A In the 1970s, as part of a large-scale research programme exploring the area of interspecies communication, Dr Francine Patterson from Stanford University attempted to teach two lowland gorillas called Michael and Koko a simplified version of Sign Language. According to Patterson, the great apes were capable of holding meaningful conversations, and could even reflect upon profound topics, such as love and death. During the project, their trainers believe they uncovered instances where the two gorillas' linguistic skills seemed to provide reliable evidence of intentional deceit. In one example, Koko broke a toy cat, and then signed to indicate that the breakage had been caused by one of her trainers. In another episode, Michael ripped a jacket belonging to a trainer and, when asked who was responsible for the incident, signed 'Koko'. When the trainer expressed some scepticism, Michael appeared to change his mind, and indicated that Dr Patterson was actually responsible, before finally confessing.

List of Headings

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LIVEWORKSHEETS