

LESSON PLAN

1

Skills: listening; create understanding of zoo animals, identify and label zoo animals, classify, the letter "Z"

Preparation: letter cards to spell "zoo." Most classrooms have a border display of the entire alphabet to refer to during the year. This helps to teach the letter "Z."

Materials: poster paper, writing materials, construction paper

Tip: Have a large, easy-to-read age-appropriate map of the world on display so that you can point to where some zoo animals originally came from. An important point to teach is that animals are brought to zoos from all over the world.

Resources: [Zella, Zack, and Zodiac](#), by Bill Peet; [A Children's Zoo](#), by Tana Hoban; [At the Zoo](#), by Claire Henley; [Zoo Animals](#), by Judy Nayer

Funsheets: Preschool/Kindergarten [Writing Sheet 51](#); Grade K, [Math 9, 11, 12](#)

Objective: Students will develop a better understanding of the differences between zoo animals and animals that are not in the zoo.

Introduction: Announce enthusiastically, "Today we will be starting a new Unit, a study of zoo animals! Has everybody been to the zoo?"

Read: [Zella, Zack, and Zodiac](#)

Procedure:

1. Ask students to name animals they are familiar with, and make a chart on the board as they name each one. Classify the animal as either a zoo animal or not. When you have a list of 10 or so, talk about the differences and similarities between these two classifications. For instance, lions and the horses both have four legs and fur, but we would not try to ride a lion.
2. Speculate as to why zoos were created and how the animals got there.
3. Use the worksheet on the next page for practicing writing the letter "z" and the word zoo.

Follow-up Activity: More fun with the letter "Z"

1. Pass out letter cards for the word "zoo" and have students put them in the right order; they may then write the word "zoo" in their books.
2. Using a sheet of drawing paper, demonstrate to students how to draw the letter "Z," filling the entire page; then have them color the three spaces left over.

How to Make Books: For detailed instructions on how to make a journal, see [Dinosaurs, Grade Preschool–K, Lesson 2](#), and [Dinosaurs, Grade 1–2, Lesson 2](#); in this case the shape could be a lion's head, or an elephant's body, or simply a square with any animal drawn on it. The journal could be used for recording observations at the zoo or in the classroom; after each animal is discussed, have students draw its picture in their books.

Zoo Animals Learning Center: Collect lots of outdated natural history magazines such as *Audubon*, *Natural History*, *National Geographic*, *Smithsonian*, *Discover*, *Falcon*, and *Ranger Rick*; they are easy to find in second-hand bookstores and thrift shops. They make wonderful sources of photographs that can be used as examples of animals and their habitats, and can be cut up to make collages and for other art activities. Leave these in the [Zoo Animals Learning Center](#).

***FACT FILES:** Copy the Learning Page [Fact Files](#) and distribute with a colored pocket folder. Give students time to organize, look them over, and decorate the covers of the folder. As an introduction to the Unit, take some time with the students to look at the [Fact Files](#), page by page, reading the information slowly as they follow with their eyes and fingers.