintegrated into a pile of dust, she was that ravenous!

As you can clearly see, this is no place for a growing girl. I trust that you will look deep into your hearts and accept your mistake in sending me here. This is clearly a school for deviants, and I am far too well-behaved for that. You are the only two people in the world who can stop this nonsense by bringing me home. I hope you do the right thing.

Your loving daughter,

Florence James

VOCABULARY FOCUS

1. Which word or phrase in the first paragraph describes how the author sees the school?
2. Write a definition for “desolate”.
3. Find two examples of language that describe Matron as being like an animal.
4. Which word has a definition closest to “knocked over”?
5. What does the phrase “laughably call” tell you?

VIPERS QUESTIONS

R

Which book is Florence balancing on her head as she writes?

R

Why is there a smudge on the letter?

E

Why is the word “food” in inverted commas?

S

What is the purpose of the final paragraph?

S

What are Florence’s main reasons for wanting to return home?

Answers:

1. Desolate prison
2. Bleak, empty, broken down
3. Absolute beast / prowls the halls /she squawks and hoots
4. Toppled
5. Florence thinks it's a funny/ridiculous idea that they call it food.

R: Great Expectations

R: She dropped the book and it knocked over the ink well

E: Florence doesn't think that it is actually food, that's just what they call it

S: It is intended to conclude all of the points and explain what Florence wants her parents to do.

S: She thinks that the school is cruel and that they don't get enough food. She is concerned that she won't live long enough to use the education she is getting.



No Homework

Teacher: Why on Earth haven't you handed your homework in? This is the seventh time in a row.

Pupil: I don't see why I should do homework. If I can persuade you that I'm right, can I have next week off doing it?

Teacher: Go on.

Pupil: First and foremost, I'm 9 years old. Scientists have worked out that I need a lot of rest at my age. I'm in school for over 6 hours a day, and I'm happy to do that. I enjoy your lessons and accept that it is important for my education. However, by the time I get home, I'm shattered.

Teacher: This is why I hand out the homework on a Friday. You can do it at the weekend.

Pupil: Don't you agree that extra-curricular activities are just as important to my whole education?

Teacher: Of course.

Pupil: Well, I spend Saturday mornings playing badminton. In the afternoons, I visit my grandparents and spend time with them. On Sunday, my sister has stage school, and I have cricket in the morning. I feel it's not unreasonable of me to expect Sunday afternoons to myself to rest and recuperate.

Teacher: The work that we set for homework is important to consolidate what you have learnt during the week. If you spread it over a few evenings, it shouldn't take too much time.

Pupil: But, spreading the work over several evenings is confusing. We wouldn't spread one lesson over a few days in school. Surely, if the work can't be completed during the school day, then maybe it isn't important?

Teacher: I understand what you're saying, and think you've made some good points. One of the benefits of homework is that it allows you to revisit work that you did at the beginning of the week, or in previous weeks, and to refresh it in your memory.

Pupil: Couldn't that be achieved by simply reading the same information? Do I really need to complete yet

another worksheet?

Teacher: One of the best ways to practise things, such as maths, is to work through problems. Do you think you would have been able to learn long division just by reading about it?

Pupil: A fair point. Maths is a lot easier when you can practise it as you are learning it. I suppose it's the same with grammar and punctuation. Isn't there a way that homework could be done in school, though?

Teacher: There is a homework club on Monday lunchtimes that you are free to join.

Pupil: Thank you. Isn't it a shame that I have to give up more of my free time, though? If the point of homework is to embed my learning, wouldn't it be better to do it at a time when I should be learning anyway? Couldn't we fit in half an hour on a Friday afternoon to revisit the learning?

Teacher: You've definitely made some good, well-reasoned points.

Pupil: So, do I have to do homework next week?

Teacher: I've not decided yet! Leave it with me.

RETRIEVAL FOCUS

1. How many weeks of homework has the child missed?
2. How many hours each week is the child in school?
3. Why is homework handed out on a Friday?
4. What does the child's sister do on Sundays?
5. When does the pupil see their grandparents?

VIPERS QUESTIONS

V

Find a word with a definition closest to "advantages".

I

How does the pupil feel about practising maths?

E

Why do you think the text is set out as a playscript rather than a narrative? What are the benefits?

V

If you embed your learning, what does it mean?

P

If you could add one argument to this discussion, what would it be?

Answers:

1. 7
2. 30
3. So that the children can do it over the weekend
4. Stage school
5. Saturday afternoon

V: Benefits

I: The pupil finds it much easier to practise it when they are learning it

E: You can easily see what each person is saying. You can act it out and understand how persuasion works in a conversation. Accept similar, well-reasoned answers.

V: You make sure it is secure in your brain

Pen or Pencil

My best friend writes with a pen. I still have to use a pencil. You say that my friend shows “great control over his descenders and ascenders and each one of his letters is perfectly in proportion with the rest”. Whatever that means. You just frown when you look at mine.

The thing is, I know I’m much neater with a pen. I do all my homework in pen, and you don’t seem to mind that. You even complimented me on my “neatness” the other week. Surely, if you need any evidence at all that I’m better off writing with a pen, this is it? What more can I do to prove it to you if you won’t give me a chance in class?

I know that I make quite a lot of mistakes when I’m writing. That’s because the ideas are buzzing around inside my head like butterflies and it’s quite hard to grab hold of one of them: they keep slipping away just when I think I’ve got it. Writing in pencil means that I can rub those mistakes out and keep my book looking neat, but it also means there’s no evidence of what I’ve done. Sometimes, you come over to me at the end of the lesson and moan that I’ve only written one paragraph, but you can’t see the other five I’ve rubbed out. If I wrote in pen, at least you’d know that I’m not wasting time.

On top of this, making mistakes and correcting them is all part of writing. Ask any of the best authors, and they’ll tell you that they are always making mistakes. Spotting them and correcting them is a great way for me to learn. I can even look back over my errors and try not to make them again. If I rub them out, it’s a bit like saying they never existed. I know you’ll understand how disheartening that feels—as though my work wasn’t important enough to keep.

There are other reasons for writing in pen. I bet you can’t guess how many times my friend had to stop writing the other day to sharpen her pen? That’s right, none. She just kept on writing all lesson. I have to sharpen mine every 30 seconds, or so it feels. Then there’s the trip to the bin and picking up the shavings that missed and fell on the floor. This is a great excuse for me to be distracted and start chatting with my friend. We all know how much that winds you up—by giving

me a pen, you could stop all this.

At the end of the day, I know you are a reasonable teacher who only wants what's best for us. I'm sure you will consider the points that I have raised here and make the correct decision, whatever that is.

If it makes any difference, I already have a pen ready to go, so it won't cost the school a penny!

VOCABULARY FOCUS

1. Find and copy a word that tells you the teacher is not happy when they look at the author's writing.
2. Find and copy an example of a simile in the text.
3. If something is "disheartening", how does it make you feel?
4. Find a word or phrase that tells you how the author feels about the teacher.
5. If something is "ascending", what is happening to it?

VIPERS QUESTIONS

I

Why is the author's friend allowed to write with a pen?

R

How often does the author have to sharpen their pencil?

S

What are the main arguments the author gives for wanting to write in pen?

E

Is the use of rhetorical questioning effective? Give a reason.

R

What was good about the homework the child wrote in pen?

Answers:

1. Frown
2. The ideas are buzzing around inside my head like butterflies
3. Disappointed/like you're not good enough or answers to this effect
4. You are a (reasonable) teacher
5. It is rising/going up

I: They show great control of their descenders and ascenders and the letters are in proportion

R: Every 30 seconds

S: They're neater writing with one, the teacher can see the work they've done, the child can learn from their mistakes and it saves time by not having to sharpen.

E: Accept answers that are well-reasoned. Examples might include: It is effective because it makes the teacher stop and ask themselves what more the child could do to prove it, or, it is not effective because it isn't used often enough to make the teacher consider it.

R: It was neat

Answers - No Homework:

1. No. They say they are not sure how they feel about it
2. The tiger was asleep, the alligator stayed inside and the rhino was a let down.
3. The author says zoos are a lot better now/they don't think older zoos were good
4. The conservation elements of the zoo won't applt to them
5. Animals such as the dodo and mammoth might still be alive today

R: 17th century

V: Thrilling

S: The money from visitors pays for conservation. This conservation helps to support endangered species in the wild

R: Far more effective

Answers - No Homework:

1. It accidentally trimmed the nose hairs of 50% of the people who bought it.
2. 21 years
3. Human versions
4. The company might not be around for long
5. False

S: We don't have to hunt mammoth anymore, we can just microwave our dinner.

P: Because they don't actually exist/they are made up by the company

V: Generous

I: They say people in the future will think them to be foolish

P: It is described as "never-before-tested".

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S: She thinks that the school is cruel and that they don't get enough food. She is concerned that she won't live long enough to use the education she is getting.

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