

Animal training

Key Stage 3 and 4

Learning objectives

To explain why it is important for some zoo animals to be highly trained.
To describe how animals can be trained using positive reinforcement.

Session content

This session 40 minute session provides an introduction to the topic of animal training. The session looks at how animals are trained through positive reinforcement and why animals are trained to exhibit certain behaviours. Many animals are trained to make day to day care and any veterinary treatment easier and less stressful. Examples of training for veterinary procedures are shown during the session and discussed. The session ends with a demonstration of how to train an animal using a volunteer from the group. Students then have the opportunity to try training a classmate.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this session...

- Most students will be able to identify reasons why animals at the zoo are trained using examples and be able to briefly describe how this training is done.
- Some students may have progressed further and will be able to confidently explain at least 2 reasons why zoo animals are trained using a number of examples for each. They will also be able to describe how animals are trained using positive reinforcement.
- Some students may not have progressed as far and will be able to give 1 reason why animals may be trained and with support give a brief description of how training is carried out.

GCSE Specification links

- **Edexcel Science 360 – B3 Behaviour in Humans and Other Animals**
 - 2.4 Animals can learn through conditioning.
 - 2.5 Humans can make use of conditioning when training captive animals for specific purposes.
 - 2.30 Humans also use animals as a source of entertainment (hunting, racing, circuses, wildlife parks) and companionship (pets)

Other links: BTECs in Animal care and Animal Management

Assessment opportunities

Students' understanding can be assessed through verbal contributions, questioning and participation during training activity.

Session suitability

This session is presented verbally and supported with text and images projected onto a screen. It is possible to provide individual materials for any partially sighted students. In addition students are asked to participate in a training activity in which they must train another student to complete a movement without talking to each other. If this is not appropriate for your group, please let us know by calling 01582 871330.



Additional information

We would like to know in advance if any members of your class have learning, physical or sensory difficulties, allergies or illness which might affect their enjoyment of the session. It is usually possible to tailor the session should your group have any special requirements. Please call 01582 871330 at least 2 weeks in advance of your visit to discuss the best way to do this.

Suggested activities:

Before the visit

- Students should understand the vocabulary listed below:
 - behaviour
 - adaptations
 - training

During the visit

- Accompanying the session is a worksheet to be used while watching the demonstrations. It is beneficial for your group to view at least 1 of the demonstrations during the day, but it will further their learning considerably if you can plan to see all of them. Details of demonstrations can be found on the website at www.zsl.org/zsl-whipsnade-zoo/whats-on/ or in the day planner you will receive at the gate.

NB: demonstrations run between April and October only.

After the visit

- Please complete a feedback sheet (available at the session or from our website) to help improve the education provision at Whipsnade Zoo.

Useful websites

ZSL Whipsnade Zoo – www.zsl.org

Disney animal kingdom - www.animaltraining.org

Seaworld - www.seaworld.org/animal-info/info-books/training/index.htm

Nobel Prize - http://nobelprize.org/educational_games/medicine/pavlov/readmore.html