

The Little Tiger with Heart

Story Reference: *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Humane Heroes Volume II*, Story 6, "The Little Tiger with Heart"

Lesson Description: Students learn about an endangered baby Siberian tiger born at the American Humane Conservation-certified Pittsburgh Zoo who needed emergency treatment to save her life. She was one of three cubs and had to be separated from her mother and siblings for an extended period in order to treat her illness. The animal care team knew that when tigers are separated from their family, they may forget each other and potentially not welcome a member back. Not only were the zoo veterinarians able to save her life, but through careful steps and planning, the zoo staff successfully reunited the baby tiger with her siblings and mother. In this lesson, students conduct Internet research in order to write a short blog post outlining the steps it takes and the skills required to successfully help animals in human care.

ELA Alignment:

- Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing; link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.

Lesson Objectives:

- Compare stories of animals in human care and identify common and distinct features.
- Explain the skills and knowledge necessary to successfully help animals survive.

Vocabulary:

- Chuff

Materials:

- Access to the Internet
- Online interactive classroom blog or other publishing platform
- Guidelines for evaluating credible online sources

Resource Links:

- "The Little Tiger with Heart" additional online resources:
<http://www.chickensoup.com/ah/volume-2/story-6>
- Chuff definition: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prusten>
- An online app to use for digital collaboration with the question and answer exercise:
www.padlet.com

- APA format for website citations: <http://www.easybib.com/reference/guide/apa/website>
- MLA format for website citations: <http://www.easybib.com/reference/guide/mla/website>

Introduction: Group share medical care stories in one word (7 minutes)

- Ask students to form a large, open circle. To begin the lesson, have students contemplate a time they might have been ill or needed a doctor's care. What did it feel like to visit the doctor? Pause a few moments to allow time to think then ask students to share one word that best describes how they felt. Students can share in either clockwise or counter-clockwise order. Some possible answers might be: curious, nervous, hurting, stressed, uncomfortable, or uncertain.
- Next ask students to contemplate how the situation was resolved. Did the situation clear up right away, or did it take a while? Go around the circle again and ask students to share one word that best describes how they felt afterward. Some possible answers might be relieved, proud, brave, hopeful, grateful, thankful, or relaxed.
- Tell students that today's lesson will be about an animal needing expert medical care and will explore the skills and behaviors of veterinarians, zoo staff, and volunteers dedicated to keeping animals healthy.

Read and analyze: Chat Stations (20 minutes)

- Prior to reading "The Little Tiger with Heart," arrange students in groups of 3-5 and tell students that they will read the story in their groups, taking turns reading aloud and following along silently. When finished, the groups will visit chat stations around the room to answer questions about the story.
- Place the following questions on the walls around the room. Alternatively, use a digital collaboration application to pose the questions and provide a forum for students to post their group's answers.
 - *What were two early observations that alerted the zoo staff that something might be wrong with the baby tiger?*
 - The cub was not crawling as well as her siblings.
 - The mother paid less attention to the cub.
 - *List four steps the veterinarians took to learn more specifically about what might be wrong with the cub*
 - They performed an initial evaluation.
 - They tried treating her with antibiotics and fluids.
 - They performed a physical exam to check for external abnormalities.
 - They used X-rays and MRI to check for internal abnormalities.
 - *What were three signs that the cub's treatment was working?*
 - She began eating on her own.
 - She became strong enough to walk around.
 - She started to recognize her toys.
 - She responded to voices and movement.

- *What were three ways the zoo staff prepared the cub to reunite with her family?*
 - They made sure not to overexpose her to human visitors.
 - They played energetically with her to simulate what her mother and siblings would do.
 - They gradually took her outdoors in the cold to grow her winter coat.
- *What kinds of signals did the caregivers notice in the tiger siblings toward each other when they were first reunited?*
 - The brother and sister were frightened and huddled together.
 - The baby tiger pounced on them.
- *What was Toma's response to the baby tiger when she first saw her through the wire mesh, and what did it mean?*
 - She chuffed, which meant she recognized the baby tiger.
- Establish time limits for each group to rotate through the chat stations. Circulate among the groups to ensure each group member provides input for every question.
- Conduct a class discussion by revisiting each station and calling on individual groups to share their answers.

Guided practice: Create a blog post to explain best practices in providing medical care to animals (18 minutes)

- Tell students that in their groups they will conduct Internet research to produce a short blog post to inform readers of best practices in providing for the medical needs of animals. The groups may choose to write about animal healthcare in zoos and aquariums, or healthcare for domestic animals or pets. They should include 3-5 credible Internet sources and work collaboratively to write the post.
 - Optional: Provide each group with the Evaluating Credible Online Sources handout.
- The blog post should identify their animal species and include information such as the following:
 - *What are some basic medical needs for this animal?*
 - *What skills are required to care for this animal?*
 - *What are some common health risks for this animal?*
 - *Who should perform the tasks?*
- Encourage students to divide up the research and writing tasks to complete the task in the time allotted.

Closing: Identify local animal care organizations (7 minutes)

- Help students identify local organizations that house or care for animals (e.g., zoos, aquariums, animal shelters).
- Pose the following question to students: *If you discovered a wild animal who was sick, injured, or in danger, who might you contact for resources and support?*

Evaluating Credible Online Sources

As a general rule, information published online in websites and blogs has a greater chance of being credible if some or all of the following information is provided:

- The author's name
- The date of publication
- Outside sources who may have contributed to the information presented
- A domain url with the suffix .edu, or .gov

Author

- ☐ Is the author's name provided? Anyone who is willing to stand behind their writing by signing their name is a good indication of a credible source. In some cases, an online source may be published by a group or organization without the names of specific authors.
- ☐ Do the author's ideas have merit? Are reasons and explanations given that logically support the author's statements? Is the author a recognized expert on the topic?
- ☐ Does the author use correct grammar and spelling? Credible sources strive for clear communication and therefore pay close attention to writing style.

Date

- ☐ Is the date provided? It is important to know when a webpage article was written. When the date is provided, the reader is allowed to assess whether the information is current for his or her purposes.
- ☐ Is the source still relevant? A source may have been credible at one time, but the data may no longer be relevant or accurate if conditions have changed, too much time has passed, or there is new information.

Sources

- ☐ Does the article list or embed sources of information? Credible sources include links or references for the reader to verify outside sources used in presenting the information.
- ☐ Does the source benefit financially from the information presented? Credible sources do not present research with a potential commercial or marketing bias.

Domains

- ☐ Is the domain .edu or .gov? Webpages published by educational (.edu) or government (.gov) institutions must conform to stricter standards of credibility. Domains with .com or .org may still contain credible information but can be purchased and managed by anyone for any purpose.