



Extinct and Endangered

Grade Level

Grade 2

Engage

This activity is designed to start your students in recognizing themselves as scientists and thinking critically about problem-solving. The goal is to teach concepts through discovery and to encourage using scientific thought processes. As with all lessons provided, please feel free to adapt them according to your students' abilities. Some of your students may be early readers, in which case you may find it more successful to lead activities and discussions as a whole group rather than using individual research plan sheets. Certain scientific vocabulary may or may not be appropriate for your student's level of understanding. Take these ideas, make them your own and your students will have a greater chance of success.

What can learning about extinct species teach us about protecting endangered species alive today?

1. Begin this lesson by telling students that they will be learning about extinct species and endangered species, and introduce the research question for this activity.

Explore

2. First ask the group if anyone has heard of the term "endangered species" and if they can explain what they think it means, or where they have heard it. Next, ask students if they can name any animals that are endangered and if they know why they became endangered. Start a list with student responses.
3. Next, ask students if they can identify any animals that are now extinct and list the causes for their extinction. Continue to record answers so entire class can view list.
4. Continue with the discussion and ask the group if they believe humans could make an impact on decreasing the number of animal species that are going extinct?

Explain

5. Explain to the group that you have an activity that will help compare extinct species and endangered species.
6. Begin the activity by splitting the class into 2 groups.

7. Each group will receive a chart that will include either 5 extinct species or 5 endangered species (included at end of lesson).
8. Each group should complete the chart by researching information about each animal as designated by the prompts.
9. Team members should also write their findings for each question/prompt on an index card. Instruct them to only write the fact/answer, and NOT the animal name. This will be used in a guessing game with the opposite team.
10. Direct the teams to draw each animal on their chart on large pieces of paper. Hang each animal drawing around the room in different locations.

Adjustments for Social Distancing

Each group member can be assigned an animal and or question from their team chart to research individually. Each team member can then write their findings in the chart one at a time. Drawings should be also be done individually without sharing drawing materials.

Expand

11. Each team should take turns guessing and matching the facts on the index cards with an animal from the other team's chart. Index cards can be placed/taped on the image of each animal when a match is correctly guessed.
12. Check answers for accuracy to determine which team recorded the most correct answers.
13. Review and compare extinct and endangered animal facts together as a class. Did students notice any similarities between animals? Or between extinct and endangered species facts?

Assess

14. As the students are engaged in the activity, have them think about what they have learned through this exercise. Were they surprised by any of their findings? Did learning about extinct animals, help them understand why some animals become endangered? Complete the research plan, and together determine if there is anything learned from extinction stories of the past to help endangered animals today to help prevent extinction in the future.

Standard

Ohio Academic Content Standards
Grade 2 Life Science Topic: Interactions Within Habitats All organisms alive today result from their ancestors, some of which may be extinct. Not all kinds of organisms that lived in the past are represented by living organisms today.

EXTINCT AND ENDANGERED: GROUP ACTIVITY SHEETS

Endangered animals (Group 1)

	Bornean orangutan	African painted dog	Hawksbill sea turtle	Blue whale	Western lowland gorilla
How many are in the wild today?					
Where does this animal live?					
What caused this species to become endangered?					
List 3 interesting facts about this animal					

Extinct Animals (Group 2)

	Glyptodon	Woolly mammoth	Giant ground sloth	Saber –toothed cat	Dunkleosteus
How many animals of this species were once alive?					
Where did this animal live?					
What caused this animal to become extinct?					
List 3 interesting facts about this animal					



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Supplemental Materials

My Research Plan

What can learning about extinct species teach us about protecting endangered species alive today?

1. What is my research question? Is it a good question?



2. How can I get my information?



3. What will I do with this information?



4. How will I know I did my job well?

