

Beloved Brother Bears

Story Reference: *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Humane Heroes Volume II*, Story 1, "The Chicago Bear Cubs"

Lesson Description: Students learn about the fate of two baby bears who were orphaned and found searching for food on the outskirts of a small town in Alaska. The bear cubs could not fend for themselves in the wild and were in danger of dying of starvation or being killed by humans. Kind-hearted people from the town reached out for help to rescue the bears and relocate them to the American Humane Conservation-certified Brookfield Zoo in Chicago. The bear cubs now live safely in a habitat that mirrors the wild. In this lesson, students analyze factors that make an authentic habitat and design their own imaginary habitat for an animal who normally lives in the wild.

ELA Alignment:

- Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).

Lesson Objectives:

- Analyze factors that make a good habitat for a particular animal.
- Design an imaginary habitat for an animal who lives in a zoo.

Vocabulary:

- Humane

Materials:

- Humane Graphic Organizer handout
- Notebook paper for taking notes
- Design a Habitat Graphic Organizer handout

Resource Links:

- *Humane Heroes Volume II*, Story 1, "The Chicago Bear Cubs"—Additional Media: <http://www.chickensoup.com/ah/volume-2/story-1>

Introduction: Think, Pair, Share about zoological institutions that work to preserve wild animals, and the word "Humane" (10 minutes)

- Write this quote by Dr. Robin Ganzert, President and CEO of American Humane, on the board or on a piece of poster paper: *People won't protect what they don't love. And they can't love what they don't know.*

- Give students a moment to read the quote and think about what it means. Pose the following question to the class: *How might Dr. Ganzert's idea apply to the role of zoos and aquariums in society today?*
- Ask students to discuss their response to the question with the person next to them. Walk around and listen in on the pair discussions. Responses could include the following:
 - The more people know about the animals, the more interested they become in protecting those animals.
 - Zoos, aquariums and conservation centers help people learn more about wild animals.
- Instruct each pair of students to collaborate on a definition of the word "humane." Prompt students to carefully examine the word and how it is spelled. (Encourage students to recognize the "human" in the word "humane.")
- Distribute the Humane Graphic Organizer to assist the pairs. As students write their definition of the word "humane," they should provide some examples and nonexamples of humane behavior. Students may also describe the characteristics of a Humane Hero.

Read and analyze: Read aloud with stop and jot (18 minutes)

- Prior to reading "The Chicago Bear Cubs," explain to students that they will read this story aloud together and will be directed to stop and jot down notes when prompted at key points in the text. Distribute a blank sheet of notebook paper to each student.
- Randomly call on students to read aloud passages of varying lengths. Tell the rest of the class to follow along and be prepared to read when called upon.
- Direct students to stop and jot down notes on the following prompt at the end of Page 1: *What are two factors that caused the mother bear to search for food near town with her cubs?*
 - Winter was coming, and she needed 90 pounds of food every day.
 - The town dump was an easy place to find food.
- Direct students to stop and jot down notes on the following prompt at the end of Page 2: *Name three factors that influenced the people of Angoon's decision to rescue and relocate the baby bears.*
 - Without their mother's protection, the young bears could have been killed by hunters or aggressive male bears.
 - If the bears survived, they would have become accustomed to finding food near town and posed a serious danger to people.
 - The people of the town loved the bears and felt that the bears deserved long and healthy lives.
- Direct students to stop and jot down notes on the following prompt at the end of Page 3: *Name some facts about the bears that influence how they are cared for and how their habitat is designed.*
 - Bears get thirsty and need plenty of fresh water.
 - Bears get hungry and need nutritious food.
 - Bears might get bored and need stimulation, challenges, and interesting things to play with.
 - Bears are large and need plenty of space.

- Direct students to stop and jot down notes on the following prompt at the end of Page 4: *Why does Christy, the bears' caregiver, hide their food and treats? Why does the habitat include plants, waterfalls, and ponds?*
 - Bears have a keen sense of smell.
 - Using their sense of smell to find their food comes naturally to the bears.
 - The habitat mirrors what it would be like in the wild.
- Direct students to stop and jot down notes on the following prompt at the end of the story: *Why is it important that the bears' habitat be full of things that are interesting and healthy for them?*
 - An animal's home should provide them with everything they need to stay physically and mentally stimulated.
 - It is a compassionate way to treat living things.
- Repeat the prompts in order and call on students to briefly share answers from their notes (e.g., ask one student to provide one factor from the first stop and jot, and then ask a second student to provide another factor, and so on). Progress through the prompts rapidly.

Guided practice: Design a humane habitat (15 minutes)

- Distribute the Design a Habitat Graphic Organizer. Ask students to think of an animal that they are curious about and would enjoy visiting in a zoo or aquarium. Tell the students that they will be designing an imaginary humane habitat for that animal, and ask them to list some questions that would be important to answer before designing the habitat. Write the students' suggestions on the board. Possible questions might include the following:
 - What does the animal eat?
 - Does the animal need water for swimming? Drinking?
 - What type of shelter does the animal need?
 - How large of a space does the animal need?
 - What kind of safety and/or protection does the animal need from bad weather or predators?
 - What kind of human care will the animal need?
- Allow time for the students to list and draw the features of their animal's habitat on the Design a Habitat Graphic Organizer. They should explain what animal will be living in the habitat and why their habitat design is humane for that animal.

Closing: Gallery walk (7 minutes)

- Create a gallery walk of the habitat designs and allow students to view and discuss each other's work.
- As a guide for peer feedback, invite students to share two positive things they like about a classmate's habitat design and then anything they suggest should be added next time to improve the design.

Humane Graphic Organizer

Definition in your words

Characteristics of a Humane Hero

Humane

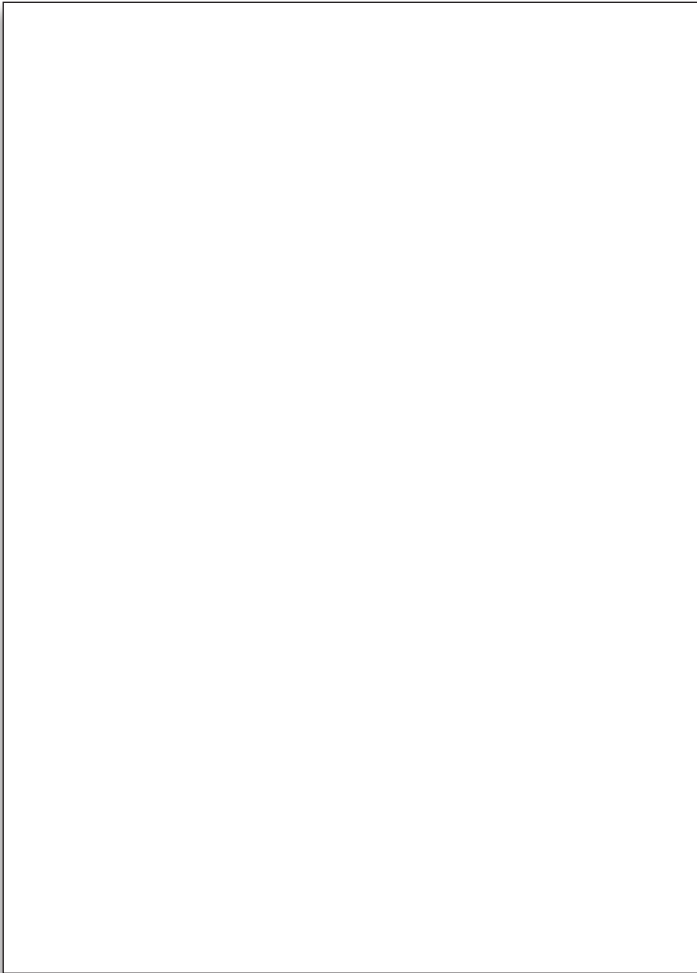
Examples

Non-examples

Design a Habitat Graphic Organizer

Design a Habitat

Draw your habitat here:



1. What does the animal eat?
2. Does the animal need water for swimming? Drinking?
3. What type of shelter does the animal need?
4. How large of a space does the animal need?
5. What kind of safety and/or protection does the animal need from bad weather or predators?
6. What kind of human care will the animal need?

My habitat is suitable for a _____ because: