



Global Voices Elementary Information Sheet

Elephants and Poverty



Courtesy of the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust

Elephants

- There are three species of elephants existing in the world today: African bush elephants, African forest elephants and Asian elephants.
- African elephants are currently found in 37 African nations.
- They differ from Asian elephants in that they are larger, have bigger ears and both male and females have tusks.
- Elephants use their tusks to dig, debark trees and to move branches and trees.
- Tusks are also known as ivory. It is soft and can be easily carved to make for art projects.
- Elephants are also known for their emotions. They cry, grieve and even experience depression – characteristics mostly known of humans.

Elephant Population Decline

- Three main factors threaten populations of elephants worldwide
- **Ivory Poaching:** Elephants are one of a few species with ivory tusks. This is very valuable on the world market. Hunting for ivory became so widespread that a global convention was adopted in 1989 to ban the trade.
- **Bush meat:** This is wildlife not traditionally considered edible that is hunted for food, usually illegally. People traditionally have hunted these animals. But, increases in population and poverty have led to overhunting in some areas.
- **Land encroachment:** As populations increase, they need more land to live on and more land to farm. This leaves less room for elephants in their natural habitat. Sometimes, they venture off reserves looking for food and trample peoples' crops or endanger people. They are often targeted by those who are afraid they may harm their families or their livelihoods.

Key Terms

- **endangered** – threatened with extinction
- **livelihood** – a means of supporting one's existence
- **poaching** – to hunt or take wild animals illegally
- **rural** – of or relating to the country or country life
- **sanctuary** – a place of refuge

To find out more about Murka and other elephants at the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust visit <http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org/>

Global Voices Elementary Educator Resources

Note to Educators:

The following activities are designed to stimulate a current events discussion. Generative in nature, these questions can be a launching point for additional assignments or research projects. Teachers are encouraged to adapt these activities to meet the contextual needs of their classroom.

In some cases, reading the article with students may be appropriate, coupled with reviewing the information sheet to further explore the concepts and contexts being discussed. From here, teachers can select from the questions provided below. Activities are structured to introduce students to the issues, then allow them to explore and apply their learnings. Extension and conclusion activities are included to challenge students and finally, encourage them to reflect on the issues at hand.

Since these activities are designed as discussions rather than formal lessons, assessment strategies are not included.

Themes and Course Connections:

- Animal rights
- Human rights
- Course Connections: Social Studies, Science and Technology, Language, The Arts.

Materials:

- Chart paper and markers
- Black board and chalk
- Drawing utensils (makers, pencil crayons etc)
- Paper
- Internet, newspapers, books etc

Specific Expectations and Learning Goals:

Students will:

- Discuss the differences between animal rights and human rights, taking an in-depth focus on animal rights.
- Explore population and land issues in Nairobi, Kenya.
- Learn about conflicts between animals and man.
- Discuss the proper treatment of animals.
- Explore the various ways that animals are used in society.
- Write an illustrated short story from the perspective of an animal in danger.

Knowledge and Understanding:

1. Discussion: Human Rights versus Animal Rights (estimated time: 5 minutes)
 - a. Ask students:
 - i. What rights to we have as humans? List answers on the board.

- ii. Do animals have rights? If so, what are these rights? List answers on the board.
 - iii. How are human rights different from animal rights? Should there be differences?
 - iv. What happens if an animal is mistreated?
 - v. What organizations in our community help to protect animals?
2. Venn Diagram: Human Rights versus Animal Rights (estimated time: 10 minutes)
 - a. Divide students into small groups.
 - b. On chart paper, have each group draw a two circle Venn Diagram. Students will title one circle “Human Rights” and the other circle “Animal Rights”. The centre portion of the diagram will represent the rights that both animals and humans have in common.
 - c. Have groups complete their diagrams.
 - d. Once diagrams are complete, ask each group to present to the class. Encourage students to debate where the rights belong.

Thinking:

1. Read Global Voices Column as a class (estimated time: 5 minutes)
2. Discussion (estimated time: 5 minutes)
 - a. Ask the class to work together to retell the events of the column in their own words.
 - b. Ask students to explain how they felt while the column was being read. Did they feel sad? Why? Did they feel angry? Why?
3. Animal Rights Investigation (estimated time: 15 minutes)
 - a. Write the following questions on the board. Ask students to reflect on the Global Voices column and write written responses in their journal for each question. In this column:
 - i. Who are the victims?
 - ii. What happened?
 - iii. Where did the incidents occur? Include a diagram.
 - iv. What were they doing?
 - v. When did this occur?
 - vi. How were those involved affected?
 - vii. Who is guilty?
 - viii. Why did they do what they did?
 - ix. What rights have been violated in this situation?
 - b. Once students have completed their personal investigation ask them to join together with another classmate and compare their investigations, making any appropriate adjustments to their findings.

Communication:

1. Food Chain (estimated time: 15 minutes)
 - a. Ask students to recall in the column why residents of Nairobi have resorted to eating “bush meat”?
 - b. Explain to students that all living organisms must consume energy in order to survive. Humans are omnivores; this means we get the energy and nutrients we need to live from both plants and animals. Have students reflect on what they eat and where this food comes from, discuss as a class.

- c. Ask students to create a food chain that illustrates the natural cycle from which they attain their food. Encourage them to think of the first stage where this chain begins and build from there.
 - d. Ask students to illustrate their food chain using arrows, pictures and labels.
2. Animal Products (estimated time: 10 minutes)
- a. Explain to students that in many cases, animals can be used to produce goods. For example, the ivory elephant's tusk can be used to create beautiful jewelry for people to wear. Ask students to list other instances such as this.
 - b. Ask:
 - i. Do you think it's okay to use animals to produce material goods?
 - ii. Why are these types of materials valuable?
 - iii. When do you consider this to be inappropriate?
 - iv. Now will you think twice before purchasing goods made from animals?

Application:

1. Children's book (continuous project)
 - a. Explain to students that they will be writing a children's book from Murka's perspective about the details of her life as presented in the Global Voices column.
 - b. The students will create a seven-page, illustrated children's book. Ask students to divide a piece of paper into eight boxes. They will use these boxes to create a story board that sticks to the following structure:
 - Box 1: introduce characters and establish setting
 - Box 2: introduce main conflict
 - Box 3: identify actions taken to deal with the conflict and the resulting complications
 - Box 4: what further actions are taken to deal with the conflict and the resulting complications
 - Box 5: what further actions are taken to deal with the conflict and the resulting complications
 - Box 6: climax: present what happens to the main character, solving the conflict
 - Box 7: examination of the main character's feelings
 - Box 8: resolution
 - c. Encourage students to use illustrations throughout their story.
 - d. Once their story board is complete, allow students to begin their good copies. Distribute eight pieces of blank paper to each student. Ask them to leave the top half of the page blank for illustrations, drawing lines on the bottom half where they will write the text of their story. When the stories are complete, staple the edges together creating a binding.
 - e. Finally, allow students to swap stories and encourage independent reading.

Additional Resources:

- World Wildlife Fund – Canada <http://wwf.ca/>
- World Wildlife Fund – International <http://www.worldwildlife.org/>