

Chimp Takes Care of Tiger Cubs
NewsDepth November 20, 2008
Classroom Activities



Overview:

A chimpanzee in Miami, Florida is bridging species to care for two tiger cubs taken away from their mother. When three year old Anjana is not part of her daily show at Jungle Island, she is backstage playing mommy with two white Bengal Tiger cubs, Mitra and Shiva. The two month old male cubs were born during a hurricane in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina and had to be separated from their mother when their sanctuary flooded. Anjana sees her trainer training these cubs and she wants to be a part of it. She takes care of them by feeding them their bottles and offering them her finger when they are crying. Both cubs and Anjana go home with their trainer everyday, and she even sleeps in the same bed.

(Source for picture: <http://primatology.net/2008/10/13/anjana-the-chimpanzees-bond-with-two-white-tigers/anjana-the-chimpanzee-and-two-tigers-1/>)

Grade level: 5-6

Subjects: Science and Language Arts

Standards:

Science:

Students will describe how organisms may interact with one another.

Language Arts:

Students will organize writing, beginning with an introduction, body and a resolution of plot.

Classroom Activities

1. **Activity #1 H-m-m, I Wonder....** (20-30 minutes)

- Have you ever looked at two people together – it could be two very good friends, a couple, or a husband and wife – and said to yourself, “H-m-m, I wonder what those two have in common. I wonder what it is that draws them together. I wonder what they see in each other. I am not sure I quite understand what brings them together.” There must be something that creates that bond. Something that only they might understand or appreciate.
- In today’s NewsDepth feature, you are introduced to entirely different kind of bonding; one that is pretty uncommon, at least to all of us. At Jungle Island in Miami, Florida, a chimpanzee named Anjana is bridging species to care for two tiger cubs who were taken away from their mother.

- Watch the video again: (You can stream the story on NewsDepth or there is a short video with no script showing Anjana with Mitra and Shiva)
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/7723868.stm>
- Look at the slide show that features 13 adorable pictures of Anjana and the two cubs: <http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/article1793356.ece>
(These are a must see!)
- Watch this video as well showing a baby hippo, rescued from the sea in Kenya after losing its parents, who has adopted a giant tortoise as its mother.
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/7715931.stm>
- Can you offer any explanations as to why this kind of maternal nurturing is taking place? What do you think will happen when the Tiger cubs start to get older?
- Pair students together. Have them spend about 15 minutes together, and write down a simple dialog between Anjana – what do they think they say to each other while they are together?

2. Activity #2 Pair Them Up (15 minutes)

- Write the names of each of these animals on separate large note cards: Mouse, Frog, Cat, Turtle, Bird, Hamster, Snake, Mouse, Deer, Dog, and Squirrel and Hedgehog (yes, mouse is used twice)
- Ask students to pair up the most unlikely combination of two animals.
- Show them the pairings on Handout #1 (show on a projector or print one out)
- Ask them if they have any combinations of pets at their house or have seen any unlikely combination of animals either inside or outside.
- Why do they think these animals are compatible or are bonding in some way?
- Resources for pictures: <http://letsbefriends.blogspot.com/>
<http://elquercoterco.blogspot.com/2007/04/cute-and-unlikely-animal-pairings.html>

3. Activity#3 A Story About An Unlikely Couple (1 class period or assignment)

- Choose any picture from the handout page or from the websites and write a story about an “unlikely couple.”
 - Create names for your two characters. That will be your title.
 - In your introduction, create profiles for each character – where they come from, their age, a fact or two about their personalities
 - In the body, develop a simple plot including how they met, why they are such good friends, possibly what they like about each other, and include any possible obstacles their friendship might encounter and in your conclusion include how they plan to overcome them.
 - Illustrate your story.

Handout #1

