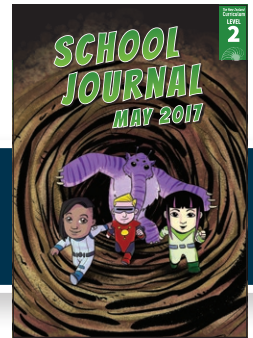


# The Zoo Debate

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## Overview

This TSM contains a wide range of information and suggestions for teachers to pick and choose from, depending on the needs of their students and their purpose for using the text. The materials provide multiple opportunities for revisiting the text several times.

This article presents both sides of a debate: should we or shouldn't we have zoos? It includes a short history of zoos and some suggestions for alternatives. It also includes lists of valid points for and against zoos. To support these points, named experts from both sides of the debate put across their views. The article includes direct quotes from these experts. Students will have many things to consider as they are invited to make up their own minds.

This article:

- provides facts and information about zoos
- includes details that support both sides of the debate
- includes some emotive language
- has non-continuous text with subheadings
- includes a glossary.

A PDF of the text is available at [www.schooljournal.tki.org.nz](http://www.schooljournal.tki.org.nz)

### Texts related by theme

“Seals” SJ L2 Aug 2016 | “Kuri” SJ L2 Oct 2015 | “Ugly” SJ L2 Nov 2014 | “Cats – Who Needs Them?” SJ L2 June 2014 | “The Bat That Walks on the Ground” SJ L2 April 2013 | “Living Fossils” SJ L2 Oct 2012

## Text characteristics from the year 4 reading standard

**Sanctuaries, Reserves, and Safari Parks**

Most regular zoos keep animals in enclosures, but there are other ways to look after wild animals or to let people see them.

- Animal sanctuaries care for creatures that have been lost, hurt, or badly treated.
- Reserves are also safe places for birds and animals. Some reserves have high fences to keep predators out, and
- Safari parks allow animals to roam freely over large areas, and people can see them.
- Safari parks allow animals to get special protection. People can swim and dive in the water, but fishing isn't allowed.

some abstract ideas that are clearly supported by concrete examples in the text or easily linked to the students' prior knowledge

**Anjalee the Elephant**

In 2015, an eight-year-old elephant named Anjalee arrived at Auckland Zoo. She came from an elephant orphanage in Sri Lanka to join the zoo's other elephant, Burma.

Zoo staff say Anjalee is thriving. They think that having elephants at the zoo is a good way to teach people about these magnificent animals. And some of them say it costs more to take care of elephants than to look after them in zoos.

Burma and Anjalee

some places where information and ideas are implicit and where students need to make inferences based on information that is easy to find because it is nearby in the text and there is little or no competing information

Today's zoos are very different. The animals have much more room, and their enclosures are more like their natural environment. Zookeepers plan things for the animals to do so that they move around and stay healthy. Most zoos also spend money and time to protect endangered animals. Many zoos have staff who work in the wild, using their special skills to help save these animals and their habitats.

some compound and complex sentences, which may consist of two or three clauses

Zoos teach people about animals and their natural environments.

Zoos allow people to see animals they would never be able to see normally.

Zookeepers and zoo vets care for the animals and work hard to give them a happy life.

Zoos help us to find out more about wild animals and how to protect them.

Zoos have special breeding programmes to help save endangered animals.

Zoos support conservation across the world.

People can learn just as much about animals from books or television documentaries.

Some animals in zoos can get bored and lonely.

Some zoos only want to keep big animals like elephants and tigers (because they are exciting for visitors to see) and not smaller, less exciting animals.

some words and phrases that are ambiguous or unfamiliar to the students, the meaning of which is supported by the context or clarified by illustrations, and/or written explanations

Reading standard: by the end of year 4

## VOCABULARY

### Possible supporting strategies


- Possibly unfamiliar words and phrases, including “debate”, “natural environment”, “archaeologists”, “Egyptian”, “retired”, “naturally”, “enclosures”, “endangered”, “habitats”, “breeding programmes”, “conservation”, “documentaries”, “animal rights”, “gifted”, “chief executive”, “inspire”, “reserves”, “natural world”, “exploitation”, “imprison”, “animal sanctuaries”, “safari parks”, “predators”, “offshore”, “marine reserves”
- The use of qualifiers to indicate degree, including “some”, “most”, “many”, “more”
- Identify words or phrases that may be unfamiliar and discuss their meaning with the students.
- Remind the students of strategies they might use to work out the meaning of unknown words, such as reading on or rereading the section and using context clues.
- Direct students to the glossary at the end of the article.
- Explain that the glossary can be extended if there are other words and phrases that need clarifying.
- The English Language Learning Progressions: Introduction*, pages 39–46, has useful information about learning vocabulary.
- See also [ESOL Online, Vocabulary](#), for examples of other strategies to support students with vocabulary.

## SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED

### Possible supporting strategies

- Some understanding of debates and what is involved
- Some understanding of the features of persuasive texts
- Geographical knowledge
- Some knowledge of zoos – the kinds of animals in them and what the enclosures are like
- Some awareness that people can hold different views on a subject for various reasons
- Some knowledge of the broad concepts underlying the arguments, such as the environment, endangered animals, conservation, exploitation, animal rights, the natural world, and the “natural” behaviours and “natural” environments for animals
- Set up a debate on a topic that is familiar to the students. Have the students take sides and put forward their points of view orally to persuade the audience or an opposing team. You could scaffold English language learners by providing sentence frames to help them to express their opinions about an issue and to use modal verbs, for example, “We should allow zoos to keep animals because ...” Or, “I think that animals should not be kept in zoos because ...”
- Have students work collaboratively to identify words and phrases used in the debate that are factual and those that are emotive. Use a chart like the one below to record their responses.

Factual words/phrases	Emotive words/phrases
Some animals live in places that are difficult to get to, such as high in the mountains.	Animals don't belong in zoos; they should <b>be free</b> .
Animals in zoos are kept in enclosures.	Zoos should be <b>banned</b> because the animals feel like they are <b>trapped in a prison</b> .

- Provide world maps so that students can identify and name continents and connect animals with their place of origin.
-  Using Google Maps (Earth view), search for Sri Lanka. Save the location, and then zoom out to show the entire Earth. Turn it until you find New Zealand. Switch to Map view so that the students can see where the various countries and continents are located on a traditional map layout.
- For more information on persuasive texts, see [English Online, Persuasion](#).

## TEXT FEATURES AND STRUCTURE

### Possible supporting strategies

- A non-fiction article providing information and points of view about zoos
- Bulleted lists of arguments for and against zoos
- Two sidebars: one about elephants at Auckland Zoo and one about alternatives to regular zoos
- Quotations
- Before reading, prompt the students to recall what they are likely to find in an article. Provide opportunities for them to talk with a partner to remind each other of the features of information texts.
- Prompt prior knowledge of purpose and audience and the features they might expect to find in a persuasive text.



Sounds and Words

# Possible curriculum contexts

## ENGLISH (Reading)

Level 2 – Purposes and audiences: Show some understanding of how texts are shaped for different purposes and audiences

– Ideas: Show some understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts

## ENGLISH (Writing)

Level 2 – Purposes and audiences: Show some understanding of how to shape texts for different purposes and audiences

– Ideas: Select, form, and express ideas on a range of topics

## SOCIAL SCIENCES

Level 2 – Understand how places influence people and people influence places

## Possible first reading purpose

- To identify reasons for and against zoos

## Possible subsequent reading purposes

- To explore and discuss the arguments for and against keeping wild animals in captivity
- To predict what might happen to zoos in the future

## Possible writing purposes

- To write a persuasive argument for or against zoos
- To write a persuasive piece on another topic
- To write from the point of view of an animal in captivity
- To write interview questions for one of the people mentioned in the article: the CEO of Wellington Zoo or the animal rights worker



The New Zealand Curriculum

# Instructional focus – Reading


**English** Level 2 – Purposes and audiences: Show some understanding of how texts are shaped for different purposes and audiences; Ideas: Show some understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts.

**Social Sciences** Level 2 – Understand how places influence people and people influence places.

## First reading

- Set the purpose for reading.
- Prompt prior knowledge about the elements of an information text – subheadings, bullet points, glossary. *What will we find in an information text?*
- Direct students to the title, then ask them to share what they know about zoos.
- Prompt prior knowledge about persuasive language.
- Explain that people have different views about what is best for wild animals.
- Direct the students to the subheadings. *What are the subheadings useful for? What are we going to find out?*
- Tell the students that the text outlines reasons for and against keeping animals in zoos.

## If the students struggle with this text

- Clarify the word “debate” and the word “persuade”.
- Prompt connections to the students’ own world of using persuasion and debate. What might you have a debate about in your family? How do you persuade someone to agree with you?
- Suggest that students form an opinion about keeping animals in zoos before reading the article, and then afterwards, discuss whether the points listed in the article changed their opinion.
- Set up an oral debate, where students are either for or against the idea of keeping animals in zoos. Provide sentence frames for English language learners.
- Stop after each section and discuss the main points. *What is the most important information in that section? Did you find out what you expected to find out from the subheading?*
-  Project the PDF of the article for the students to view, zooming in on each section as you discuss it.

**Subsequent readings** How you approach subsequent readings will depend on your reading purpose.

### The teacher

Copy and display the bullet points under the headings “Arguments for Zoos” and “Arguments against Zoos”.

Invite further suggestions from the students.

Have students reread the section “Anjalee the Elephant”. Support them to identify any further points to be added to the arguments for and against.

Do the same with the section headed “Listening to Both Sides”.

### The teacher

Place students in small groups for group discussion.

Set the purpose for discussion.

- *We all have opinions about keeping wild animals in zoos.*
- *What do we think will be the best option for the future?*
- *Should Nandi be brought to Auckland Zoo?*

Challenge students’ thinking with questions that require them to evaluate information.

- *Do Kiwi kids need to see an elephant or a lion in real life?*
- *How is seeing a wild animal in real life different from watching it on a video?*

Provide further reading on zoos.

### The students:

- identify the main ideas of each section
- reflect on and evaluate information, to allocate ideas to the “For” and “Against” lists
- share opinions and decide where the ideas fit
- evaluate the ideas and their feelings about them – whether they feel more strongly about some points and less about others.

### The students:

- think critically about how they respond to the elephants when they learn their names. *Now that we know they have names, how do we feel about them? Would we feel differently if the article didn’t mention Nandi’s name?*
- make connections with personal experience of seeing wild animals in captivity
- share stories of their personal experience
- evaluate the information in the text and make up their own minds about the pros and cons of zoos
- use information in the text to support an exchange of ideas about possible zoos or alternatives in the future
- write to clarify their thinking (quick-write) on different topics, for example, *Is it a good idea to bring Nandi to New Zealand? OR Should we allow wild African or Asian animals to roam free in New Zealand rather than keeping them in zoos? OR What would be the best alternative to zoos? Could we create “virtual” zoos?*

### GIVE FEEDBACK

- *I noticed that you went back to the text after listening to what some other students were saying and you found evidence in the text to support your opinion.*

### METACOGNITION

- *You have been making connections to your own experience. Show me what helped you to make those connections when you looked at this page.*



Reading standard: by the end of year 4



The Literacy Learning Progressions



Assessment Resource Banks

# Instructional focus – Writing

**English** Level 2 – Ideas: Select, form, and express ideas on a range of topics; Language features: Use language features appropriately, showing some understanding of their effects.

## Text excerpts from “The Zoo Debate”

Page 14

But animal rights groups do not agree. They believe that elephants don't do well in zoos.

They say it costs more to take elephants across the world and keep them in zoos than to look after them in the wild in their own country.

Since Anjalee arrived, another elephant called Nandi (from the same orphanage) has been gifted to the zoo.

## Examples of text characteristics

### VARIETY OF SENTENCE STRUCTURES

*The text uses mainly simple and compound sentences that vary in their beginnings, structures, and lengths.*

### COMPLEX SENTENCES

*A complex sentence is formed when a subordinate clause is added to a simple sentence.*

*When the subordinate clause comes first, it is separated from the rest of the sentence by a comma.*

## Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)

Explain that all sentence structures have an impact. When we use a variety of structures, including beginnings and lengths of sentences, it can make our writing more effective.

Introduce complex structures.

- *We can use a complex sentence when we want to show a connection between the ideas in the sentence: “Because their enclosures are more like their natural environment, the animals have much more room and are much happier.” We must use a comma to separate ideas when we start the sentence with “Because”.*

If students need more support, you could introduce a sentence combining task. First model how to combine two sentences into one complex sentence. Then have the students practise combining sentences orally and then in writing. This activity is best done in small groups. Once they are confident, give the students sentences from the text to combine, and then discuss their answers with the whole class. The students can also practise rewriting complex sentences as two simpler sentences. Note that for some English language learners, writing complex sentences will be difficult. Ensure that they can write a compound sentence first.

Ask students to review some writing they are working on to see where more detail and information could be provided through a complex sentence. Ask them to add the sentence, then share their work with a partner and give each other feedback.

Page 11

### HOW ZOOS HAVE CHANGED

In the past, visitors came to zoos to see the animals, but they also came to be entertained.

They could ride on elephants and watch chimpanzees have tea parties. Many zoos kept their animals in small, concrete cages. Most people didn't think about the fact that this meant most of the animals couldn't behave naturally.

Today's zoos are very different. The animals have much more room, and their enclosures are more like their natural environment. Zookeepers plan things for the animals to do so that they move around and stay healthy. Most zoos also spend money and time to protect endangered animals. Many zoos have staff who work in the wild, using their special skills to help save these animals and their habitats.

### USING EMOTIVE LANGUAGE

*Writers sometimes choose words and phrases that express an emotion or provide a clue for the reader that will prompt a response.*

Direct students to page 11. Explain that they are going to notice the words and phrases that make us feel a particular way.

- *The writer describes where zoo animals used to be kept.*
- *Do any words make you feel a bit sorry for the animals?*
- *What other words give us clues that the zoo environment wasn't very pleasant for animals in those days.*

Brainstorm the emotive words they could choose if they were to put themselves into the skin of, for example, an elephant in captivity.

- *If an elephant could talk, how would it describe its home in a zoo?*
- *What words would help us understand how it feels?*

Text excerpts from  
“The Zoo Debate”

Examples of text characteristics

Teacher  
(possible deliberate acts of teaching)

Page 13

## ARGUMENTS AGAINST ZOOS

- People can learn just as much about animals from books or television documentaries.
- Most animals from breeding programmes stay in the zoo – they will never be put back into their natural environment, so the number of wild animals does not increase.
- Some animals in zoos can get bored and lonely.
- Animals don't belong in zoos – they have the right to be free.
- Some zoos only want to keep big animals like elephants and tigers (because they are what visitors want to see) and not smaller, less exciting animals.
- It costs a lot of money to keep animals in zoos

### BIG IDEAS

*Writers often include messages, among supporting detail, that are the big ideas they want their readers to understand. Bullet point lists can be used to identify big ideas clearly.*

Lead discussion around the effect of ideas being separated, and listed, with bullet points.

- *What makes it easy to count the number of points the writer has given in the arguments against zoos?*

Have students work with a partner to identify the big ideas in each bullet point.

Make connections to information in bullet points and to questions that students may have.

- *What else do we want to know?*
- *What will we ask the experts?*
- *Do you want to know more about the arguments for and against zoos?*

Provide opportunities for students to work collaboratively, in pairs or small groups, to create their own questions in a bullet point list.

### METACOGNITION

- *Tell me what you wanted your audience to feel when they read your persuasive piece. How did you decide what you needed to include to persuade them to agree with you?*

### GIVE FEEDBACK

- *You have managed to get under the skin of that elephant – he sounds so lonely! Your careful choice of words helps us know how he is feeling.*



Writing standard: by the end of year 4

The Literacy Learning Progressions