

Teaching Activity

Keeping animals in zoos: arguments for and against

Argument analysis, 120–129

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Learning intention

For students to examine and justify their ideas about keeping animals in zoos and to explore arguments for and against doing so.

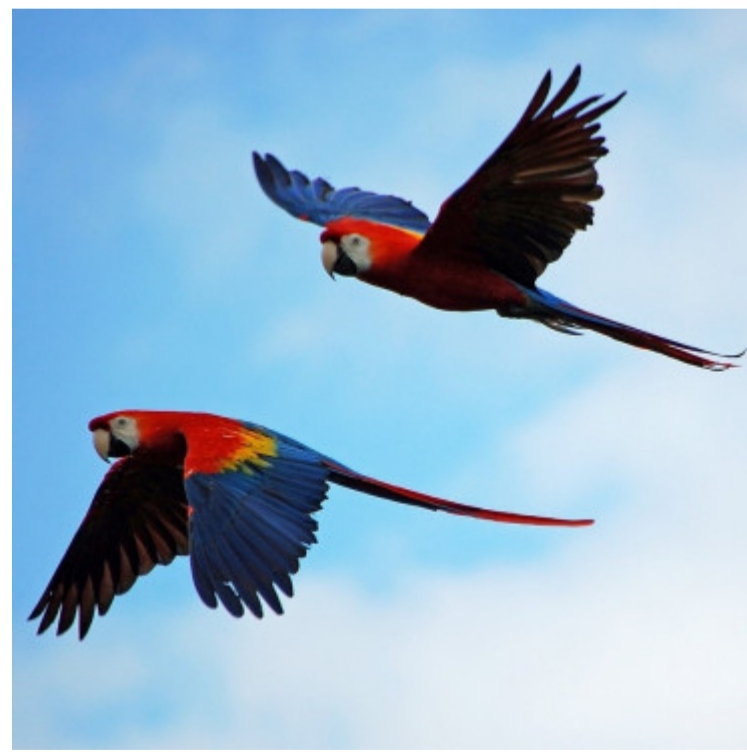
Before you begin

Note that this teaching activity is closely related to the teaching activity beyond the level, [Closing Buenos Aires Zoo: Analysing viewpoints and arguments on an ethical issue](#).

👁 Show



The following images are paired (caged vs free animals).



Need help?



Ask

students to jot down how they respond to the image.

Ask

students to consider:

- what they like about each image and why
- what they don't like and why
- what questions or thoughts come to mind.

Discuss

student reactions as a class.

Ask

students how they feel about keeping animals in zoos.

Ask

students to write down some good things about keeping animals in zoos and some bad things using a 'for-against table', as shown below:

Should we keep animals in zoos?	
Reasons for	Reasons against

Move

students into small groups and ask them to discuss their arguments. Encourage them to add any arguments from the group to their own lists.

Ask

each group to consider whether their arguments against zoos apply only to certain kinds of zoos and whether some of them apply to all zoos.

Ask

each group to discuss which is their strongest argument **for** and their strongest argument **against** keeping animals in zoos.

Invite

each group to report their best arguments for and again to the class.

Extension activity

Tell

students that they will now examine and consider objections to their arguments about keeping animals in zoos.

Read

the following article: Goñi, U (24 June 2016) "[Buenos Aires zoo to close after 140 years: 'Captivity is degrading'](#)", *The Guardian*, accessed 8 January 2024.

As students read the article, ask them to highlight any arguments that the article mentions to support the move.

Discuss

the following with the class:

1. Which arguments relate to the situation at this particular zoo?
2. Which arguments would apply to any zoo?
3. What other arguments are there against having zoos?
4. What arguments are there in favour of zoos?

Related activities below the level

- [Changing school hours: arguments for and against](#)

Related activities at the level

- [Dinocephalosaurus: analysing a scientific argument about fossils](#)
- [Body image](#)
- [False causes](#)
- [Biscuit thief](#)

Related activities beyond the level

- [Closing Buenos Aires Zoo: Analysing viewpoints and arguments on an ethical issue](#)
- [Pharmaceuticals: making important decisions with limited evidence](#)
- [Hoaxes: are they ever ok?](#)

Related annotated questions

- [Identifies which of a series of statements support or challenge a proposal in a familiar context 1](#)
- [Matches a set of claims to an opposing claim in the context of an argument](#)
- [Identifies which of a series of statements support or challenge a proposal in a familiar context 2](#)