



Are you for or against zoos?

- From the smallest insect to the largest mammal, animals are essential to life on Earth, so it is not surprising that humans find them fascinating. However, is it right to take animals from the wild and keep them in captivity in zoos and wildlife parks or should all wild animals live in freedom?
- Children can learn about animals from books and films but seeing them in real life is much more exciting and helps to encourage enthusiasm for knowing about the natural world. A visit to the zoo is not only an enjoyable experience but it is also educational because visitors learn about the different species and what they need to survive. In addition, zoos and wildlife parks can protect animals from dangers that threaten their survival in the wild. Zoos have also succeeded in breeding animals that are endangered species, such as the giant panda, the Arabian oryx and the golden lion tamarin.
- However, when animals are kept in a zoo or even in a wildlife park, they are not free to live as they would in the wild. For example, a lion in a zoo doesn't need to hunt for its prey and it cannot leave its enclosure, so it is not a natural way of life for a wild animal. Cages and enclosures are necessary in order to keep visitors safe but they are a prison for the animals. While some species adapt well and live happily in captivity, others appear bored, stressed and unhappy.
- Zoos and wildlife parks that provide good conditions for their animals are a pleasure to visit and help towards the survival of many species. Nevertheless, it does not seem right for humans to keep animals in captivity, particularly when it is possible to find out about wildlife and see them in their natural environment in films and in wildlife programmes on TV.

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