TEACHER BOOKLET

ETHICS TRAIL

MELBOURNE ZOO

DO NO HARM TO OTHERS

Is it fair that animals are treated differently from people?

Author: Marilyn Wiber

Trail Design: Joanne Roberts and Mel Treweek

The Melbourne Zoo Learning Experiences Team, respectfully acknowledges the Wunrundjeri People, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work, live and learn. We recognise their continuing connections to land, water and wildlife and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

THE EDUCATION STATE

VICTORIA State Government | Education and Training

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION FOR PHILOSOPHY IN SCHOOLS

ZOOS VICTORIA

WERRIBEE MELBOURNE HEALESVILLE

ETHICS TRAIL

MELBOURNE ZOO

DO NO HARM TO OTHERS

ESSENTIAL QUESTION: 'Is it fair that animals are treated differently from people?'

Purpose: The Victorian Association for Philosophy in Schools (VAPS), in collaboration with the Zoos Victoria learning experiences staff, have developed a philosophy trail around three identified sites. These are:

1. Fur Seals: Levels 3 - 6
2. Frogs, particularly Southern Corroboree Frog: Levels 6 - 8
3. Sumatran Orang-utan: Levels 8 - 10

Ethical capabilities: The tasks set for each site of the trail, focus on the conceptual and analytical skills necessary for deliberating ethical issues at different levels of schooling. The concept of 'fairness' provides opportunities at these year levels for students to challenge others' assumptions. Reasoning in argument is important to developing ethical capability so students can consider how their values contribute to an ethical issue.

The philosophy trails provide students with this opportunity.

As a facilitator of this trail your task is to establish a Community of Inquiry (CoI) at each site. You have suggestions for a followup CoI in your classroom. Wherever possible, use the philosophical vocabulary provided to help students distinguish between 'claims' and 'truths' and to consider the impact of 'jumping to a conclusion'.

Rather than telling your students what to think, try to ask questions that will encourage them to:

- Create hypotheses
- Clarify their terms
- Ask for and give good reasons
- Offer examples and counter examples
- Question each other's assumptions
- Draw inferences.

Link with the Zoo: Make sure your students take note of the information signs, animations, video and interactive displays at the Zoo found along the trail as they provide great information on the threats and problems these animals face in the wild. These animals are treated differently from people. The seals, with an IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Conservation Status of Least Concerned, may appear to be less affected compared to the critically endangered Sumatran Orang-utan or Southern Corroboree Frog. The focus of the Zoo is on conservation, increasing numbers and stability of the populations in the wild and educating people about what could be done to save these species.

'Fairness' as a contestable concept of the Ethical Capabilities curriculum, is first introduced around Level 3 and then clarified and extended throughout Levels 4-10. A Level 3 – 4 student should be able to demonstrate their understanding of 'Fairness' in different situations whereas a student at Levels 9-10 will be able to connect 'Fairness' to other concepts in the curriculum, be able to make distinctions between them all and be able to think through and report upon complex ethical issues. They will be asked to evaluate arguments for and against the 'Fair' treatment of animals considered in this trail.

Teachers will need to tailor the level of questioning to suit the level of understanding of their students. The Fur Seals site demonstrates Levels 3-6 thinking and questioning. The Southern Corroboree Frog is modeling Community of Inquiry questioning for students in Levels 6-8. The Orang-utan site has been written with Levels 8- 10 students in mind.

Please note: With consideration and adjustments, all sites can be used by all year levels as stimulus material for a Community of Inquiry.

Tasks: As a result of the Zoo information, Zoo observations and philosophical discussion, teachers and students should understand and apply the concept of 'fair'. They should form an opinion as to whether it is fair that animals are treated differently from people. In so doing, they should consider whether 'we should do no harm to others'.

Pre-Trail Activities to introduce participants to the Essential Question:

DO NO HARM TO OTHERS

'Is it fair that animals are treated differently from people?'

1. What is meant by the term, 'fair'?

'Fairness' is an essential concept for moral thinking. We have all experienced times when we think something is 'unfair'. There can be an overlap with 'fairness' and 'justice'.

Ethics Trail participants will need to think what 'fair' means to them. Undertake some reading/ research before you come. Individual thinking could suggest prompts as:

- 'impartial and just treatment without favouritism' (Oxford Living Dictionaries)
- 'free from bias or injustice' (Dictionary.com)
- 'quality of treating people/ animals equally or in a way that is right or reasonable' (Cambridge Dictionary)

OR

2. Facilitate a Concept Game in your classroom- thinking together.

A Concept Game could be completed as a class activity before participating in the Zoo Trail. (It would be an imperative to do this activity with your students before bringing them to the Zoo to participate in the Ethics Trail).

The purpose and value of the trail is to challenge and/ or extend an agreed understanding of the term 'fair'.

A possible script for teachers when introducing a Concept Game to the class is as follows:

Procedures:

- We will play this game to try to determine the class understanding of 'fairness'. We want to consider what we all regard as 'fair'. What situations would you regard as being 'fair'?
- We will be applying our conceptual knowledge of 'fairness' to the animals we see on the Zoo Trail.
- We will require a good deal of conceptual and philosophical considerations as well as a grasp of appropriate knowledge. So, there is a strong philosophical dimension to our Zoo visit.
- As we walk along the paths in the environments of the orang-utan, seals and frogs, we will look at the animals' behaviours and their environments. We will be learning many new things as we consider the concept of 'fairness'. We will be considering what is important to us and we will develop our own philosophies and think for ourselves.
- When trying to establish an understanding of the concept of 'fairness', we need some examples which are strongly 'fair'; some which are never 'fair' and some that are questionable or borderline cases.
  (You may use the examples provided below, or use your own)

The following examples include some from P4C.com, development of the concept of 'fairness' by Steve Williams.

Students could use a range of these, but not necessarily all of them. Each student in the class is given one of these statements written on a slip of paper.

A starving person steals some food.

A hungry person steals some food. You steal some food.

Everyone at the birthday party gets the same amount of chocolate cake.

Everyone in the class gets the same mark for their maths test.

Males earn more money than females.

A white person is paid more than a black person.

Only doctors and nurses have a duty to help sick people.

Doctors are more respected in the community than rubbish collectors.

The teacher gives everyone in the class five hours of homework every day.

Some people have several homes, whilst others are homeless.

A person has a day off work because of illness but doesn't get paid.

People who earn more money pay higher taxes.

Animals should not be kept in captivity.

Teachers should note:

- Category headings of YES, NO, NOT SURE can be written on three cards that can be placed on the floor for all students to view. This will provide a structure for each student to apply to the example that they have been given. Students need to explain their own decisions and develop some general criteria for the concept under review. Students cannot change the placement of another student's placement but they can challenge it. With class agreement a statement may be moved to another category.
- You can then discuss the class findings and write the key ideas, of the concept 'fair', on the board. Students should have reflected on the different understandings of 'fairness'.
- As the statements are being discussed and placed, the teacher keeps a record of the thinking that is being shared. Each time a point is made that implies a definition, the teacher records this work. E.g. "In this case, fair means…." As the activity progresses, the teacher might ask, "Are some definitions better than others? Should any definitions be combined?
- They should think about who would use this concept, how they would use it and why.
- You might ask, "What have we discovered, learned or clarified so far?"

What decisions have been made arising from the class discussion of these statements?

You/ your students might say that 'fairness' is:

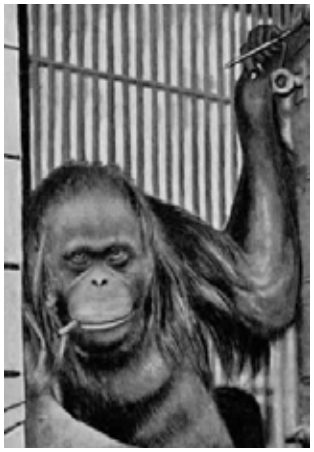
- equal treatment
- based on needs
- based on effort
- based on achievement
- based on ability
- other situations???

Students should think about their understanding of this concept of 'fairness' when applied to the trail Essential Question, i.e. 'Is it fair that animals are treated differently from people?'

With your agreed understanding of the concept of fairness, you are now ready to participate in the Zoo's Ethics Trail. Hopefully, the Trail will help you extend your thinking and increase your awareness and empathy around animal rights and human behaviour in relation to animals in the wild.

Personal decision-making and possible action following deep discussion would mean both strands of the Victorian Curriculum- Ethical Capabilities have been addressed.

The Story of MOLLIE



Mollie was brought to the Zoo as a baby in the early 1900's and immediately captured the imagination of the Zoo Board as well as that of the general public. Mr Wilkie (Director) was particularly enchanted with her and enjoyed the company of the intelligent, cheeky – although sometimes grumpy- orang-utan.

She lived in a cage (still in existence as an historical artifact on the main drive), and had all sorts of human traits imposed on her. She would be encouraged to smoke and could even strike a match, a skill she learnt by imitating visitors to the Zoo. She'd light Mr Wilkie's pipe, put on gloves, play with umbrellas and even drink lemonade…. And sometimes even stronger varieties of beverage. Ice cream was her biggest weakness.

Each night, when preparing for bed, Mollie would spread two bags on the ground as a mattress, bunch one up to use as a pillow and pile all the rest on top of her. Unfortunately, she had a knack of setting the bedding alight thanks to her superior match-lighting skills, so her enclosure needed to be lined with iron. She'd often be teased with offers of food from an 'eager to be pleased' public, but sometimes when Mollie had had enough, she would pull the visitor's arm or grab their collar instead.

Ref: 150 Years Melbourne Zoo, pg. 37

Taking into account your trail pre-reading and any discussion, what is your current understanding of the term 'Fair'?

Is it fair that animals are treated differently from people? Justify your reasons and give examples if you can.

SITE 1: FUR SEALS

(Levels 3 - 6 Victorian Curriculum, Ethical Capabilities)

FUR SEALS

▶ Please read the data page on the Fur Seals. This page provides you with important factual information about these creatures. Although you will find out that the numbers of Fur Seals are increasing, you will find out why they are still under threat.

FUR SEALS

HABITAT:

This seal is found around the coast of south-eastern Australia in the waters off Tasmania, Victoria and Bass Strait, as far east as southern New South Wales and as far west as Port Fairy. They breed in colonies on rocky islands in Bass Strait. Two major breeding sites are Seal Rocks near Phillip Island and Lady Julia Percy Island, near Warrnambool.

The seals moult, breed, and rest on land, congregating on rock platforms, reefs, and rocky or pebbly beaches. They also use structures such as beacons and oil platforms as 'land' at sea.

BIOLOGY:

There are 9 species of Fur Seals in the world occurring mostly in the southern waters between Antarctica and the southern land masses. There is also a species found in the northern hemisphere known as the Northern Fur Seal. This species has almost been hunted to extinction. All Fur Seals have a fine, dense underhair in common that has made them a target of commercial hunting in the past.

FOOD:

Fur Seals eat fish, squid, lobster and cuttlefish.

COMPARISONS WITH PEOPLE:

The Fur Seal, along with the Cape Fur Seal, is the largest of the fur seals. Males (bulls) are approximately 2–2.3 metres long and weigh 218–360kg, and females (cows) are approximately 1.5 metres long and 36–113kg.

Bulls are dark greyish-brown with a mane of coarse hair. Cows and immature seals are silver-grey to brown with a creamy yellow throat and chest.

They are called Fur Seals because they have two layers of fur: the outer layer of dark guard hairs is on top, with an undercoat so light, thick and dense that the skin stays dry even when the animal is underwater.

Fur Seals belong to the group of seals called otariidae, or eared seals. They have external ear flaps. Their front legs are flippers and their hind legs are rear-facing, which means they can swivel under the body for rapid movement on land.

Fur Seals form breeding colonies during the breeding season from October to December. Females usually have a single pup, which has its first months in the relative warmth of the Australian summer. They wean at around 11 months.

MOVEMENT:

They move swiftly in water, diving to up to 200m, but more awkwardly on land; they need to lift the front of their bodies and manoeuvre using their flippers.

THREATS:

Now protected, this species was hunted almost to extinction in earlier centuries. They are still at risk from humans, who sometimes (illegally) shoot them for bait, in the belief that they interfere with fishing operations, or to attract sharks for tourist viewing. They are also at risk from oils spills and entanglement in nets and other plastics dumped in waterways. Despite some remaining threats, numbers are thought to be stable with the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) conservation status being 'Least Concerned'.

MELBOURNE ZOO

Zoos Victoria is contributing to the fight to conserve these species. They provide education, like Seal the Loop, which distributes specially designed bins around Victorian coastal areas to collect fishing waste and reduce rates of marine wildlife entanglement. Additionally, the new campaign Bubbles not Balloons highlights the plastic pollution issue in marine environments that affects all marine wildlife and the health of the ecosystem.

- Participants are to make observations and ask questions when they attend the seal presentation at Melbourne Zoo (11.30 am daily).

  Use this sheet and guiding questions to collect information.

CRITERION	DESCRIPTION
HABITAT Where are they living? Do seals spend equal time in and out of the water? Do they prefer one habitat?	
FOOD What food have the seals been given? Would you expect this was the food they would eat in the wild?	
MOVEMENT How do seals move from place to place? Do they move differently on the ground to in the water? Do the larger animals move in a different manner to the smaller ones? Are they all swimming?	
APPEARANCE What do they look like? In what ways do they look like people? Why are they called 'fur' seals?	

FUR SEALS

SOUNDS What sounds do seals make? Can you hear a cry, a laugh, a growl, a roar? Another sound?	
SLEEP Do seals sleep?	
ALONE OR GROUP Do you think they are on their own or in a group?	
FIGHTING Are they/ do they fight?	
PLAYING Can you observe any play?	
SAFETY Are the seals safe in this environment? What threatens seals in the wild?	
OTHER? Fur Seals and humans are both mammals. In what ways are both groups very similar? A little bit similar? How are they not the same? Do Fur Seals appear to be intelligent? Explain your answer. Does this make them more like humans? Should we treat them as we would a human? Should Fur Seals be expected to perform for people?	

▶ Now write a **short paragraph** on the Fur Seals, as you saw them and about how similar and/ or different they are from humans?

FOR YOU TO CONSIDER:

How are the Fur Seals being treated? Are people treated in this way?

What has Melbourne Zoo done to ensure the survival of these animals?

What else could be done to save the Fur Seals?

GOING BACK TO OUR Essential Question: 'Is it fair that animals are treated differently from people?'

Apply your understanding of the concept 'fair' now that you have more knowledge of the Fur Seals.

Is it fair that the Fur Seals in the wild are treated differently from people?

What is being done to save these creatures? Should more be done?

What could you do to make life 'fairer' for the Fur Seals?

Explain how the Melbourne Zoo is making life 'fair' for the Fur Seals.

Are there any changes you want to make to your understanding of 'fair' on page 8 of this booklet? If so, do that now.

FUR SEALS

COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY

At the Zoo, or back in the classroom, form a Community of Inquiry (CoI) to discuss the Essential Question in the light of your Zoo observations. After visiting the Fur Seals, have any of your views changed? (It is ok when doing Philosophy to change your mind!)

If your views have changed, why have you changed your mind?

Although an Essential Question has been provided, students could also be asked to develop their own 'Big Questions' once the understanding of the concept 'fairness' has been established.

So, after the zoo visit, it could also be possible to develop a Big Question arising from the questions that the students bring back to class.

The focus of Zoos Victoria is on conservation, protecting habitats and educating people in what can be done to save the Fur Seal. Think- Should the Fur Seals have a place at the Zoo if their numbers are increasing?

LINKS TO OTHER RESOURCE MATERIALS:

https://www.coolaustralia.org/activity/seal-the-loop-flipped-classroom-marine-debris/

https://vimeo.com/205165077

https://vimeo.com/221579906

ETHICAL CAPABILITIES STANDARDS COVERED BY THIS ACTIVITY:

Understanding Concepts

- Examine the meaning of concepts.
- Discuss how ethical principles can be used as the basis for action.
- Explain how problems may contain more than one ethical issue.

Decision making and Actions

- Discuss the role and significance of conscience and reasoning in ethical decision-making.

SITE 2: SOUTHERN CORROBOREE FROG

(Levels 6 - 8 Victorian Curriculum, Ethical Capabilities)

SOUTHERN CORROBOREE FROG

- Please read the data page on the Southern Corroboree Frog. This page provides you with important factual information about these creatures. You will find out that the Corroboree Frog is 'Critically Endangered'. What does this mean?

CORROBOREE FROG

Because of its bright yellow and black stripes, the critically endangered Southern Corroboree Frog is one of Australia's best known frog species.

HABITAT:

The Southern Corroboree Frog only occurs in mountain and alpine environments in Kosciusko National Park. They are found in small seasonal wetlands and surrounding vegetation in the Australian Alps above 750 metres and are inactive during the winter, remaining under logs or litter on the woodland floor.

BIOLOGY:

There are two species of Corroboree Frog, the Southern Corroboree Frog (Pseudophyrne Corroboree) and the Northern Corroboree Frog (Pseudophryne pengilleyi). They are both listed as critically endangered by the IUCN. Like all amphibians, they have a unique life cycle that involves metamorphosis from the larval tadpole stage to the adult frog form. The changes that take place in this transition are incredible, their internal structure changes to become air-breathers, their digestive system adapts from a plant-based diet to insects, the mode of locomotion changes with development of limbs. The juvenile stage of its life cycle relies on fresh water habitat where the adult stage for a Corroboree Frog is solely a terrestrial habitat.

FOOD:

The tadpoles have a long spiral gut, typical of a herbivore, they will eat algae and small organic matter found in their pools. As a mature frog, their gut shrinks to resemble that of a predator, at this stage they eat small invertebrates, particularly small black ants, beetles, mites and insect larvae.

COMPARISONS WITH PEOPLE:

A distinct feature of the Corroboree compared with other frog species is their unique mating behaviours. Male frogs will build a nest near bogs and wetlands. They will then call to females who will visit and lay more than 30 eggs in the burrow. The developing tadpoles will take an unusually long time to hatch, from six to eight months. They develop to an advanced stage in the egg and then enter diapuse (suspended development). They remain in this stage until the nest floods and there is enough free moving water for the tadpoles to swim. Outside the breeding season, Corroboree Frogs have been found sheltering in dense litter and under logs and rocks in woodland and tall moist heath near breeding grounds.

They are 2.5 – 3 cm in body length.

Their bright colours warn they are poisonous They are unique among frogs in that they produce their own poison rather than obtaining it from their food source as is the case in every other poisonous frog species. They are the first vertebrate to be identified that produces its own toxins and have no known predators.

MOVEMENT:

They walk rather than jump. Since they have no known predators, they have no need to escape quickly like other frogs.

THREATS:

There is no one single threat that has caused the massive decline in the Corroboree Frog's population. Instead, the following factors all seem to compound this decline.

1. Disease: Amphibian Chytrid Fungus has been detected in the Corroboree Frog population. This is a highly infectious fungus that survives in soil and water and is readily transported by other frogs and animals. The fungus affects the adult frog's skin. Amphibians have specialised skin that functions to absorb (drink) water and exchange gas (breathe). The fungus infection changes the structure of the skin, preventing it from water and gas exchange, eventually killing the frog.

2. Habitat Degradation and Drought

Because Corroboree Frogs typically breed in seasonal wetlands, severe droughts cause mortality of entire tadpoles. Prolonged periods of extreme drought result in reduced quality of breeding habitat. Also habitat destruction from recreational 4WD use and the development of ski resorts.

3. Weeds and Feral Animals

In recent years, feral pigs, feral horses, and samba deer have all been observed damaging Corroboree Frog breeding habitat by trampling wetlands.

Because Corroboree Frogs typically breed in pools that are exposed to sunlight, shading by weeds such as blackberry is also likely to impact these species.

MELBOURNE ZOO

Zoos Victoria's key roles in the Southern Corroboree Frog Recovery Program include:

- Maintaining a population in captivity
- Supplementing wild populations through captive breeding
- Assisting with population monitoring
- Undertaking research into the role of chytrid fungus in the decline of amphibian populations
- Increasing community awareness of this frog

▶ Participants are to make observations of the Corroboree Frogs in their enclosure at Keeper Kids (near the main entrance of the Zoo) or at World of Frogs (next to the Reptile house). Look out for the Zoo educators walking around with specially designed Frog Pods as they 'take a frog for a walk!' on main drive (this is subject to change but often occurs between 11am-1pm, Mon-Fri)

CRITERION	DESCRIPTION
HABITAT Where do they live in the wild? Why a Frog Pod?	
FOOD What food have the frogs been given to eat? Would you expect this was the food they would eat in the wild?	

SOUTHERN CORROBOREE FROG

MOVEMENT How do these frogs move from place to place? Do they move on the ground or in water? Or both? Do they swim?	
APPEARANCE What do they look like? In which ways are they like people? In which ways are they different from people? Why is it called a 'Corroboree Frog'?	
SOUNDS What sounds do they make? Can you hear a cry, a laugh, a growl, a roar, a croak? Another sound?	
SLEEP Are they sleeping?	
ALONE OR GROUP Do they live alone or in a group?	
FIGHTING Are they/ do they fight?	
PLAYING Have you observed any play?	
SAFETY Are these frogs safe in their environment? What is their greatest threat?	
OTHER? Frogs are amphibians and humans are mammals. What is an amphibian? What is a mammal? In what ways are both groups very similar? A little bit similar? How are they not the same? Do Corroboree Frogs appear to be intelligent? Explain your answer. Does this make them more like humans? Refer to your Worksheet. Which criteria would be of greatest importance when determining whether we treat these frogs fairly? Should we treat them as we would a human?	

Now write a **short paragraph** on the Southern Corroboree Frog, as you saw them and about how similar and/ or different they are from humans?

FOR YOU TO CONSIDER:

What has Melbourne Zoo done to ensure the survival of these animals?

What else could be done to save the Corroboree Frog?

GOING BACK TO OUR Essential Question: 'Is it fair that animals are treated differently from people?'

Apply your understanding of the concept 'fair' now that you have more knowledge of the Corroboree Frog.

Is it fair that the Corroboree Frogs in the wild are treated differently from people?

What could you do to make life 'fairer' for these frogs?

Explain how the Melbourne Zoo is making life 'fair' for the Corroboree Frogs.

Are there any changes you want to make to your understanding of 'fair' on page 8 of this booklet? If so, do that now.

COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY

At the Zoo, or back in the classroom, form a Community of Inquiry to discuss the Essential Question in the light of your Zoo observations. After going for a walk with the Corroboree Frogs, have any of your views changed? (It is ok when doing Philosophy to change your mind!)

If your views have changed, why have you changed your mind?

Although an Essential Question has been provided, students could also be asked to develop their own 'Big Questions' once the understanding of the concept 'fairness' has been established.

So, after the Zoo visit, it could also be possible to develop a Big Question arising from the questions that the students bring back to class.

Think- What is being done to save these frogs? Should more be done? Why/ Why not?

The focus of Zoos Victoria is on conservation, protecting habitats and educating people in what can be done to save the Corroboree Frog.

LINKS TO OTHER RESOURCE MATERIALS:

https://www.zoo.org.au/sites/default/files/LYL_Teacher_Resource_Pack.pdf

https://vimeo.com/45547747

https://vimeo.com/155340749

ETHICAL CAPABILITIES STANDARDS COVERED BY THIS ACTIVITY:

Understanding Concepts

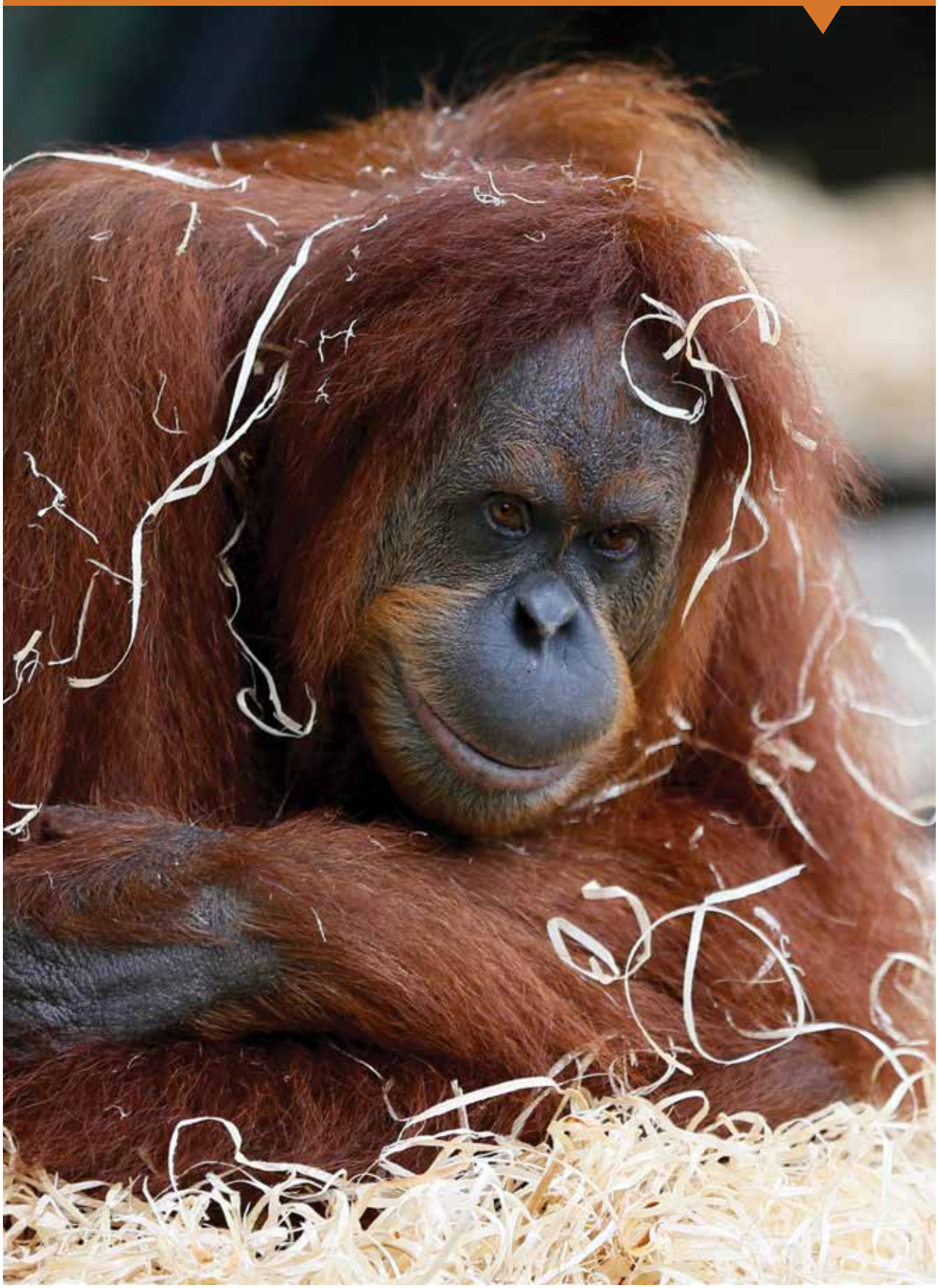
- Explore the meaning of concepts and the extent to which they are and should be valued by different individuals and groups.
- Investigate criteria for determining the relative importance of matters of ethical concern.

Decision making and Actions

- Explore the extent of ethical obligation and the implications for thinking about consequences and duties in decision making and action.

SITE 3: ORANG-UTANS

(Levels 8 -10 Victorian Curriculum, Ethical Capabilities)



ORANG-UTANS

▶ Please read the data page on the Orang-utans. This page provides you with important factual information about these creatures. You will find out that the Orang-utan is highly intelligent and can search and problem-solve to find food.

ORANG-UTANS

('Orang-utan' means 'person of the forest' in the Malay language.)

HABITAT:

The forest habitat in Indonesia and Malaysia is rapidly disappearing. Sumatran Orang-utans are under threat. They are critically endangered, with numbers in the wild rapidly falling. Numbers dropped by 95% in the last 100 years. May be 3500 left in the wild. Orang-utans are the largest tree-living mammal in the world.

BIOLOGY:

There are two species of Orang-utan found separately on islands in Indonesia. They include Pongo abelii, the Sumatran Orang-utan and Pongo pygmaeus, the Bornean Orang-utan. They are one of four types of Great Ape or Hominid species including gorillas, chimpanzee and humans. They share 97% of their genome sequence with humans. They can live up to 35-40 years in the wild and over 50 years in captivity.

FOOD:

They are largely solitary and forage for fruit high in the canopy of the rainforest. They rely on the great diversity of the plants in their forest to be able to eat seasonal fruit all year round. They rarely come to the ground and will build nests out of leaves and branches in the tree tops. They rest in smaller nests during the day.

COMPARISONS WITH PEOPLE:

Orang-utans are like humans in many ways.

Young remain with their mother the longest of any animal in the animal kingdom besides humans. A son will remain with his mother for 7-8 years while a daughter may stay with her mother into her teens. This is important learning time and helps develop problem-solving skills.

They are highly intelligent and search and problem solve to find food.

They have shaggy reddish fur, grasping hands and feet. Their powerful arms are stronger and longer than their legs.

MOVEMENT:

They travel by moving from one tree to another. On the ground they move on 'all fours', placing clenched fists on the ground.

THREATS:

They take a long time to reach sexual maturity. There are long periods between births and the Orang-utans give birth to a single young, so there is a low reproductive rate. The Orang-utan is highly vulnerable to mortality and the populations take a long time to recover from population declines.

Habitat loss is the greatest threat. Huge tracts of forest are cleared throughout their range; the land has been used for agriculture, particularly palm oil.

Other issues are road development, illegal timber harvesting, unsustainable logging, mining, and human encroachment.

Protected areas are also not secure because the boundaries with neighbouring states are not clearly delineated so it is difficult to patrol.

Many Parks are understaffed and underfunded. Oil palm companies and logging firms have encroached into Parks.

Their is an illegal pet trade for Orang-utans up to 7 years of age. The mother is killed, so this represents a real threat to wild Orang-utan populations.

They are hunted for food in some areas.

Farmers sometimes kill Orang-utans when these animals move into agricultural areas and destroy crops.

Fire can also be a threat.

MELBOURNE ZOO

The Melbourne Zoo enclosure has been carefully designed so Orang-utans and humans can both enjoy the experience. Zoo Orang-utans live in safety. The outdoor enclosure with high platforms was designed to encourage aboreal behaviours. Food is placed on the platforms so individuals can swing, climb up and down and often have to work out puzzles or use tools to retrieve their food. This provides for their physical as well as mental well-being and health. Globally, breeding programs in captivity ensure we have an insurance population so that the species does not disappear. Individual Orang-utans in captivity all over the world are managed by a curator responsible for the Species Survival Plan (SSP). These people ensure the captive population are genetically viable and breeding is conducted to maximise genetic diversity. The Bornean and Sumatran species are managed as separate captive populations to retain their species uniqueness.

- Participants to go to The Great Apes enclosure (Map location) to sit, without talking to others, to observe the Orang-utans for 20 minutes.

CRITERION	DESCRIPTION
HABITAT Where are they living? Is it a forest environment? Are the Orang-utans staying in the trees or on the ground- or both?	
FOOD What food have they been given to eat? Is it fruit? Are there vegetables? Are the orang-utans eating the natural vegetation of their enclosure?	

ORANG-UTANS

MOVEMENT How do they move from place to place? Do they move on the ground or in the trees? Or both? Do the larger animals move in a different manner to the younger ones? Are they swimming?	
APPEARANCE What do they look like? In which ways are they like people? In which ways are they different to people?	
SOUNDS What sounds can Orang-utans make? Can you hear a cry, a laugh, a growl, a roar? Another sound?	
SLEEP Are any Orang-utans sleeping?	
ALONE OR GROUP Are they spending their time alone or in group interaction?	
FIGHTING Is there any fighting?	
PLAYING Can you observe any play? How are they spending their time?	
SAFETY Are the Orang-utans safe in this environment? What or who is the Orang-utans greatest threat in the wild?	
OTHER? Orang-utans and humans are both mammals. In what ways are both groups very similar? A little bit similar? How are they not the same? Do Orang-utans appear to be intelligent? Explain your answer. Does this make them more like humans? Should we treat them as we would a human?	

- Now write a **short paragraph** on the Orang-utans, as you saw them and about how similar and/ or different they are to humans?

FOR YOU TO CONSIDER:

What food do they eat in the wild? How do the Zoo Orang-utans find food?

You will find out why the Orang-utans in Sumatra and Borneo are under threat. Should forest clearing, for timber and palm oil production, be allowed?

Explain why the Orang-utans are 'critically endangered'. Think what this means.

How are the Orang-utans being treated? Are people treated in this way?

If the Orang-utans are so similar to people, should they be treated like people? (Refer p7 - the story of Mollie). Suggest the advantages and disadvantages for both Orang-utans and people if this was the case.

The information on the Zoo Information boards tells you that the Orang-utans could disappear from our planet.

What has Melbourne Zoo done to ensure some Orang-utans are safe, have somewhere to sleep and food to eat?

Are there any changes you want to make to your understanding of 'fair' on page 8 of this booklet? If so, do that now.

COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY

At the Zoo, or back in the classroom, form a Community of Inquiry to discuss our Essential Question in the light of your Zoo observations. After visiting the Orang-utans, have any of your views changed? (It is ok when doing Philosophy to change your mind!)

If your views have changed, why have you changed your mind?

Is it fair that the Orang-utans in the wild are treated differently from people?

What is being done to save these creatures? Should more be done?

Is the treatment of Orang-utans the same in all Zoos? In different countries?

What could you do to make life 'fairer' for the Orang-utans?

Possible questions that could lead to **Extension Activities** or further dialogues, suitable for Years 9 and 10 students, could be:

- Is keeping animals in zoos, 'fair'?
- Is it morally wrong to keep animals in zoos?
- Should animals be held in captivity in a zoo?
- Should there be a global Code of Ethics for the way animals are treated in zoos?
- Under what conditions could it be morally justified to hold a creature in captivity?
- Should we think of animals and humans differently?
- Is captivity a necessary harm?

LINKS TO OTHER RESOURCE MATERIALS:

https://www.zoo.org.au/sites/default/files/DPUO_Teacher_Resource_Pack.pdf

https://vimeo.com/73596136

https://vimeo.com/154689444

ETHICAL CAPABILITIES STANDARDS COVERED BY THIS ACTIVITY:

Understanding Concepts

- Investigate concepts such as fairness, equality, respect, tolerance
- Explore a range of ethical problems and examine the extent to which different positions are related to ethical concepts and principles.

Decision making and Actions

- Discuss issues raised by thinking about consequences in approaches to decision-making and action and arguments for and against these approaches.
- Investigate how different factors involved in ethical decision making can be managed by people and groups.

REFLECTIVE WRITING

(A considered re-draft of this writing might be annotated against the EC standard for assessment)

- Find a comfortable place in the Japanese Gardens or somewhere quiet to take some time to consolidate your thinking around our Essential Question. Justify your thinking with reasons and examples if you can.

Is it fair that animals are treated differently from people?

As a result of undertaking the Zoo Trail:

(a) Has your relationship with these animals changed? Explain your ideas.

(b) Has your understanding of the ways in which we treat animals changed? Give reasons for your answer.

(c) Are we treating animals more 'fairly' today?

CONTACT DETAILS

- For assistance with the trail
- In-school/ follow up support
- Further training in facilitating a Community of Inquiry

Joanne Roberts
Ethical Capabilities Project Coordinator (Western Hub)
0400 105 400

Janette Poulton
Education Officer
Victorian Association for Philosophy in Schools
www.vaps.vic.edu.au
educationofficer@vaps.vic.edu.au

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Staff at:
Zoos Victoria Education Team
Ascot Vale PS
Good News Lutheran College
Hoppers Crossing SC

Booklet Design & Layout
KD Graphic Design
kddesign11@gmail.com