

Zoos should be abolished

Text by Angela Weeks
Photos licenced to SPELD SA

Zoos Should Be Abolished

Set 11 (330 words)

Text written by Angela Weeks and Photos licenced to SPELD SA

Special words

artificial, people, species, research, bygones, protection

I strongly oppose the existence of zoos and think that they should be abolished.

How can anyone, seeing a wild animal holed up, often on its own, in a cage, doubt that zoos are cruel? These animals have been robbed of their freedom and imprisoned for life.

It is argued that zoos are educational because they allow the visitor to see animals they wouldn't otherwise see.

But what value is there in seeing a locked up animal in an artificial environment?

It provides the onlooker with no sense of the life the animal would lead in its native habitat, how it finds or catches food or looks after its young. This is not educational.

The animal's day is one of boredom, where everything around it is artificial: artificial ponds, artificial trees, and food served up by zoo keepers.

Furthermore, many animals that would normally be part of a group are kept separated, with males frequently kept away from females, unless it is the mating season or a partner is shipped in from another zoo.

I think this is unnatural, cruel and selfish.

People say that thanks to zoos, we are protecting species. What for?
So that they can become a rarity to be gawked at by the paying public?
If a species is at risk, it is probably too late for protection.

Nothing could have saved the dinosaur.

Let bygones be bygones and let us focus our money and energy on maintaining the environments, all over the world, that are home to the world's wildlife, rather than preserving the wildlife in environments that are not their native habitat. We all know this is the right thing to do.

If we want to preserve the memory of a species, we need photographs and film, research and books about it, specimens in museums, not a specimen in a zoo.

Together, let us lobby governments to close down all zoos.

Now is the time to abolish zoos, forever.

Questions/Activities

After reading the text ask students one or more of the following questions. If students are working in pairs, alternate Partner 1, then Partner 2.

- What is this text about? OR What is the main idea of the text?
- What would the author like to happen to zoos?
- Do you agree that zoos should be abolished? Give 2 reasons for your answer.
- Is there an animal that you have not seen and would particularly like to see? Why? Give 2 reasons for your answer. Would you prefer to see it in a zoo or in real life?
- What do these words or phrases mean? Choose 4: holed up, natural habitat, artificial, rarity, gawked at, species, the paying public, protection, specimen, preserve, maintain the environment, native habitat, abolish, preserve, research, let bygones be bygones
- What is your favourite animal? Tell me three things about it.
- Are there any statements in the article that you think may not be based on fact/s?
- What do you think the existence of zoos tells us about human beings?