



# To Be or Not to Be: Animals on the Brink of Extinction

Jennifer Gaylord, WVPT

## Overview

**Topic:** Endangered species, animals, habitat, extinction. After researching an endangered mammal using teacher-selected websites, students will choose a perspective to assume regarding the future of the animal. They will work with a small group to create and film a public service announcement, interview, or news report about the animal. Students will use digital video cameras and video-editing software to prepare the movies, which will be shared with parents, administrators, teachers, and friends.

## Time Allotment

Five 90-minute lessons

## Learning Objectives

On completion of this lesson students will be able to:

- Describe the physical traits, diet, and habitat of an endangered species.
- Explain two reasons why many animal species are endangered.
- Argue from the perspective of someone who has an interest in the future of the endangered mammal, and present the information in a skit written and filmed in a cooperative group.
- Identify, paraphrase, and summarize important information from websites using a social book-marking site.

(This lesson addresses Va. Sol English 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8)

## Media Components

- **Biologics: Patterns of Population Growth and Management.** United Learning. 1995. Discovery Education. Retrieved 20 July 2009.  
<http://www.wvpt.unitedstreaming.com>

Segment Used:

Segment 7: Preserving the Habitat of an Endangered Species: The Burrowing Owl (03:12)

Websites:

- Diigo <http://www.diigo.com> — Diigo is a social book-marking website that allows you to take notes on websites by highlighting and writing sticky notes.
- ReadWriteThink Printing Press [www.interactives.mped.org/view\\_interactive.aspx?id=110&title](http://www.interactives.mped.org/view_interactive.aspx?id=110&title) — This website has a template that allows the students to complete an advertisement/invitation for their movie.
- ReadWriteThink Student Materials: Persuasion Map [www.readwritethink.org/materials/persuasion\\_map/](http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/persuasion_map/) — This website has a persuasion map for students to complete

Websites for Research:

- <http://www.reference.com/> — This website is an online reference
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page) — This website gives information about the perspective each student will argue.
- <http://www.kidsplanet.org/> — This website provides a definition of the Endangered Species Act and gives information on several endangered mammals.
- [www.amnh.org/nationalcenter/Endangered/index.html](http://www.amnh.org/nationalcenter/Endangered/index.html) This website contains information on various endangered animals.



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- <http://www.worldwildlifefederation.com> — This website has information about many endangered animals.
- Book: Yolen, Jane. Owl Moon. New York: Philomel Books, Inc. 1987.
- Document Camera
- Interactive Whiteboard
- Multimedia Projector
- Computers – 1 per student or group of 2
- Video cameras – 1 per group of 3-4 students

### Materials and Student Handouts

- Endangered Animals Research gathering sheet – one per student (attached)
- Popsicle stick with each student's name, or any method you use for randomly selecting names
- Endangered Animals Skit Directions sheet – one per student (attached)
- Argue from a Different Perspective sheet – one per student (attached)
- Skit grading rubric – one per student (attached)

### Teacher Preparations

- Download and preview video.
- Preview and bookmark all websites. Check to make sure they are not filtered.
- Create a group Diigo site to bookmark research sites ahead of time. Note to teacher: Join Diigo at least a week ahead of time and apply for an educator's membership so you can create accounts for each student in your class. You will also receive daily updates on teacher recommended websites. Students do not need an e-mail address if you have an educator's membership. It may take a day or two to be approved.
- Bookmark the diigo website and add the diigolet toolbar for note taking on student computers.
- Obtain one copy of the book Owl Moon by Jane Yolen.
- Make sure interactive whiteboard, document camera, video cameras, and computers are working.

### Introductory Activity

**1. Focus:** I am going to read you a short picture book. As I am reading, please think about what brought this father and daughter closer together.

**Activity:** Read aloud the picture book Owl Moon by Jane Yolen using the document camera to show the pictures.

**Follow-up:** After reading the book, ask: what brought the father and daughter closer together? (the owl hunting experience) The teacher can model text-to-self connections as a comprehension strategy by sharing any experience with a wild or domesticated animal.

**2. Focus:** I know that many of you have had experiences with animals that you would like to share. You are going to have the opportunity to share your stories on a video.

**Activity:** Have students work in groups of 3-4. Give each group a video camera. Ask them to film each other sharing an experience they have had with an animal.

**Follow-up:** Download videos from cameras to your computer, and show clips students have volunteered to share with the whole class. Say: Take a few minutes to imagine your lives without animals. How would life be different without animals? (Use Think-Pair-Share to discuss. (Students think about the answer to the question, pair up with a classmate to discuss, and share their thoughts with the group.)

#### Videostreaming

In order to use videostreaming interactively with students, teachers should use pre-segmented clips provided by the videostreaming company. If you wish to conduct a discussion before the clip is over and then resume after the discussion, use PAUSE, as this will cause the media player to remain at the current location in the stream. If the remainder of the video clip will not be used and the teacher wants to return to the beginning of the video clip, then use STOP so that the media player will revert to the beginning of the stream.

### Learning Activities

**1. Focus:** I am going to show you a video clip, *Preserving the Habitat of an Endangered Species: The Burrowing Owl*. I want you to watch it and figure out why the graph is relevant to a discussion on endangered species?

**Play:** *Preserving the Habitat of an Endangered Species: The Burrowing Owl* from the beginning.

**Pause:** the video at 00:03 when you see a picture of line graph, no talking.

**Follow-up:** Select a student to summarize what they saw. What does the graph have to do with endangered animals? (It is important because the line in the graph is going down which shows a decline of burrowing owls.) Why is this important to us? (Allow whole class discussion.)

**2. Focus:** Who would be interested in the future of owls? Brainstorm a list on the board. (park ranger, animal rights activist, news reporter, Green Peace employee, World Wildlife Federation employee, poacher, farmer, vegetarian, legislator, zoologist, wildlife biologist, etc.) Why would they care? Pause: Use Think-Pair-Share to discuss. (Students think about the answer to the question, pair up with a classmate to discuss, and share their thoughts with the group.)

**Follow-up:** Why would they care? (Allow whole class discussion.)

**3. Focus:** Why do you think the owl is endangered? Do you think that is the same reason other animals are endangered. (Allow student discussion.) Let's see what we find out from the video.

**Resume:** the video from its pause point.

**Pause:** at 00:23 when you see two men walking in field and the naturalist being interviewed says "loss of habitat."

**Follow-up:** Give one reason why the owl is endangered. (loss of habitat, shot and killed) Do you think these reasons apply to many animals? Use Think-Pair-Share to discuss. Students think about the answer to the question, pair up with a classmate to discuss, and share their thoughts with the group.

**4. Focus:** Listen as the biologist gives examples of why the owl's habitat is disappearing. Be ready to

share two examples of what has been done to the owl's habitat.

**Resume:** the video from the pause point.

**Pause:** at 00:45 when the interviewer is shown and the biologist says "a lot of them are hit by cars."

**Follow-up:** So what are some of the reasons for loss of habitat? (land cultivation, roads and cities being built, insecticides, shot, hit by cars) Can you predict other ways man is hurting the burrowing owl population? (Accept all answers.)

**5. Focus:** Predict what is being done to help save the owl from extinction? (Allow whole class discussion) Let's see what the experts say in the video. Be ready to share one thing that is being done to save the Burrowing Owl.

**Resume:** video at pause point.

**Pause:** at 1:13 when the little chicks are on screen and the naturalist says, "we talk to land owners and see if they want to voluntarily protect the habitat around the burrowing owl."

**Follow-up:** How is the owl being protected? (Operation Burrowing Owl asks volunteers to watch for and help protect the owl.)

**6. Focus:** Can you explain how a decline in the owl population might hurt other animals? Use Think-Pair-Share to discuss. Be ready to explain biodiversity, and what it has to do with the relationship between animals.

**Resume:** video at the pause point.

**Pause:** at 2:02 when you see two owls are on the screen cleaning each other and the naturalist says "just being able to appreciate them is great."

**Follow-up:** How does biodiversity affect the food chain? (Biodiversity is the relationship between animals that depend on each other for shelter, food, etc. If the owl disappears, other animals will multiply too fast and upset the food chain.) What happens if the food chain is upset? (Allow whole class discussion.)

**7. Focus:** As you watch the next segment, think about why people should care about animals becoming extinct.

**Resume:** video at the pause point.

**Pause:** at 2:10 on the naturalist on screen and he says that biodiversity is something a lot of people take for granted.

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**Follow-up:** Why should people care about animals becoming extinct? (We need to have a variety of plants and animals in order to live to our fullest potential on the planet. Animals depend on each other for food, shelter, etc.)

**8. Focus:** What use could animals provide to us? (Brainstorm items that we get from animals.) Be ready to share one possible use of animals to learn from the video.

**Resume:** video at the pause point.

**Stop:** the video when it reaches the end.

**Follow-up:** So what else could animals offer humans? (Prairie animals could offer medicines we don't even know about.) Can you develop a way to help save endangered species? (Accept all thoughtful answers.)

**9. Focus:** Pass out a research sheet to each student. Say: Endangered animals are located in all parts of the world. We are going to take a few minutes to review the continents and oceans, and then you will choose an animal to research.

**Activity:** Use an interactive whiteboard to display the notebook activity with the names and pictures of animals. Conduct a whole class discussion of the seven continents and five oceans and have volunteers write the names on the whiteboard. Select student names randomly with popsicle sticks or any appropriate method. Students should come to the whiteboard and choose the animal they are most interested in researching. Students will drag the picture and its name to the continent or body of water they think the animal comes from.

**Follow-up:** Students should write the name of their animal on their research sheet. Teacher will share answers to where animals are from. North America: Bighorn Sheep, Burrowing Owl, Polar Bear. North/South America: Leatherback Turtle. South America: Mexican Bobcat, Black Spider Monkey, Spectacled Bear. Africa: Rhinoceros, African Elephant, Mountain Gorilla. Asia: Tiger, Amur Leopard, Giant Panda. Atlantic/Pacific Oceans: Blue and Gray Whales.

**10. Focus:** Let's review how to read, paraphrase/summarize and take notes. Students should read the research sheet page to themselves.

**Activity:** Use the interactive whiteboard to model how to use the highlighting tool and sticky notes on the animal research sites you bookmarked on Diigo by reading, highlighting, and making sticky notes on the Endangered Species Act at [www.kidsplanet.org/](http://www.kidsplanet.org/). Have students pay attention to the date of the article when they are researching facts about their animal population today. The World Wildlife Federation has current information on many endangered species around the world. Pass out computers and give each student his or her login and password for Diigo. Students should conduct their research and take notes on the computers. When they are finished, they can answer the research questions on their handout. Students will need 1.5 class periods to gather research.

**Follow-up:** At the end of each class, have students share an interesting fact they learned about their animal.

**11. Focus:** Do you remember our list of people who would be interested in the future of endangered animals? Go over the list that was generated earlier and discuss why they would be interested. Pass out one perspective handout per student.

**Activity:** Show Wikipedia and reference website in diigo on interactive whiteboard and model how to put in a search, read, and paraphrase. Call on students randomly by picking their name written on a popsicle stick or any other method. They will then choose a perspective and write it on their handout. Students will work with a partner on a computer to define and take notes about the person's perspective they chose.

**Follow-up:** Students share definitions, job descriptions, and general perspective of person researched.

### Culminating Activities

**1. Focus:** We will now work in groups. Sort students before class in groups of three-four with different perspectives represented. Let's review the persuasion map website I have bookmarked. You will be completing this map about your animal from the perspective of the person you researched.

**Activity:** Model how to complete the persuasion map with an animal no one else researched from the

perspective of a vegetarian. Students will work on computers in their groups to complete the persuasion map at the following website:

[www.readwritethink.org/materials/persuasion\\_map/](http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/persuasion_map/)

They should peer edit, then have the teacher check it before printing.

**Follow-up:** Students share printed persuasion maps with the whole group.

**2. Focus:** Pass out one skit directions sheet to each student. Instruct them to work in groups and brainstorm a plan for their skit. Pass out grading rubric and go over it with them before they begin. Model how to write dialogue using a document camera.

**Activity:** Students will create public service announcement, news report, or interview skit in groups of three-four students. They should refer to their printed persuasion map for information about their perspective.

**Follow-up:** Share what your group has planned with the teacher. Describe what information you used to support your argument. How did your perspective change how you thought about the information? (Allow student discussion.)

**3. Focus:** Give a brief overview of how to film, and import/edit movies. Remind students to speak loudly and look at the camera.

**Activity:** Students film their skit and use a movie editing software program to make their movie. Groups can take turns filming skits.

**Follow-up:** Share the movie with the teacher.

**4. Focus:** Who would you like to invite to attend the movie viewing of your projects? (parents, younger students, administrators, other teachers and friends) Show them the invitation on an interactive whiteboard using this website:

<http://interactives.mped.org/ppress110.aspx>

**Activity:** Students will complete the advertisement/invitation at the web site and deliver it to parents, administrators, etc.

**Follow-up:** Show movies to parents, etc. on interactive whiteboard. Allow time for questions and discussion. Serve food such as, popcorn and lemonade.

### Assessment

- Grade the project using the rubric.

### Community Connections

- Invite a wildlife biologist, vegetarian, legislator, news reporter, etc. to speak about the issue of endangered species.
- Plan a field trip to a zoo, national park or museum that focuses on animals.

### Cross-Curricular Extensions

- **Language Arts:** Turn research page or persuasion maps into a five paragraph persuasive essay. Visit [www.readwritethink.com](http://www.readwritethink.com) and choose student materials. Use the essay-writing site.
- **Math:** Make a line or pie graph showing how the population of your endangered animal has changed over the years.
- **Science:** Research another endangered animal and compare it to the first one you learned about.
- **Science:** Allow students to explore the National Geographic Kids Page <http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/> — This website contains fun animal related games for kids to do during free time.
- **Language Arts:** Complete a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting your point of view with another person's on the issue of saving your endangered animal.
- **Science:** Invite an expert such as a biologist, legislator, or park ranger from the community to speak to your class about his or her job.

### About the Author

#### Jennifer Gaylord

Jennifer Gaylord teaches 5th Grade Virginia Studies and English in Charlottesville, Virginia. She is married and has 2 daughters ages 12 and 10. Jennifer has been teaching for almost 20 years, always striving to learn new ways to excite her students about the pure enjoyment of learning. During free time, she enjoys hiking, boating, reading, and watching movies.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

What is the Endangered Species Act? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name at least two provisions of this act \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Common name of animal \_\_\_\_\_

Scientific name of animal \_\_\_\_\_

Physical description of animal \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

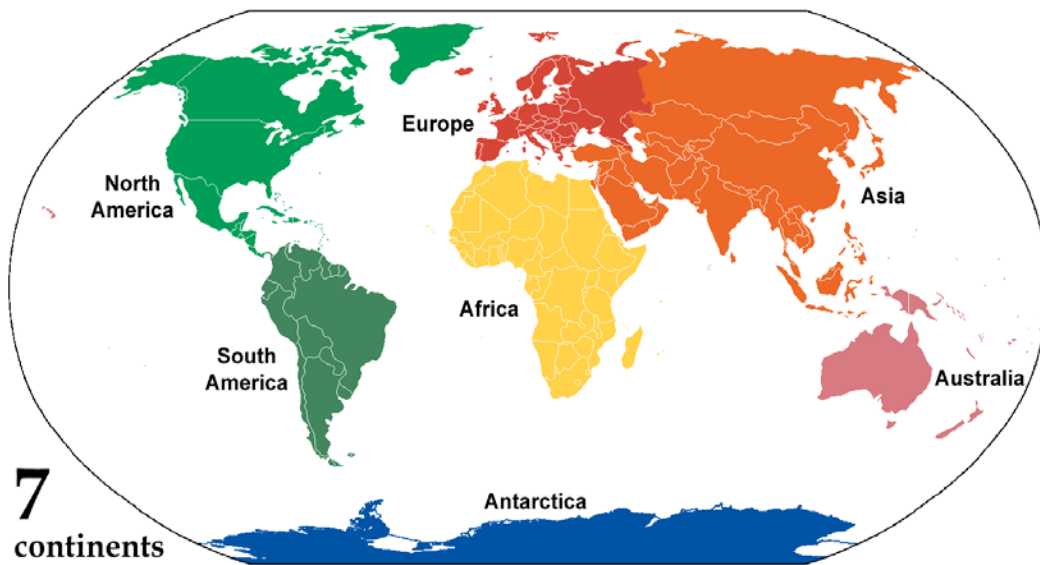
Diet \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Habitat \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Circle the areas where the animal lives.



At least 3 interesting facts:

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At least 3 reasons why this animal is endangered:

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At least 5 reasons why it is important to save this animal:

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Potential damage to the environment or other living creatures if this animal becomes extinct:

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Anything else?

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## Endangered Animals Skit Directions

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Teammates' Names \_\_\_\_\_

Now it is time to present the research on your animal from the person's perspective you have chosen. You will be working in a group of up to three people. Plan and write a script with your classmates. Film your skit, and use movie making software to add a title and edit your project. Please begin by reviewing the skit choices below:

1. Public Service Announcement (PSA) — You have paid a lot of money to interrupt Saturday morning cartoons on Nickelodeon. Your PSA will be 3 minutes long. You and your teammates pretend to be experts and advise others about the protection of the animal. One of you could be against saving the animal and the other two can try to convince you to change your mind.
2. News Show — One of you could pretend to be a news reporter. Film yourself in the animal's environment. Report on what is happening with the animal. Your teammates could pretend to be community members who live in that area, or poachers who just got arrested. You could also pretend to be outside of Congress in Washington, D.C. Interview various lawmakers, Fish and Game Department workers, and/or regular citizens.
3. Interview — Pretend you work in the public relations department of a university. You are trying to entice high school seniors to attend your school. Interview a zoologist who is doing important research on your animal. Your teammates could be graduate students who work for you in the lab. Your teammates could also be random college students who have differing beliefs about the future of your animals.
4. Work with your group. Come up with a skit idea of your own and run it by me first.





## Digital Storytelling : Endangered Species Infomercial, Debate or Interview

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
<b>Voice - Consistency</b>	Voice quality is clear and consistently audible throughout the presentation.	Voice quality is clear and consistently audible throughout the majority (85-95%) of the presentation.	Voice quality is clear and consistently audible through some (70-84%) of the presentation.	Voice quality needs more attention.
<b>Point of View - Awareness of Audience</b>	Strong awareness of audience in the design. Students can clearly explain why they felt the vocabulary, audio and graphics chosen fit the target audience.	Some awareness of audience in the design. Students can partially explain why they felt the vocabulary, audio and graphics chosen fit the target audience.	Some awareness of audience in the design. Students find it difficult to explain how the vocabulary, audio and graphics chosen fit the target audience.	Limited awareness of the needs and interests of the target audience.
<b>Duration of Presentation</b>	Length of presentation was 3 minutes.	Length of presentation was 2 minutes.	Length of presentation was 1 minute.	Presentation was less than 1 minute long or more than 3 minutes long.
<b>Point of View - Purpose</b>	Establishes a purpose early on and maintains a clear focus throughout. Includes many facts and vocabulary words that lend credibility to point of view.	Establishes a purpose early on and maintains focus for most of the presentation. Includes some facts and vocabulary words that lend credibility to point of view.	There are a few lapses in focus, but the purpose is fairly clear. Includes a few facts and vocabulary words that lend credibility to point of view.	It is difficult to figure out the purpose of the presentation. Facts and vocabulary words are missing from the presentation.
<b>Research</b>	Research is complete with all areas thoroughly answered.	Research is mostly complete with few details missing.	Research is inconsistent with several questions missing answers.	Research is missing and most answers are incomplete.
<b>Persuasion Map</b>	Map is completed with thoughtful answers that explain the perspective of the person selected.	Map is mostly completed with many thoughtful answers that explain the perspective of the person selected.	Map is inconsistent with differing perspectives shown and missing details.	Map is incomplete with many sections missing and answers confusing

Created using Rubistar <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/>