

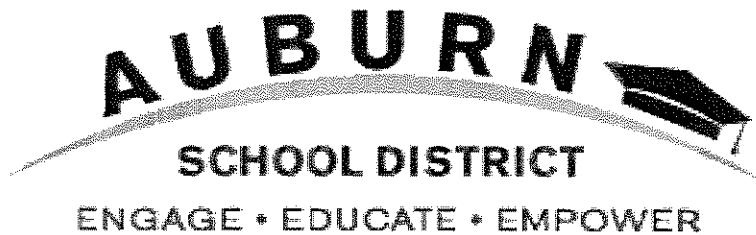
Grade 4

ELA - Performance

Task Assessment

Are Zoos For You?

Opinion



Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Grade 4 Performance Task

STUDENT DIRECTIONS:

Are Zoos For You? Opinion Performance Task

Task:

Your animal club at school is deciding whether or not to participate on a project with the local zoo. You have been chosen to share your opinion in a short essay. Before you decide whether zoos are good for animals you will read two articles and watch one video to help you form your opinion.

After you have looked at these sources you will answer some questions about them. Briefly scan the sources and the three questions that follow. Then, go back and read the sources carefully to gain the information you will need to answer the questions and support your opinion in an essay.

In Part 2, you will write your opinion essay using information you have read.

Direction for beginning:

You will now look at three sources. You can look at any of the sources as often as you like.

Research Questions:

After looking at the sources, use the rest of the time in Part 1 to answer three questions about them. Your answer to these questions will be scored. Also, your answers will help you think about the information you have read which should help you support your opinion.

Note Taking Guide for Source 1: Are Wild Animals Meant to Be Free?

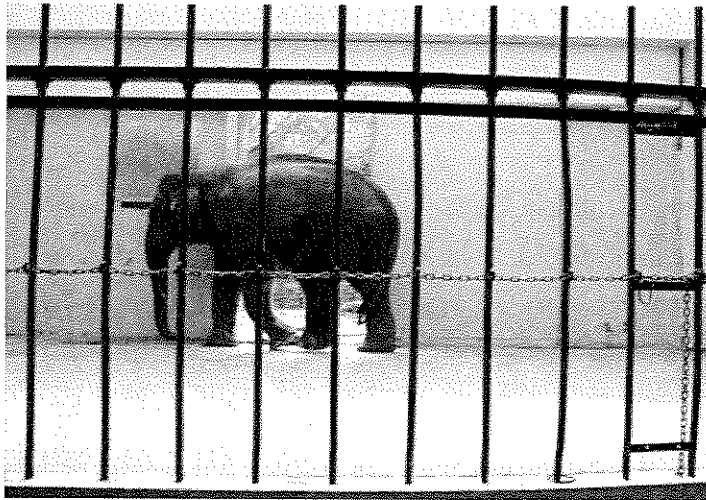
Paragraph Number	Main Idea Most Important Who and What in 10 Words Or Less
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Part 1

Sources for Performance Task

Source#1: Here is an article about the negative impact zoos have on animals.

Are Wild Animals Meant to Be Wild?



Elephant forced to stay indoors are often bored and suffer from extreme foot problems.

Andrew Lichtenstein/Getty Images

Maggie's Story

Many people consider zoos to be fun and educational. But are they really? Look no further than Maggie the elephant. Maggie was kept in a small indoor cage at the Alaska Zoo until 2007. Maggie spent her days indoors due to the cold harsh Alaskan climate. Maggie began showing symptoms of depression and refused to exercise at all. Finally, in 2007 Maggie was rescued from the Alaskan Zoo and brought to an Elephant Rescue Camp in California. [source: National Geographic].

Even in the best conditions it's very difficult to provide for the needs of animals like elephants. If Maggie lived in the wild with other elephants, they would wander as much as 30 miles (48 kilometers) a day in large groups, grazing on leaves and stopping to splash in the occasional watering hole. In zoos, elephants are lucky to get a few acres and one or two other elephants to keep them company [source: Lemonick].

Deadly Zoo

Maggie's story is just one of many. Zebras at the National Zoo in Washington D.C. starved to death because they were lacking the food they needed. The same zoo's red pandas died after eating rat poison [source: Farinato]. Even though zoos in the United States, are supposed to follow the laws and requirements of the Animal Welfare Act, some zoos still are not meeting standard. Endangering the lives of animals [source: Farinato].

Animals Need More

While conditions have improved from the years of bars and cages, there are still many problems with zoos. Although the natural-looking habitats are certainly more attractive, people like David Hancocks, a zoo expert and former zoo director, describe them as “all looks”, arguing that they're not much of an improvement in terms of space [source: Lemonick]. Indeed, many captive animals exhibit signs of extreme suffering: People have seen elephants bobbing their heads, bears pacing back and forth and wild cats constantly grooming themselves [source: Lemonick, Fordahl].

Animals like zebras, giraffes and gazelles were made to run across miles of open land, not live out their lives in a cage. Despite a zoo's best efforts, its animals often lack privacy, are kept in small spaces and unable to engage in natural hunting and mating activities. Forced to live in manmade environments, many animals give in to what some people refer to as **zoochosis**, the act of repeating the same behaviors over and over again [source: Naturewatch].

In addition, many animals have specific dietary and environmental needs that zookeepers are just beginning to understand. Some, like the armadillo, survive on a limited diet that zoos have a hard time finding; others succeed only in certain temperatures and environments that aren't easy to recreate.

Does it Really Help?

Even zoos' conservation efforts are not always successful. Only 16 programs have had success with their animals surviving in the wild. About two-thirds of Los Angeles Zoo's Condors were actually strong enough to survive in the wild [source: Encarta].

There are many factors to think about when deciding if zoos are good for animals. Does the zoo provide enough natural space for the animal to roam and hunt? Are zoos really helping save endangered animals? Or are zoos doing more harm to animals like Maggie?

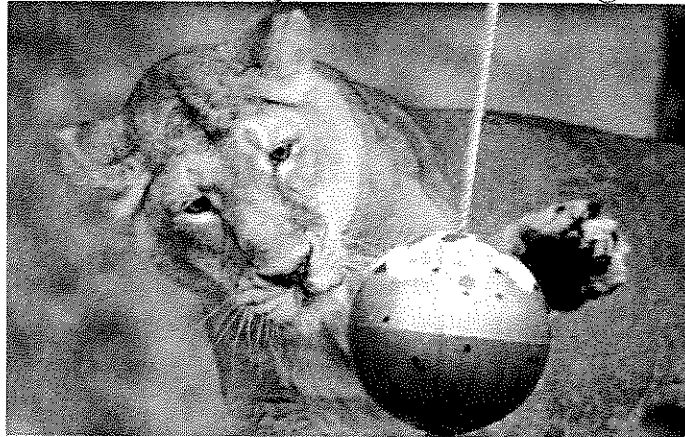
Note Taking Guide for Source 2: Zoo Pros: Rescuing and Conserving Animals

Paragraph Number	Main Idea Most Important Who and What in 10 Words Or Less
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Source #2

Here is an article about the positive impact zoos have on animals.

Zoo Pros: Rescuing and Conserving Animals



A lioness bats at a ball as part of her enrichment activities at the London Zoo.
Scott Barbour/Getty Images

Zoos have improved significantly in the last 4,000 years. Gone are the old steel-bar and cold cement cages. Most zoos these days use natural-looking barriers like moats or ditches to separate animals from people, and have mini-habitats that are similar to the animals' natural environment.

Breeding Programs

Zoos are making many changes. Previously zoos captured most of their animals directly from the wild, they now get many animals through **captive breeding programs** and other zoos. Some breeding programs also help to bring back threatened species. The Los Angeles and San Diego zoos spent ten year rebuilding the population of the endangered California condor. They were able to increase the population of fewer than two dozen birds to around 170 birds [source: Encarta].

Successful breeding programs brought the Pere David's deer back from extinction. Though this Asian deer no longer exists in the wild, Chinese and European zoo programs were able to release four of the deer back into the wild in 1985, where they're now healthy.[source: Encarta].

Rescue and Care

Some zoos also take in neglected animals that wouldn't otherwise have a home. Both the Baltimore Zoo and the Detroit Zoo have taken in polar bears rescued from a traveling circus. The Bronx Zoo took in an orphaned snow leopard from Pakistan in 2007. The cub, Leo, now spends his time playing and chasing small animals that wander into his pen. [source: Maikowski].

And although zoo animals aren't treated quite like guests at a four-star hotel, their care has improved tremendously. Zookeepers now understand that many animals, such as monkeys, bears and elephants, need engaging activities to prevent boredom and mental weakening. This is why you'll often see chimps playing with toys or tigers "hunting" for a meal.

Aside from taking care of caged animals, many zoos also add to the care of species in the wild. Both the Toledo Zoo and the Nature Conservancy, are helping to restore butterfly habitats in Ohio. The Bronx Zoo has channeled more than \$3 million toward protection projects in central Africa [source: Fravel].

Research and Education

Zoos also present an opportunity for scientists to carry out research. In 2002, zoos participated in 2,230 research and conservation projects in more than 80 countries. The information they gather helps them to develop new medicines and techniques to improve animal health [source: Fravel].

Beyond the positive impact zoos try to have on animals, they often affect the people visiting as well. Zoos don't just entertain, they also aim to educate. With a variety of programs geared toward children and adults, zoos teach people about the needs of animals and the importance of conservation. And if people get excited enough, the thinking goes that they'll be more willing to donate money to conservation efforts -- another zoo pro.

The fact that zoos impact people in a positive way is nice, but it's not the people critics worry about -- it's the animals.

Key Words:

Conserve: to protect something from harm

Captive: unable to escape

Environment: the natural world

Species: animals that have common qualities

Source #3: Watch the first 4 minutes of Jane Goodall's interview using the link below. Use the note taking guide to organize your thoughts and information.

http://www.kvie.org/programs/kvie/viewfinder/captive_audience/video.swf

Question	Jane Goodall's Answer Most Important Who and What in 10 Words Or Less
<p>1. In your view, what role do zoos play in the United States? And What role does education play?</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>2. Are zoos fulfilling their mission to be a conservation organization?</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>3. So, you're saying that zoo animals are really ambassadors for their cousins in the wild?</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>4. Is neurotic behavior of animals lessening in zoos?</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>5. Do you think there are any species of animals that just shouldn't be in zoos?</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Questions

1. The following question has two parts. First answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

Part A

Which source **best** describes the reasons zoos are not fit for animals?

- A. Source 1
- B. Source 2
- C. Source 3

Part B

Which sentence from the sources supports your answer in Part A?

- A. Even though zoos in the United States, are supposed to follow the laws and requirements of the Animal Welfare Act, some zoos still are not meeting standard.
- B. And although zoo animals aren't treated quite like guests at a four-star hotel, their care has improved tremendously.
- C. Animals are showing less neurotic behavior as zoos begin to create environments that are closer to animal's natural habitat.

2. Which topic can be found in all three sources?

- A. California Condors
- B. Endangered Animals
- C. Conservation efforts

3. The following question has two parts. First answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

Part A:

Which source **best** describes the reasons zoos are helpful for animals?

A. Source 1

B. Source 2

C. Source 3

Part B

Which sentence from the sources supports your answer in Part A?

- A. Even in the best conditions it's very difficult to provide for the needs of animals like elephants.
- B. Aside from taking care of caged animals, many zoos also add to the care of species in the wild.
- C. Zoos play a role in education by giving people some idea of how animals behave in their natural habitats.

Student Directions for Part 2

You will now look at your sources, take notes, and plan, draft, revise and edit your article. Now read your assignment and the information about how your opinion essay will be scored; then begin your work.

Your Assignment:

You are in the animal club at school. Write an opinion essay that is several paragraphs long for the club's newsletter about your opinion on whether zoos are good for animals.

Your essay will be read by other students, teachers, and parents. Make sure to include reasons for your opinion as well as support for your reasons. Be sure to use details from the notes in the table using your own words as recorded.

REMEMBER: A well written opinion essay:

- Has a clear opinion
- Is well-organized and stays on the topic
- Uses transitions
- Uses details from the sources to support your opinion
- Develops ideas clearly
- Uses clear language
- Follow rules of writing

Now begin your work on your opinion essay

1. Plan your article
2. Write your article
3. Revise and edit the final draft

Combining Notes from All 3 Sources:

Reasons Zoos are Good for Animals	Reasons Zoos are Not Good for Animals

