

Report on the pro's and con's of zoos essay



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After visiting London Zoo, our group have unanimously agreed that the majority of zoos generally are negative establishments and that the disadvantages of them far outweigh the advantages. As a group we feel that the way zoos interfere with nature and what would happen naturally is a corruptive thing to do. Whilst we accept that zoos provide the chance for people to see animals they wouldn't usually have the opportunity to see, this comes at a price of potentially scarring the animals mentally by keeping them in conditions which are cramped and poor a lot of the time; a fact that is demonstrated with images on our group poster.

It is unarguable that no zoo can ever provide animals with the conditions they would receive naturally in the wild. It has been proven that even animals born in captivity can notice biologically what is 'missing' from their surroundings. An animal born in captivity can still miss, and need, its wild life. A number of people may argue that zoos have an educational value. This really is an inferior argument in favour of zoos.

What sort of educational value is contained in watching animals behave in an unnatural way? We - as a group - can answer that question easily. There is little -if any- educational value for visitors to zoos. It has also been proven that animals die prematurely in zoos. For example, in 1991, twenty two of the twenty five Asiatic Lions were born in zoos around the world died. An 88% death rate for newborn animals is unnatural and we believe that there is one reason for this - zoos. Continuing, we propose that zoos are in fact death traps not sanctuaries for animals.

Zoos in the United Kingdom are known to have supplied animals for use in experiments. Recently, a zoo research institute performed experiments on primates and wallabies. These experiments were the total opposite of harmless. An experiment was carried out on marmoset monkeys in which their sense of smell was destroyed using surgical burning and chemical techniques. The object of the research was to discover whether the breeding rates of the monkeys improved.

In another experiment, fully conscious wallabies were decapitated. We find these actions monstrous and a scandalous thing to do. In 1992 the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV) found that the Longleat Safari Park and Woburn Wild Animal Park were supplying primates to Shamrock GB Limited, the UK's primary supplier of laboratory primates for scientific research which use animals for experiments such as those mentioned above. Furthermore, we find it appalling that animals are still being taken from the wild and being put into zoo captivity. This really does affect the animals and at least half of all animals taken from the wild die due to a number of reasons.

Some of these reasons are that they miss the wild, cannot cope with their new lifestyles and that they are too lonely to survive. The poor conditions in some zoos which a majority of suffer from severe low funding problems are also responsible. Young elephants have come to the UK from South Africa where they have witnessed their families being killed by shooting. Generally, it is conclusive that zoos are primarily interested in their own benefit before that of the animals or any other reasons they might decide to supply you with such as conservation and education of visitors. It is an undeniable fact <https://assignbuster.com/report-on-the-pros-and-cons-of-zoos-essay/>

that a lot of zoos focus on their 'crowd pullers.' Typically, these are the large mammal species such as Giraffes, Monkeys, Tigers and Elephants.

These animals are only kept in captivity for the benefit of the zoos themselves. Animals bred in captivity and their young always attract visitors and appeal to them, but these animals do get old. Older animals no longer do 'funny' things and are a lot less active. These animals quite often are disposed of either being shot or sold into the pet trade. In 1992 a CAPS investigation team found two Goeldi's marmoset monkeys in a pet shop. The monkeys had been supplied to the pet shop by a zoo.

Goeldi's marmosets are one of the world's rarest primate species. Zoos are supposed to protect endangered species, but surely, getting rid of rare species is encouraging extinction of the very animals they claim to be protecting? A number of zoos suffer from severe staff shortages, and the staff they do have lack basic knowledge and skills on animal care. Asia's largest zoo has never had a veterinary hospital. Although two veterinarians are required by law, the zoo does not even have one on-site veterinarian. It is not surprising animals are dying in zoos. In 2003, after a zookeeper left a male tiger's cage door open, the tiger leaped out and attacked and killed Badri, a 13-year-old tiger in the adjacent cage.

These incompetent staff and the staff shortages directly lead to negligent actions on their part. Whilst it is clear that zoos are negative establishments, we do acknowledge that they have some limited advantages. We do understand that seeing the animals means that public awareness is raised and the need to protect endangered species is emphasised. Furthermore, in

our opinion, the most important and plausible advantage of zoos are that they protect orphaned animals which otherwise would not have survived. Finally, we accept that some commendable research is conducted on animals in a non-harmful way in the appropriate manner and that this is a good thing.