ENDANGERED ANIMALS   notes and topic vocabulary

Ever since life began on Earth, species have existed and naturally gone extinct. Many people credit this to natural selection and "survival of the fittest." Some would argue that since extinction is a natural, normal thing, humans shouldn't pay much attention to it.

Humans aren't responsible for the **extinction of animals**, or are they? Studies show that 99% of currently endangered species are at risk due to **human activity.**

Humans have a responsibility to help save endangered species because we are the top reason for endangerment because we clear these creatures' habitats by **deforestation**, mining, or expanding and most of these animals, plants, or insects are at risk because of human activity like **pollution** from cars or **factories**.

There are still people who highly believe that endangered animals shouldn't be conserved. Many would argue that the cost on saving these animals is too high and outweighs the possible benefits.

 Some would even say that "it's the circle of life, and humans are the ruling species because we can learn to adapt,"

 some people choose to ignore these problems because they don't have an immediate effect on us. They choose ignorance over responsibility because it's the easier route.

Just like in a Jenga block construction, animals depend on one another, and at one point one species will disappear and it'll cause a chain reaction. For example, let's say that a certain plant species goes extinct. Other animals depended on that plant for food and without it, the whole food chain is messed up.

We destroy a creature's habitat and now, they have nowhere to live. Things like **pollution** and **global warming** can also contribute to the loss of habitat or extinction. For example, polar bears rely on the arctic sea to hunt and live.

The **melting of the ice** only means that polar bears will have less access to food, mating, and become extinct. Scientists have predicted that if the Arctic keeps getting warmer, 2/3 of the world's polar bears could disappear by the end of the century. Humans help global warming by burning fossil fuels like coal and oil into the atmosphere. These gases only add on to the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and help higher temperatures. Also, trees help remove CO_2 from the atmosphere and **deforestation** slows down this process.

 loss of biodiversity can mean the loss of possible discovery of treatments for diseases or health problems. For example, a flower type called Rosy Periwinkle almost went extinct due to deforestation in Madagascar. The flower was later found to have a substance that fights and cures Leukemia and Hodgkin's disease. It also helped increase the survival rate of Leukemia from 20% to

80%. If this flower had gone extinct, humans may have never discovered this and it would've had a very different effect in the medical field.

Pollution is not the only reason for the extinction of animals. Unfortunately, many wild animals are being **hunted** nowadays. This is mainly because of their beautiful fur, which is "perfect" for making coats. In order to help many people have decided not to wear leather or fur at all.

t**he number of endangered species rises every year.** Scientists even predict that by 2050, 30%-50% of all species will be on the way to extinction.

Conservation actions: These days even more and more animals and plants are becoming extinct. That means they must be protected in order to maintain the number of animals or plants, which are threatened by extinction.
As humans, we can help conserve animals' habitats and not take away their homes. We can all become **socially aware** of the things we buy and where they come from. By teaching others about endangerment we help spread awareness about it and show others how to make a difference. Even though extinction is a natural process, things like pollution, deforestation, and global warming help speed up extinction. Humans should help endangered animals because they can greatly contribute to humans and we are only speeding up the process.

The real question is **how to protect** them. For example, pollution is a huge threat to every single animal or plant. Pollution is the reason for global warming, which causes the destruction of many animals' habitat. For example, the icy parts in the north and south are melting very slowly, which puts penguins and polar bears in danger. In order to prevent that people shouldn't throw away junk in the nature and should start recycling more.

Urbanization: every year dozens of forests are being destroyed by people who need to open more place for construction.