Follow-up Activities

- There are many opportunities for classes or schools to raise money for the "adoption" of threatened or endangered animals. This kind of activity helps children to feel that they are doing something meaningful, and benefits include detailed information on the animal, as well as teacher's guides in some cases. Contact your local zoo, environmental agency, or search the Internet for these resources.
- Read *The Great Kapok Tree* by Lynne Cherry aloud to the class. This wonderful story can also be presented to the school as a dramatization by the class. At home, students can practice their lines. In class, using the illustrations from the book, students can discuss, plan and modify costumes and props.
- Divide the class into groups and have them create posters to make the school more aware of endangered and threatened animals. Have each group create a slogan and then design a poster around the slogan. Hang the posters around the school.
- Have each child select a different endangered animal to describe in an illustrated report. They can explain why this animal is endangered and how humans can work to save this creature.

Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our Web site at www.LibraryVideo.com

- **www.tenan.vuurwerk.nl/indexusa.htm**
  This ongoing project gives students a chance to foster knowledge and appreciation for the many thousands of endangered animals of the Earth. Students will gain valuable skills for researching and collaborating, while sharing their information with people around the world.
- **www.kidsplanet.org/factsheets/map.html**
  Defenders of Wildlife developed this Kids' Planet site with puzzles, games, fact sheets and coloring pages designed to entertain and educate children.
- **www.panda.org/resources/publications/species/threatened/index.htm**
  This site from the World Wildlife Federation is a good place for students to begin research on a specific threatened or endangered animal.
- **www.epa.gov/kids/plants.htm**
  This site from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency links to many activities, including Save Our Species, which contains pictures and facts about some of the endangered plants and animals in the United States, including why they are endangered.

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Suggested Print Resources

- Charman, Andy. *I Wonder Why the Dodo Is Dead and Other Questions About Extinct and Endangered Animals.* Kingfisher Books, New York, NY; 1996.
- Cherry, Lynne. *The Great Kapok Tree.* Harcourt Brace, New York, NY; 1990.
- Dobson, David. *Can We Save Them? Endangered Species of North America.* Charlesbridge Publishing, Watertown, MA; 1998.

TEACHER'S GUIDE CONSULTANT

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TEACHER'S GUIDE

ANIMAL LIFE for Children™

All About Endangered & Extinct Animals

Grades K–4

This guide is a supplement, designed for educators to use when presenting this program in an instructional setting.

Before Viewing: Research in learning suggests that it is important for the teacher to discover what the students know — or think they know — about a topic, at the start of a new unit, so that their accurate conceptions can be validated and reinforced, and their misconceptions identified and corrected. Therefore, after reviewing the pre-viewing discussion questions provided for your class, create an "Everything We Know About…" list. Preview key vocabulary words and have students raise additional questions they hope will be answered by this program. Most importantly, students should be told that as "science detectives" they must listen closely, so that after viewing the program, they will be able to tell whether or not the facts/beliefs they put on their list were scientifically accurate.

After Viewing: After a brief discussion about the program, challenge your "science detectives" to prove or disprove the accuracy of the facts they put on their "Everything We Know About…" list. Discuss what else they learned and use the follow-up questions and activities to inspire further discussion. Encourage students to research the topic further with the Internet and reading resources provided.

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Program Summary

It is difficult to imagine what our world would be like without any animals, plants or people. Most species of animals and plants that used to live on Earth no longer exist. When there are no more animals of a certain species alive, then that species is said to be extinct. All the different species of dinosaurs are extinct, and many other animals are close to becoming extinct. Scientists have come up with ways to describe the amount of danger a species is in. Animals like grizzly bears are described as threatened because their numbers have become dangerously low. If the population of a species, like the tiger, continues to decrease, moving closer to becoming extinct, then that species is labeled endangered. When an animal species is labeled as threatened or endangered, the remaining animals of that species are protected by law.

There are many reasons to explain why animals become extinct. In the case of the dinosaurs, scientists believe the weather changed rapidly when a huge meteorite hit the Earth around 65 million years ago. A giant dust cloud blocked the sunlight, causing an ice age. Because dinosaurs were not able to adapt to the cold conditions, they died. When these kinds of changes occur in the environment, animals can adapt, they can move to a different environment or they can die. Recently, people have been responsible for speeding up the extinction of animals by destroying habitats to build homes and farms. When this happens, many of the animals have no place to go. When people clear forests, they also remove food sources. When trees are removed by people, there is no food left for animals. Human pollution, like oil spills in the ocean, is also responsible for the loss of many animals. In the last 100 years, the speed at which species are disappearing from the Earth has increased.

Humans have always hunted animals for food. However, when humans hunt endangered animals, they are breaking the law. That is called poaching. Fortunately, many humans are now working hard to protect and help endangered and threatened animals.

Vocabulary

The following words are included for teacher reference or for use with students. They are listed in the order in which they appear in the video.

extinction — The complete disappearance of a species due to changes that it cannot adapt to.

endangered — A term describing animals or plants whose numbers are so few that they are in immediate danger of becoming extinct.

threatened — A term describing animals or plants whose total numbers are declining and on the way to becoming endangered.

(Continued)

meteorite — A large chunk of metal and rock from outer space that hits the Earth.

adaptation — Changes in an animal's body structure or behavior that occur over long periods of time which enable it to survive in its environment.

poaching — The illegal hunting, capturing or collecting of wildlife.

pollution — Harmful chemicals that human activities put into the air, land and water, like smog and oil spills.

habitat — The environment where an animal lives, including factors such as temperature, climate, light and the presence of food.

recycling — Recovering and reusing materials like glass, paper and plastic; this practice saves energy, trees and land required for trash dumping.

Pre-viewing Discussion

Before students generate their list of "Everything We Know About…" this topic, stimulate and focus their thinking by raising these questions so that their list will better reflect the key ideas in this show:

1. What does extinct mean? What are some examples of extinct animals?
2. How do animals become extinct?
3. What are some ways that people can help animals that are in danger of extinction?

After the class has completed their "Everything We Know About…" list, and before watching the show, ask them what other questions they have that they hope will be answered during this program. Have students listen closely to learn if everything on their class list is accurate and to hear if any of their own questions are answered.

Focus Questions

You may wish to ask your class the following questions to assess their comprehension of key points presented in the program:

1. What does the term "extinction" mean?
2. What are the labels used by scientists to describe animals in danger?
3. What does it mean when a species is labeled "threatened"?
4. What is an example of a threatened animal species?
5. What does it mean for a species to be "endangered"?
6. What are some animals currently listed as endangered?
7. What causes a species' population to drop?

(Continued)

8. When a species is declared to be threatened or endangered, how can people help?
9. How do scientists explain the disappearance of the dinosaurs?
10. Did humans cause the extinction of the dinosaurs? Explain.
11. When an animal's environment changes, how can it respond to the changes?
12. Name one way that humans have been responsible for endangering animal species.
13. How has the loss of eucalyptus trees affected the koala?
14. Why are animals like the panda endangered?
15. How are animals like orangutans protected?
16. Explain how humans have been speeding up the process of extinction for many animals.
17. What is poaching? Give an example of what poachers want.
18. What happens to marine animals when an oil tanker has an accident?
19. How have recently passed laws begun to help endangered animals?
20. How can recycling help protect threatened and endangered animal species?
21. Why is it so important to set aside protected areas like national parks for animals?

Follow-up Discussion

The most important part of this segment is to examine both the facts and beliefs generated by the class in their "Everything We Know About…" list. Research indicates that students will retain their previous misconceptions — in preference to the new information — until they actively recognize and correct their own errors. Because of this, it is important to lead students to the correct ideas while identifying and correcting any misconceptions from the class list. After reviewing the list, encourage students to share the answers they got to the questions raised before viewing the program.

Raising a thought-provoking question is a good way to assess the overall depth of understanding. A couple of suggestions are listed below:

1. Why is it important for people to protect endangered animals?
2. How would you explain the difference between natural causes and other causes of endangerment?