

Predators, NOT Pets

Teacher's Lesson Plan
Time: 40 minutes



Introduction:

Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge's mission is to provide lifetime refuge for abandoned, abused, and neglected big cats with an emphasis on tigers, lions, leopards, and cougars. Our vision is through public education we can work to end the Exotic Animal Trade, making sanctuaries like Turpentine Creek no longer necessary; together, we can preserve and protect these magnificent predators in the wild for our children's future.

This lesson plan provides students the ability to identify what a predator is, why Turpentine Creek has to rescue and care for them, and that they are meant to be in the wild, not kept as pets.

Background:

Currently there are more tigers in backyards as pets (5,000) in the United States than in the entire wild in Asia (3,800). By teaching our students early on about how wildlife should be treated, we can make a huge impact on their survival. This lesson plan was developed to aid educators in teaching students the difference between domesticated and wild animals, why wild animals are not good pets, and what we can do to help save wildlife for the future. By learning how to protect wildlife, we can make a difference in animal welfare, saving animals from a life of abuse and neglect.

Title: Predators, NOT Pets

Theme: Predators are dangerous animals who hunt for their food, and use their skills as a predator for survival. Wild animals do not lose their natural hunting instincts and protective nature when taken out of the wild, and placed into captivity. Wild animals deserve a life of freedom. However, when people try and keep them as pets, they lose their fear of humans, cannot care for themselves, and cannot be released into the wild. Sanctuaries like Turpentine Creek save these animals from people who do not care for them, and provide them with the most natural life possible in captivity free from human contact.

Objective: Identify differences between predators and pets, and wild versus domesticated animals. Students will understand the issues facing exotic pet ownership, and what they can do to help protect wildlife for the future.

Resources: Lesson plan for appropriate grade level, printed activity books, and vocabulary list

Online Resources: TCWR Website, TCWR You-tube Channel Lesson Plan Evaluation

Please feel free to use any worksheets appropriate for your classroom

Teacher Materials: dry erase board and marker, pictures or videos of animals, crayons/markers, pencil.

*Worksheets are for educational, classroom or personal use only, and should not be shared publicly or reproduced at any time. Please contact TCWR's Education Department at: education@tcwr.org with questions or concerns.



Procedure 4th grade:

4-LS1-1, 4-LS1-2

- 1) Ask students to brainstorm what kind of native predators live in the wild where humans live.

Create a class list; Examples:

- a) What do they eat?
 - b) What makes an animal a predator?
 - c) How do they survive?
- 2) Ask students to model the differences and similarities between a predator and a pet.

Worksheets 4-7

- a) How do pets use their internal and external structures to survive?
 - b) How are they similar or different to how wild animals survive?
- 3) After brainstorming, discuss with students that wild animals are often kept as pets. Ask them if they think it is a good idea to keep an animal that can eat you. What are some reasons why predators are not pets? **worksheets 8 & 9, 4-LS1-1**
 - a) In each environment, can a tiger live a natural life?
 - b) How would each tiger respond differently to where it lives?
 - 4) How do predators use their internal and external structures to support their survival, growth, behavior, and reproduction? **Worksheets 10-11, 4-LS1-2**
 - 5) **Worksheet 12**, which animals are kept as pets, and can also be wild?
 - 6) **Worksheet 13**, vocabulary word quiz, can be used in class or as a homework assignment.
 - 7) Reading assignment: Turpentine Creek's mission , **worksheet 14**, can be a take home reading assignment or read in class.
 - 8) Introduce activity sheets throughout the lesson and allow students to work individually or as a group. They may use their vocabulary list to describe the pictures, color the picture sheets, and you should read the instructions as a class before getting started.

Discussion:

- 1) What is something new that you learned about animals?
- 2) Should wild animals be kept as pets? Why?
- 3) How can we help save wild animals?
- 4) Where should wild animals be kept in captivity?
 - i) A zoo or sanctuary
- 5) What kind of animals are good pets?

Conclusion:

- 1) Wild animals should never be kept as pets. They are **“predators, not pets”**-say as a class together
- 2) We can protect wildlife by saving their natural habitat and keeping them wild.
- 3) Domesticated animals are okay to keep as pets, and need to be cared for just like we care for ourselves.
- 4) Sanctuaries are important to save wild animals in captivity, giving them forever care and a natural lifestyle.



Vocabulary List

- Captivity: **not able** to roam free, need people to survive
- Carnivore: an animal that eats **only meat**
- Conservation: **protecting** of natural environment and wildlife
- Dangerous: able or likely to **cause harm** or injury
- Domestic Animal: tame or **friendly**, lives with humans, dogs, cats, farm animals
- Endangered Species: a type of animal seriously at risk of **disappearing forever**, becoming **extinct**
- Environment: **surroundings** or conditions in which a person, animal, or plant lives
- Exotic Animal: **not native** or from the area that it lives in, introduced by people
- Extinct: a species, family, or group of animals that **no longer exist** or are living
- Freedom: not being restricted, able to **move around freely** and easily, wild
- Herbivore: an animal that eats **only plants**
- Omnivore: an animal that eats **both** meat and plants
- Pet: a **domestic or tame** animal kept by people for companionship or pleasure
- Predator: an animal that kills other animals for **food** to survive or live
- Refuge: **Free** from harm, kept in captivity
- Sanctuary: a place of **refuge or safety** in captivity, providing care for wild animals
- Tame: a **not dangerous** animal or frightened of people, domesticated animals
- Welfare: health, **happiness**, and well-being
- Wild Animal: **not domestic** or tame, lives in natural environment, not with people



Draw your favorite predator below in its natural habitat.

Now draw your favorite domesticated animal and where it lives.

Natural Habitat Discussion:

Predator Picture:

- 1) What is the name of your favorite predator? _____
- 2) Where does it live? _____
- 3) What other animals live there? _____
- 4) What do you think it eats? _____
- 5) What would happen if it lost its home? _____
- 6) Why is it not a good pet? _____

- 7) How can you help protect your favorite wild animal? _____

Pet Picture:

- 1) What is the name of your favorite pet? _____
- 2) Where does it live? _____
- 3) What does it eat? _____
- 4) Why is it different from a wild animal? _____

- 5) How is it a good pet? _____

- 6) How can you help make sure it is happy and healthy? _____

Once you are finished, you will discuss your picture with the class.



Wild Animal vs. Pet Class Discussion Questions:

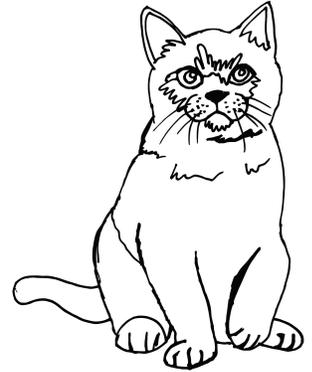


List 3 things that make a wild animal **different** from a pet

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

List 3 things that make a wild animal and pets **similar**

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____



Describe your favorite **predator** and how it survives: (Can it live without humans?)

Describe your favorite pet and how it survives: (Can it live without humans?)

Join TCWR in taking a wildlife pledge! I (your name) _____ pledge to help protect wildlife by:

I _____ pledge to help protect domestic animals by:

Use the Venn Diagrams to compare and contrast wild versus domestic animals. You can also use words in your vocabulary list.

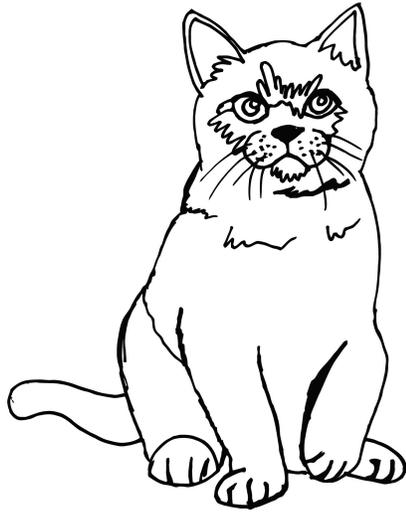


Photo 1

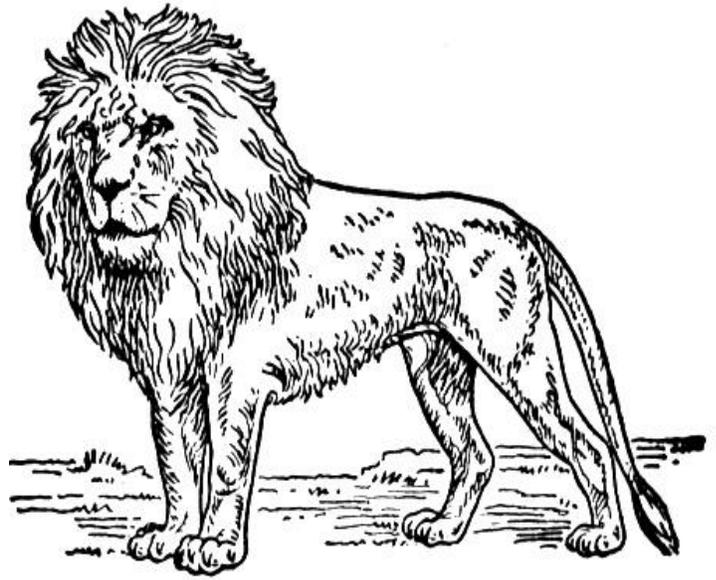
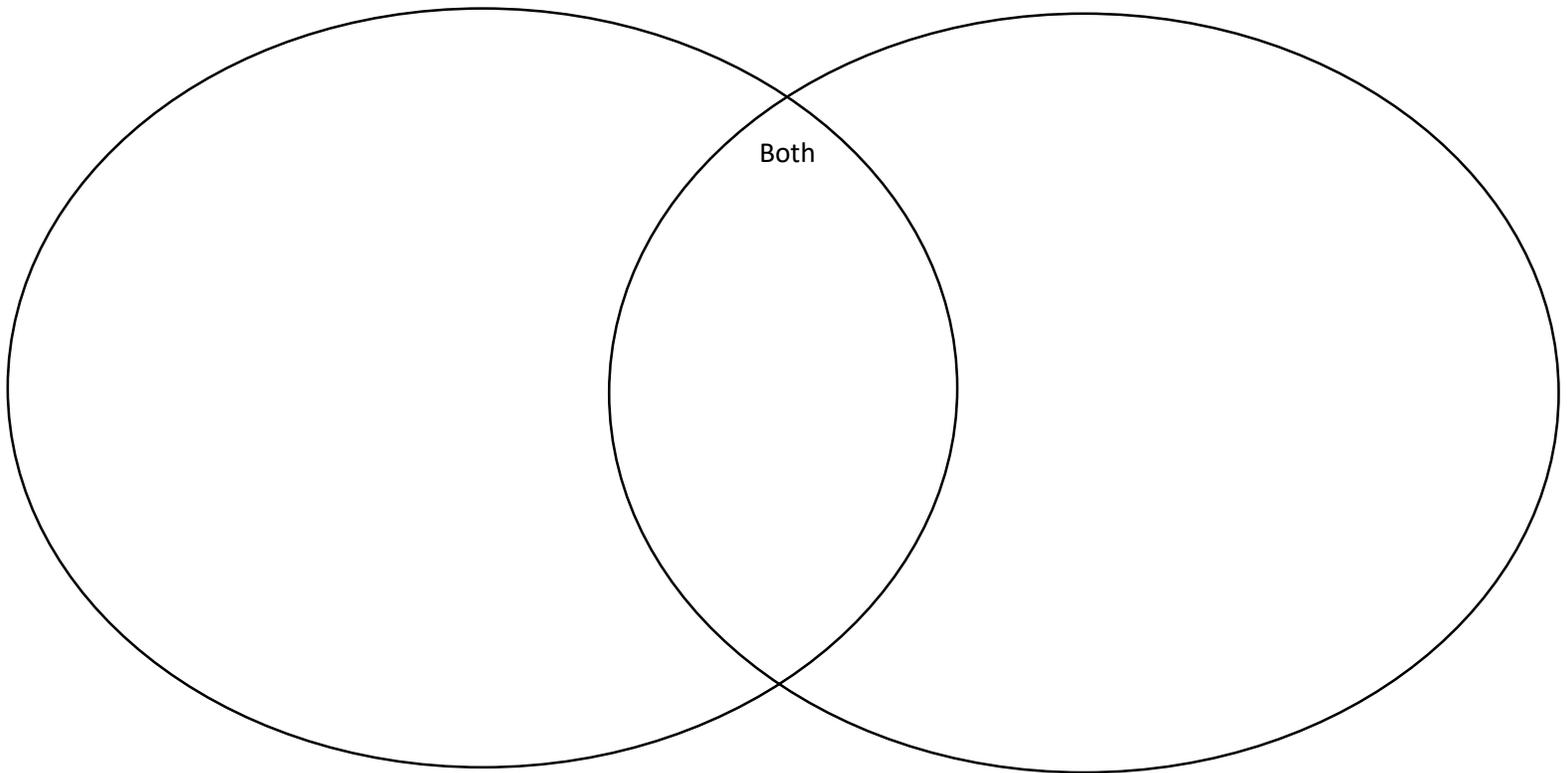


Photo 2



Wild versus Captivity- How do tigers meet their needs for survival in the 3 environments below? Circle which images meet the tigers needs.



Image 1) Wild Tiger

Can it find food?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Can it find water?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Can it find shelter?

- a. Yes
- b. No

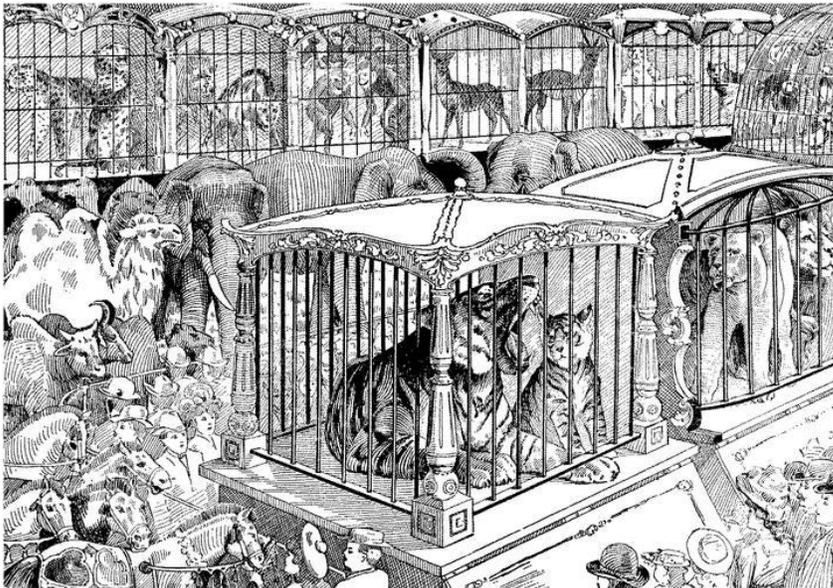


Image 2) Tiger in a Circus

Can it find food?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Can it find water?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Can it find shelter?

- a. Yes
- b. No



Image 3) Tiger in a Sanctuary

Can it find food?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Can it find water?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Can it find shelter?

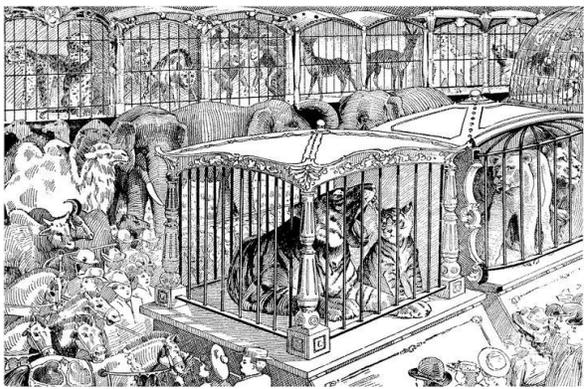
- a. Yes
- b. No

Wild vs. Captivity

In the 4 environments below, create an argument of how the tiger would use it's internal and external senses in the environment for survival, growth, natural behaviors, and reproduction.



1) Tiger in the Wild



2) Tiger in a Circus



3) Tiger in a Sanctuary or Zoo

4) Tiger cub without mother



Label the tigers face words below, and learn how tigers use their unique bodies to survive. Label the external body part, then write how they use them to explore their environment.



What does the tiger use each body part for? Guess below, and check the answer sheet!

Eyes: _____

Ears: _____

Tongue: _____

Whiskers: _____

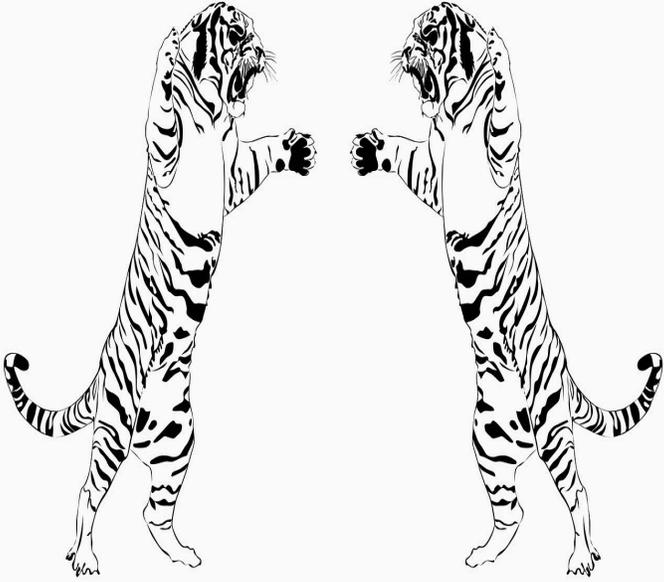
Nose: _____

Stripes: _____

Fur: _____

Teeth: _____

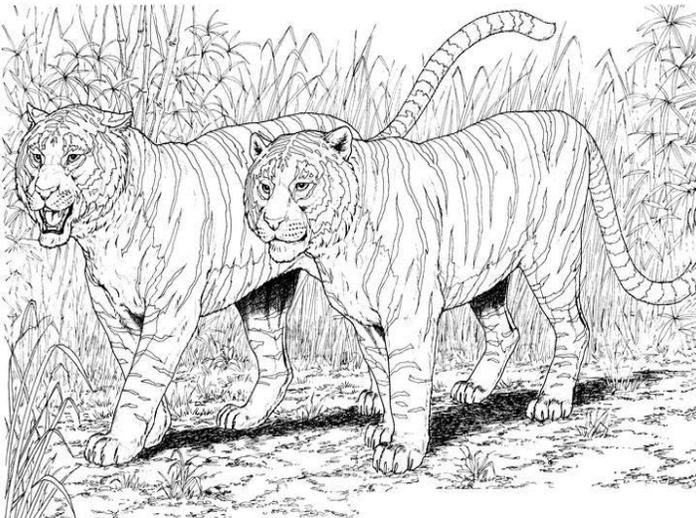
Tigers are apex predators, meaning that they are at the top of the food chain. How would they use their unique body parts and adaptations for each picture below? Use examples from the tiger face activity.



Tigers defending their territory:

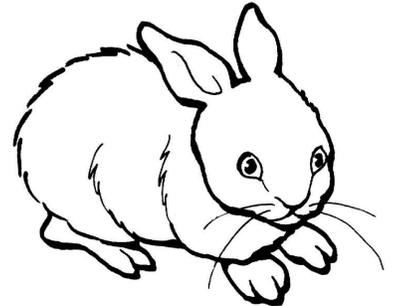
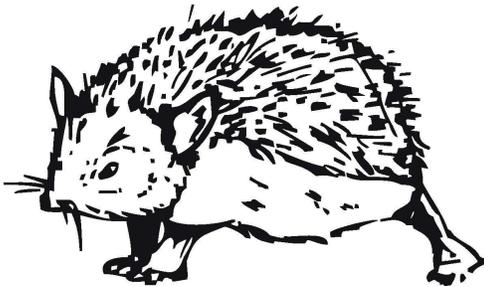
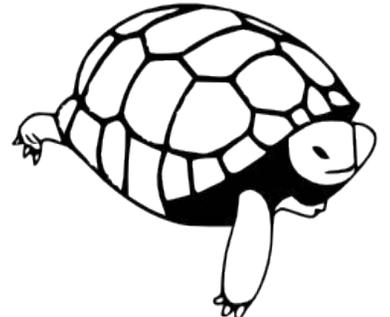
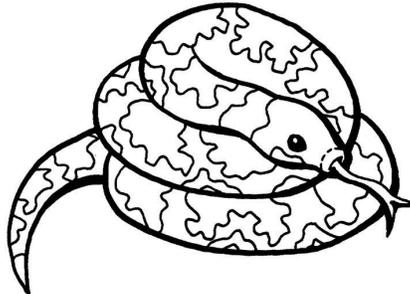
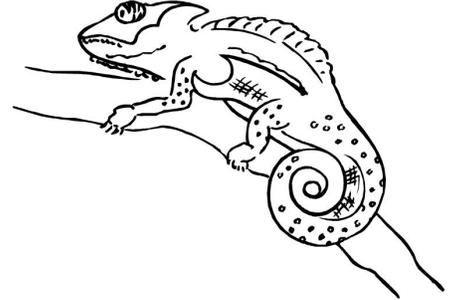
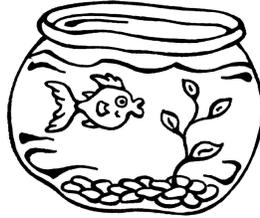
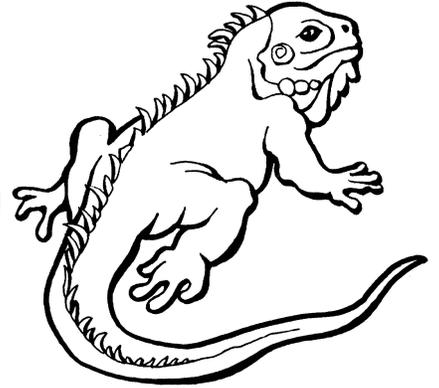
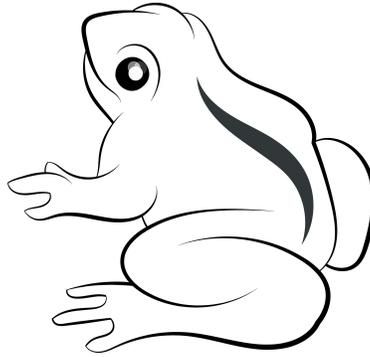
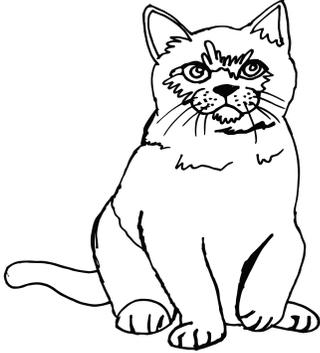


Tiger hunting:



Tiger mother caring for her cub:

Imagine you walk into a pet store, and below are the animals available for pets. Circle the animals that you can also find in the wild.



When buying a pet, it is important to make sure you know where it comes from. Many exotic animals are sadly stolen from the wild to be sold, and are not supposed to be pets. Do not keep wild animals as pets and you will be a responsible pet owner!



Fill in the blanks below using your vocabulary sheet

- A _____ should never be kept as a pet. They should live in their natural _____ or surroundings, not with people.
- An _____ eats plants and meat, while a _____ only eats meat. _____ only eat plants.
- Animals that are not native to an area are called an _____.
- _____ are animals that are at risk of disappearing forever. If they disappear, they are called _____, and no longer exist.
- Animals that are in _____ depend on people to survive, and are not free to go anywhere they want. They should be kept in a zoo or _____.
- _____ animals are good pets, they are friendly and are happy to live with humans. They are _____ and not dangerous.
- All animals should be given _____, and not be restricted to move around in both the wild and captivity.
- A _____ is a companion animal, people keep as a companion to be happy. Exotic animals are _____, and should not be kept as a pet.
- _____ protects the natural environment for wildlife, and keeps the Earth clean and safe.
- Animals that kill other animals for food is called a _____.
- The most important thing for any living being is it's _____, which is health, happiness, and well-being.
- Turpentine Creek is a _____, providing forever care to exotic animals in captivity, keeping them safe from harm.



Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge's Mission Reading Assignment

Currently there are over 5,000 tigers in backyards as pets in the United States than in the entire wild in Asia, where there are only 3,800. By learning about how wildlife should be treated, we can make a huge impact on their survival and making sure they do not become extinct. There are 5 different types of tigers in the wild, and all of them are endangered. If they disappear, they can never be seen again in their natural habitat. Tigers are an important part of the ecosystem, creating a balance between all plants, animals. They are called an "umbrella species", by protecting tigers and their habitat, the other plants and animals are also protected.

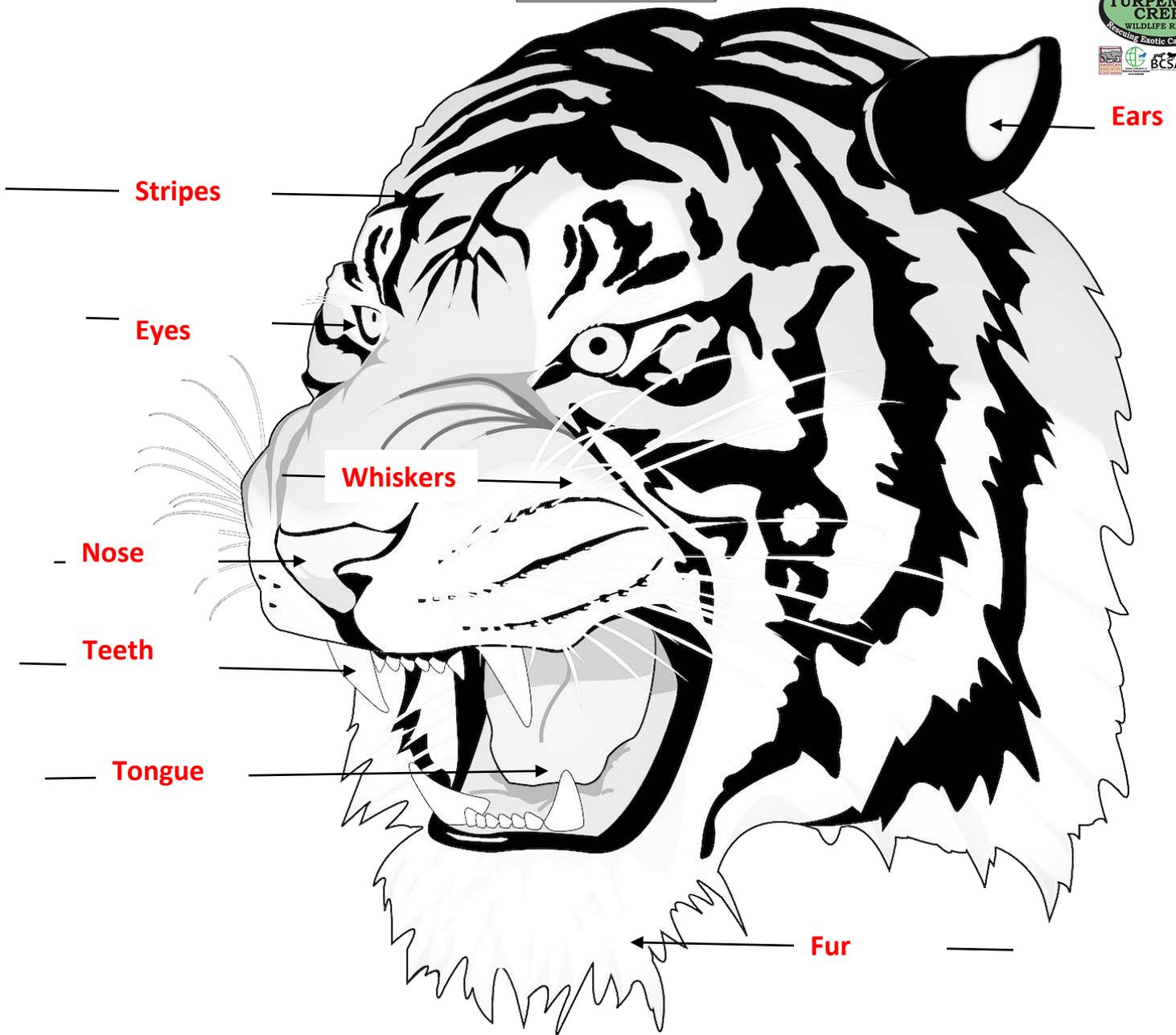
Wild animals do not make good pets, and by keeping them in captivity, they can never go back into the wild. This is because they have not been taught by their mothers how to hunt or find territory, and would not have the skills to survive. Even when people have to take care of them, tigers are still wild, and extremely dangerous. They do not lose their instincts of being a predator. You cannot tame a tiger by raising it from a cub. Once a tiger gets bigger and bigger, many people who own them as pets no longer want to care for their dangerous animal. This is why Turpentine Creek is important, because they rescue animals who cannot go back into the wild, and give them a natural life in captivity.

The mission of Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge is to provide lifetime refuge for abandoned, abused, and neglected big cats with an emphasis on tigers, lions, leopards, and cougars. Our vision is through public education we can work to end the Exotic Animal Trade, making sanctuaries like Turpentine Creek no longer necessary; together, we can preserve and protect these magnificent predators in the wild for our future.

How you can help Turpentine Creek protect tigers, big cats, and bears is to share what you have learned with your friends and family, do not keep dangerous wild animals as pets, and do not visit places that let you touch or, play with, or pet dangerous animals like big cats. Only visit places that are real sanctuaries or zoos, rescuing animals and providing them with forever care, free from human contact. Remember that predators are NOT pets, and you can protect wildlife by speaking up for them.



Teacher Key



Eyes: Tigers have very good eye sight, and use their eyes to hunt and find food.

Ears: The spots on the back of their ears look like eyes, so other predators do not sneak up on them.

Tongue: Their tongues feel like sand paper, and help the big cat eat its food by removing fur.

Whiskers: They are very sensitive, and allow cats to feel how big the space around them is.

Nose: Tigers do not use their nose to smell for food, but to communicate with other animals in the wild.

Stripes: Used for camouflage, or helping the tiger blend in with its surroundings, it makes them look smaller.

Fur: Mammals have fur to keep them warm, and also protect them from being hurt.

Teeth: Tigers use their teeth to kill their food, and can feel the heart stop beating through their teeth!

Wild versus Captivity- How do tigers meet their needs for survival in the 3 environments below? Circle which images meet the tigers needs.

Teacher Key



Image 1) Wild Tiger

Can it find food?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Can it find water?

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Can it find shelter?

- a. Yes
- b. No

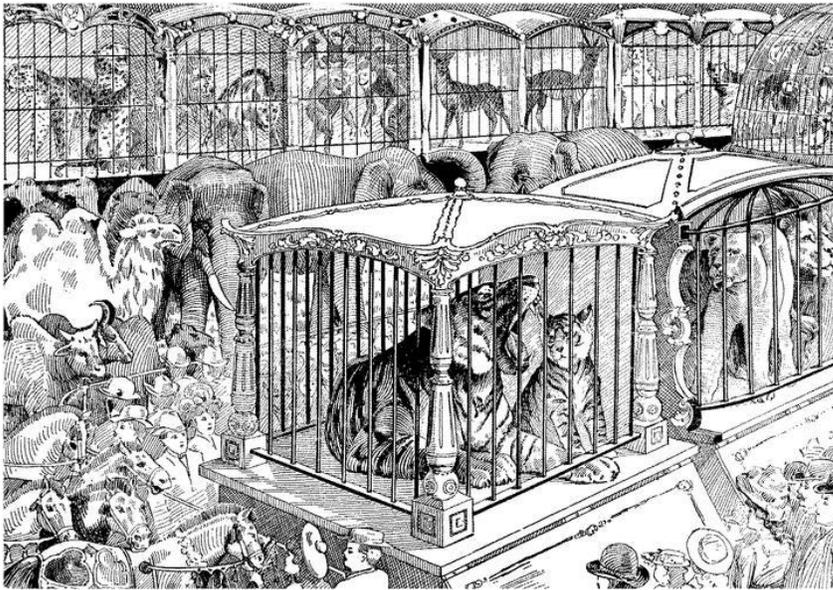


Image 2) Tiger in a Circus

Can it find food?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Can it find water?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Can it find shelter?

- a. Yes
- b. No



Image 3) Tiger in a Sanctuary

Can it find food?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Can it find water?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Can it find shelter?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Teacher Key: Fill in the blanks below using your vocabulary sheet

- A **wild animal** should never be kept as a pet. They should live in their natural **environment** or surroundings, not with people.
- An **omnivore** eats plants and meat, while a **carnivore** only eats meat. - **herbivore** only eat plants.
- Animals that are not native to an area are called an **exotic animal**.
- **Endangered Species** are animals that are at risk of disappearing forever. If they disappear, they are called **extinct**, and no longer exist.
- Animals that are in **captivity** depend on people to survive, and are not free to go anywhere they want. They should be kept in a zoo or **sanctuary**.
- **Domestic** animals are good pets, they are friendly and are happy to live with humans. They are **tame** and not dangerous.
- All animals should be given **freedom**, and not be restricted to move around in both the wild and captivity.
- A **pet** is a companion animal, people keep as a companion to be happy. Exotic animals are **dangerous**, and should not be kept as a pet.
- **Conservation** protects the natural environment for wildlife, and keeps the Earth clean and safe.
- Animals that kill other animals for food is called a **predator**.
- The most important thing for any living being is it's **welfare**, which is health, happiness, and well-being.
- Turpentine Creek is a **refuge**, providing forever care to exotic animals in captivity, keeping them safe from harm.



Use the Venn Diagrams to compare and contrast wild versus domestic animals. You can also use words in your vocabulary list. **Teacher Key Examples**

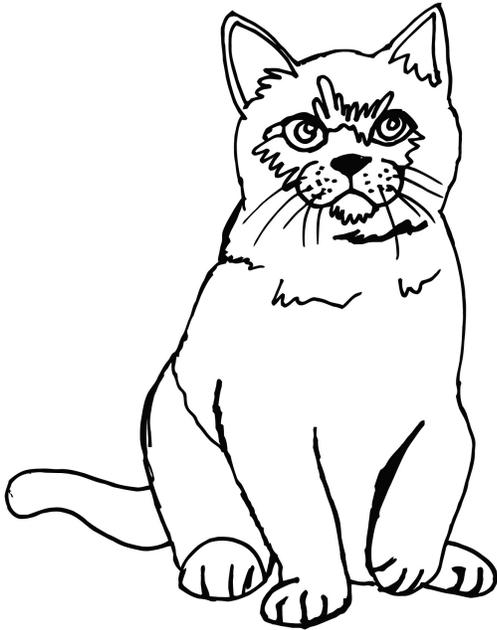


Photo 1

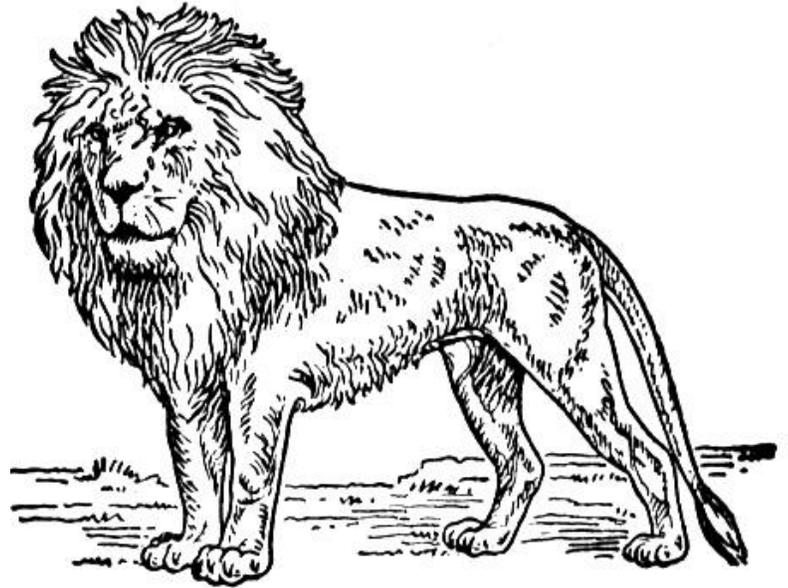
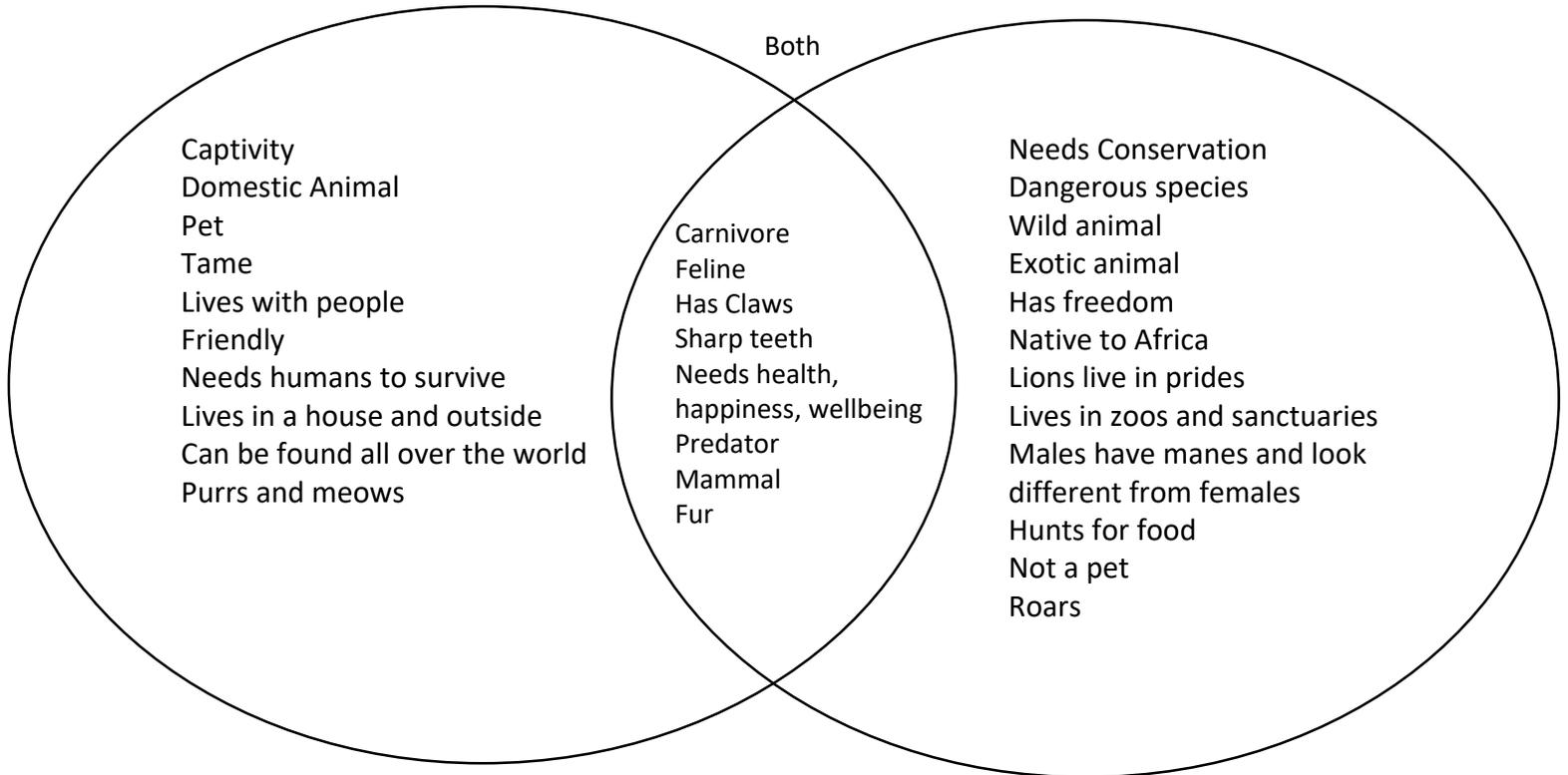
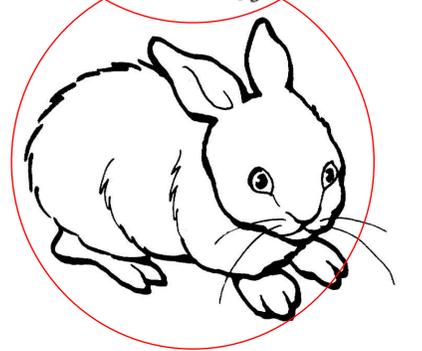
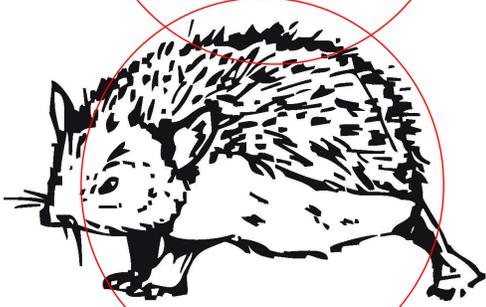
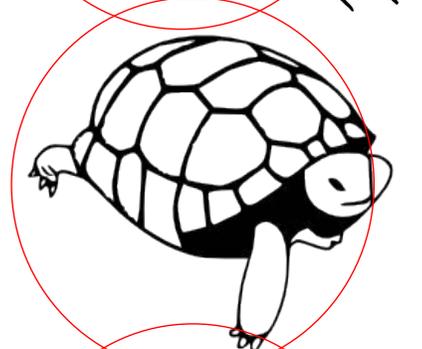
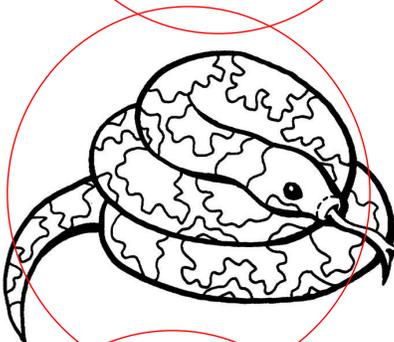
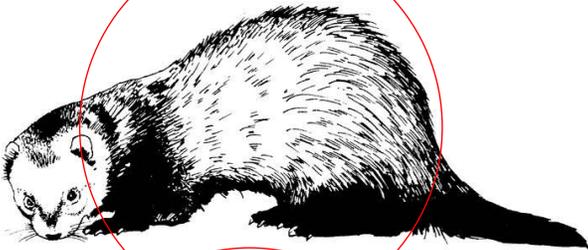
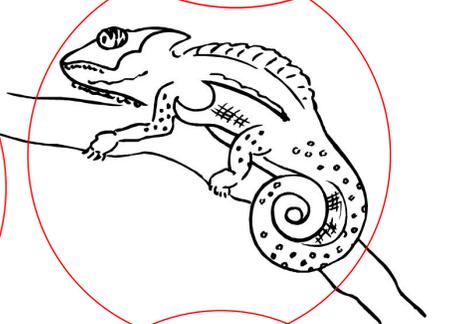
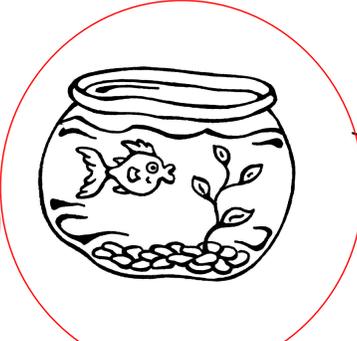
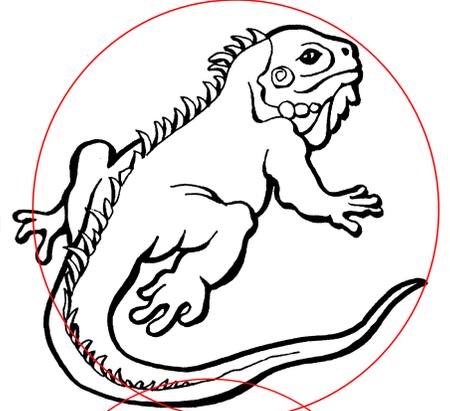
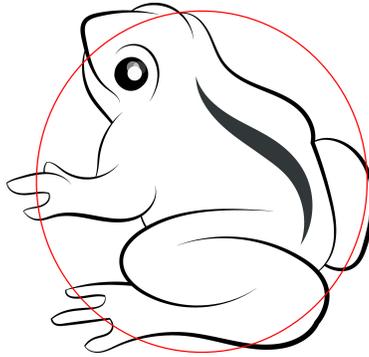
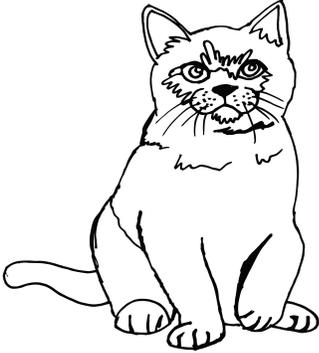
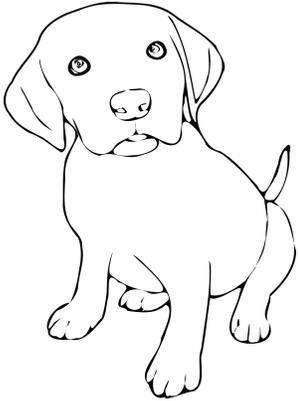


Photo 2



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