



MAKE A ZOO

A CHALLENGE FOCUSING ON ANIMAL KNOWLEDGE AND CONSERVATION

AIM: To create the habitat needed for an animal of choice to survive.

ITEMS NEEDED:

- A wide variety of LEGO Bricks
- Baseplates
- Animals (for younger students)

SET UP:

1. Place LEGO bricks on a tray, or mat depending on the number of students you will have interacting with this activity.

THE BUILD:

Students will choose an animal to create a living space for. They will need to consider what the animal needs to eat, drink, shelter, and sleep. They will need to consider the size of the environment each animal requires to comfortably survive. (for example, a Monkey may only need some trees, whereas a cheetah requires large spaces to run in.

ALTERNATIVES & EXTENSIONS

Consider who will be involved and for how long. This activity is a great way to explore animal conservation and care. You could have a full class group involved, or just a small group focusing on this topic of inquiry/learning focus. Will this be a 1-day activity or will it be expanded on over a week?

Build your own animals - not all LEGO collections are going to include an incredible range of wild and domestic animals. Therefore get students to create their own animals. This way they can make a whole herd, gaggle, flock, tower, tribe, or troop. (NOTE: more learning here to discover what groups of animals are named!). The animal does not need to be accurate, it just needs to be a representation of the animal they are using. For example, an elephant could be some big grey bricks with smaller grey pieces for legs, or a giraffe could be a stack of yellow and brown bricks. For younger students, you could use actual LEGO animals, or assist them with making their chosen animal.

Space needed: Some animals need only a small space so 1 base plate is sufficient. However, some animals will require a much larger area. A larger 'base' could be made using paper to outline the area so students can focus on building the animals and habitat.

Extend for older students: Use this activity as a complete research topic. First get students to research their chosen animal in detail, write up their findings, and then plan their build. Once built students can then complete a video, narrating all the requirements and research findings visually through their LEGO-made creation.

Extend again: Set up a camera and make a timelapse of the creation being made!

Go super creative - Get students to invent or 'discover a new animal. What does it look like (start by building a creature from LEGO)? Name it. Where is its natural habitat (now build this, and/or write about it)? What climate does it live in? Remember to record their invention via photos or videos. Is this creature still alive, endangered, or extinct?

At House of Bricks we love to hear what students are creating with our activity ideas. email info@houseofbricks.co.nz or share your students creations with us on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter.



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RICH EXPERIENCES

- **Researching** - children question, find information, report on animal habitats and survival habits. This may be done individually or as a small group.
- **Awareness of the wider world** - children begin to look wider than their immediate environment. Exploring places around the world where some of the animals may live, they become aware of different climates, landscapes, environmental factors which affect these animals.
- **Exploration of building skills** - for the build an animal challenge, children have to think outside the box with how they will create different parts of the animal e.g. what will they use for teeth, claws, stripes, a nose.

LINKS TO CURRICULUM

Te Whāriki

Mana aotūroa - Exploration

Children develop working theories for making sense of the natural, social, physical and material worlds.

➡ This links to children developing an understanding of different animals habitats and their natural habits when in the wild.

Mana whenua - Belonging

Children affirm connections between people, places and things in their world and the wider world which are also extended to include new knowledge.

➡ This links to children learning about animals that don't naturally inhabit the place where they live.

Mana tangata - Contribution

Children are affirmed as individuals

➡ This links to children understanding that they have ideas and thoughts which are valid to their learning. They are encouraged to share these in a group setting and be heard and acknowledged as they learn alongside others.

New Zealand Curriculum

Science - Living World

Students begin to explain how living things are suited to their particular habitat and how they respond to environmental changes both natural and human induced.

➡ This links to students researching their animal and finding out what makes a healthy habitat for them to survive in and translating this into creating the different elements of their build.

Digital Technology

Students understand there is a relationship between a material used and its performance properties in a technological product.

➡ This links to students using a computer, tablet, or other device to research information online and then use it to produce a video or stop motion recording of their animals habitat.

Art - Visual

Students will explore art making conventions, applying this knowledge of elements and selected principles through the use of materials and processes.

➡ This links to students exploring different ways to be inventive especially when they make their creature from scratch. This could be watching short clips of *LEGO Masters** to see how others have adapted bricks to make them represent other parts of their build.



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