

Name: _____

Date: _____

Reading warm-up: Read the questions below. Answer the questions as best as you can. Then read the passage.

1. What is extinction? _____

2. What does "native" mean? _____

3. What is an endangered species?

4. Is hunting bad? _____ Explain why or why not.

Endangered Species

By Hope Mucklow Edited by Nancy Whelan

Native plants or animal whose current population numbers are so low that the species faces the threat of extinction (no longer existing anywhere on Earth). Various levels of this status start with least concerned (LC), near threatened (NT), vulnerable (VU), endangered (EN), critically endangered (CR), extinct in the wild (EW), and extinct (EX). Possible causes of this threat are loss of habitat, drought, climate change, competition for resources from invasive species, and poaching.

Certain species if not preyed upon or hunted will multiply to high numbers that will consume too many resources or develop diseases and other problems that will ultimately lead to death anyway. Natural predators are nature's way of keeping balance.

Poaching (sounds like coaching with a "p") differs from hunting, because the hunter violates the governing laws that exist that determine what may be hunted and when. These laws help keep the population numbers in balance allowing adequate time for reproduction and survival of the animal, while ensuring that human interests and safety are protected as well.

Too often these laws are broken, because humans create demand for animal parts and products, for various reasons. For example, the red panda's adorable striped tail is still used in the Yunnan province of China. Here it is used to create hats worn by newlyweds who consider the tail a lucky charm and the perfect gift for a new bride. Therefore, red panda fur "pelts" continue to be illegally sold on the black market.

Habitat loss due to deforestation explains one of the reasons why both the giant panda and red panda are endangered species. Both pandas rely mainly on bamboo for their #1 food source. Recent research finds that based on the structure of their skulls, the two species are unable to eat the same thing. Because they eat different parts of the bamboo, the red panda and giant panda co-exist without problem.

The good news is, if people worked together, some species on the endangered list can rebound in population to the point where they're numbers are no longer considered endangered. This is the story of The American Bald Eagle.

Learning about, teaching others, preserving habitat, conserving water, and adopting a species through a conservation program like The Red Panda Network are effective ways to make a positive difference. Special days like "Endangered Species Day" are designated to increase awareness and understanding of how humans can better care for their shared environment with a multitude of different species.

Review Questions:

1. What do some people in Asia think a red panda tail is for? _____

2. Which species classification means *in most danger*? _____
3. Which species classification means *in least danger*? _____

4. What is the difference between hunting and poaching?

5. List and describe three activities you can do to make a difference in the status of an endangered species. _____

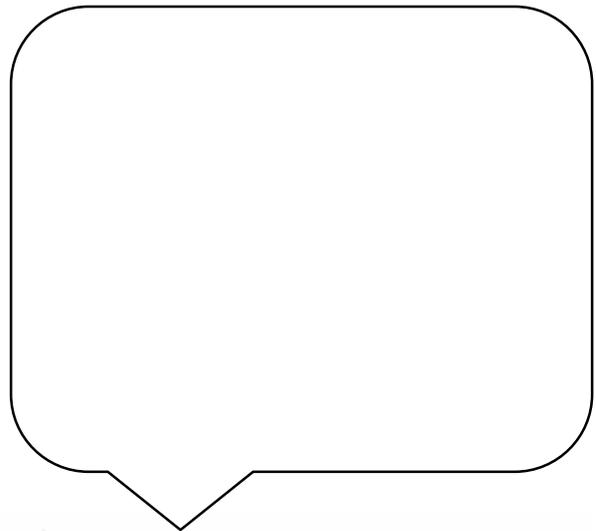
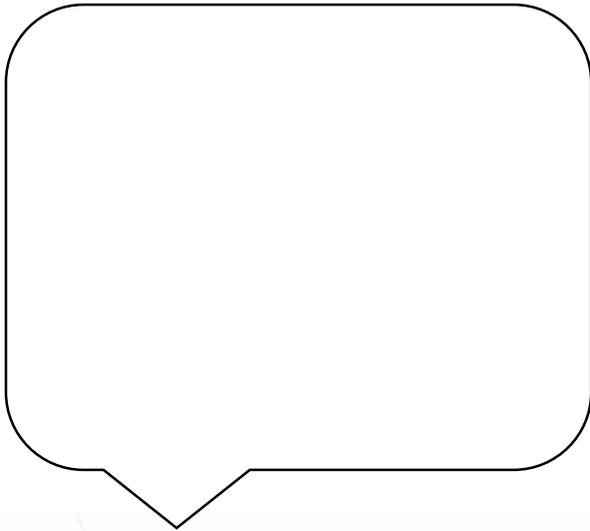
Additional Activities:

1. Read *Rojo, The Baby Red Panda at the Zoo*. Identify 3-5 difference between giant pandas and red pandas. Use the attached sheet to make a chart comparing the two.
2. Here's an short online quiz about endangered species in North America that would project nicely on a Smart/Promethean Board.
<http://www.nature.org/newsfeatures/specialfeatures/animals/endangered-species-quiz.xml>
3. Visit:<http://animals.about.com/od/endangeredspecies/a/endangered-species-faq.htm> to learn more about the US Endangered Species Act and to view the types of animals listed.
4. If you are interested in adopting a red panda as a class or as an individual, do so through the: <http://redpandanetwork.org/>

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Read *Rojo, The Baby Red Panda at the Zoo* by Hope Mucklow. Fill out the text boxes describing 3-5 difference between the red panda and giant panda. (ie. Size, color, diurnal/nocturnal). Color in the pandas when you are done.



Nombre: _____

Fecha: _____

Lee Rojo, *The Baby Red Panda at the Zoo de Hope Mucklow*. Rellena los cuadros de texto describiendo de 3-5 diferencias entre el panda rojo y el panda gigante. (es decir, el tamaño, color, diurno/nocturne, etc.) Pinte el dibujo.



Teacher Notes

Use the questions in the pre-reading guide to activate prior knowledge students have on the subject. One might choose to make sure students have the correct definitions of the vocabulary words in questions 1-3 prior to reading. If not, all but “native” will be defined in the reading and you could have them go back and change their answers after they read the passage. Question 4 is meant to stimulate students to make a prediction. It might be fun to allow some differing opinions to surface in the group with no resolution prior to reading.

Review Questions:

1. What do some people in Asia think a red panda tail is for? To create hats worn by newlyweds who consider the tail a lucky charm and the perfect gift for a new bride.
2. Which species classification means *in most danger*? Encourage students to discuss whether it is critically endangered (CR) or extinct in the wild (EW). Those extinct in the wild live only in zoos around the world.
3. Which species classification means *in least danger*? least concerned (LC)
4. What is the difference between hunting and poaching? This question is to point out that hunting isn't necessarily bad. Humans are predators to some prey. Too many deer die from starvation in the winter in states like Pennsylvania. In Maryland the deer are stripping too much forest vegetation from their high numbers. Hunting helps to keep the population in check and can provide nutritious food for humans. Many hunters and fishermen care greatly for the well being of the animals. Its' hunting to greedy excess and that violates laws (poaching) that leads to the threat of extinction.
5. List and describe three activities you can do to make a difference in the status of an endangered species. Students will need to expound on “Learning about, teaching others, preserving habitat, conserving water, and adopting a species”. For example: learning about and teaching others go hand in hand. If the culture believes that an animal is “bad” because it kills livestock, they first need to learn why a wild animal may be turning to livestock and take different measures so that both can live. In this article using a red panda tail for a hat is a cultural tradition. People need to be willing to change their traditions and beliefs. Preserving habitat is the most universal answer for helping endangered species. Conserving water has to do with ensuring clean water is available to all around the world. Producing less trash and handlind it responsibly are also good responses. Life in the ocean is struggling with our trash and pollution problems. There are many conservation programs students can research and learn more about how to support. The Red Panda Network is a favorite of the author because they help the surrounding people in the native habitat of the red pandas in addition to help preserving the habitat. Also, they are very fiscally responsible. This is something students should be taught to evaluate before supporting a conservation movement. Are the funds really being used to conserve the species? Are they doing it in a respectful manner for the native people and economy?