

Endangered Species



READING

Grades: 3-5

Objective: Students will practice their informational reading and note-taking skills while learning the basics about endangered species!

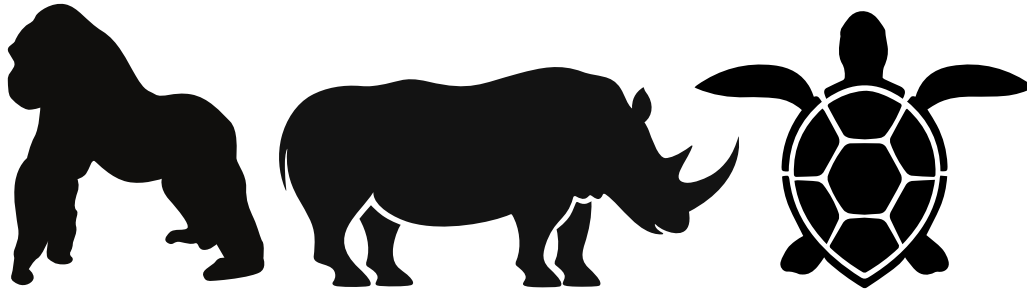
What's Inside?

- Student reading passage
- Student graphic organizer

Sources: Britannica Kids (reading) & CILC Original Resource

GETTING STARTED WITH READING

Excerpt from Britannica Kids



Introduction

An **endangered** species is any type of plant or animal that is in danger of disappearing forever. If a species, or type, of plant or animal dies out completely, it becomes **extinct**.

How Plants and Animals Become Endangered

Animals and plants depend on each other and their environment to survive. When their **environment**, or **habitat**, changes or disappears, plants and animals may become endangered. Natural disasters or changes in the climate can harm or destroy habitats.

Humans can cause **species** to become endangered as well. Humans pollute habitats with garbage, car fumes, and factory wastes. They destroy habitats by clearing land for roads, buildings, and farms. They also may hunt and kill too many of certain types of animals.

The arrival of a new species in a habitat is another threat. Often the new species spreads freely because it has no natural enemies. The species already in the habitat may not be able to compete against the newcomer. For example, mongooses brought to Jamaica in the 1800s killed many native animals.

Endangered Species Today

The list of endangered animals includes many large, well-known mammals. The tiger and both African and Asian elephants are endangered. Several types of whale are also endangered.

Endangered birds include several types of crane, eagle, and parrot. Among the endangered reptiles are several types of sea turtle—for example, the leatherback turtle. There are also endangered amphibians, fishes, mollusks, insects, and other animals.

Protection

In the 1960s people became aware that many species were endangered. Today many countries have made it illegal to harm, capture, kill, or sell endangered species. In addition, many organizations work to keep endangered species from becoming extinct. The International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) keeps lists of endangered species. The Nature Conservancy and the World Wildlife Fund help to set aside land for threatened wildlife. Nature **preserves** and zoos help endangered animals to reproduce.

Such programs have helped to increase the populations of the black-footed ferret, the California condor, and other endangered animals. Giant pandas survive only in remote parts of China and in zoos. For many years they were considered endangered. In 2016, however, the IUCN declared that efforts to protect the pandas have worked. The animals are no longer endangered, though they are still **vulnerable** and need to be protected.

Name _____

Taking Notes

Directions: Use this organizer to take notes on the essay.

list of key words

words I need to define

summary of main points

interesting facts

questions I have