

2.6 How Do Animals Help Us? What Harm Can They Do?

Story Extension for This Lesson:

In the story, Alex and Sam are warned against going into the forest. It is true, there can be plants and animals that are dangerous to humans if we do not take precautions. However, animals also do a lot of good things for humans! In this activity, let's take a look at how animals can affect humans, in both good and bad ways.

Grade: 2

Strand: Growth and Changes in Animals

Big Ideas:

- Animals have distinct characteristics. (Overall expectations 2 and 3)
- Humans need to protect animals and the places where they live. (Overall expectations 1)

Overall Expectations:

1. assess ways in which animals have an impact on society and the environment, and ways in which humans have an impact upon animals and the places where they live

Specific Expectations:

1.1 identify positive and negative impacts that animals have on humans (society) and the environment, form an opinion about one of them, and suggest ways in which the impact can be minimized or enhanced

3.3 identify ways in which animals are helpful to, and ways in which they meet the needs of, living things, including humans, to explain why humans should protect animals and the places where they live

3.4 identify ways in which animals can be harmful to humans (e.g., some people have an allergic reaction to bee and wasp venom when they are stung; deer, moose, and bears on roads can pose a hazard to people driving at night)

Inquiry Skills:

Observing, Recording, Analyzing, Explaining

Instructions:

Part 1:

Ask the class how many students have pets, and have the class share what pets they have. There is a reason so many people have pets... they must be good for us! Brainstorm as many reasons as possible why pets might be good for humans (e.g. companionship, protection, etc). Then, as a class, watch a slideshow that goes over many reasons why pets are good for humans.

- Slideshow: <http://pets.webmd.com/ss/slideshow-pets-improve-your-health>

Part 2:

In groups of three or four, have students make a list of ways that animals can help people. Encourage them to think of as many different animals as possible, both big and small. At regular intervals, encourage one 'spy' from each group to go around to different groups to look for information that might be different than what they already have. They can then go back and share information and add to their own chart. Remind students that this is not a competition and the goal is for all groups to be successful. When teams run out of ideas, there are several videos on YouTube that you could share, and then have groups add to their charts. There are also some excellent websites that show animals that are essential for our survival.

- Example YouTube video: <https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=UzogQOwVmNQ>
- Example YouTube video: <https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=MbNuW8Kq1IY>
- Example website: <http://www.onegreenplanet.org/animalsandnature/animals-that-help-us-to-survive/>

Part 3:

Do the same brainstorming, but focus on how animals can be harmful to humans. Again, have students think of a broad range of animals, both small and large.

Part 3:

Have students complete a short journal entry, in which they create their own ranking of what they think the three or five most important benefits of animals are for humans, based on the chart they produced. They should then choose one or two dangers that they think animals pose to humans. Depending on the writing ability of students, have them justify their choices. Some students may benefit from an oral conference with the teacher to fully explain their choices.

Materials List:

- chart paper
- data projector
- markers
- science journals

Assessment Strategy:

The student science journals, completed in the Consolidation portion of the lesson, will serve as excellent assessment pieces.