



Animal Enrichment

What is animal enrichment?

Animal enrichment is used in zoos as a way of enhancing the animal's environment that it lives in. Essentially it is giving the animals things such as toys, training and furniture and adding these to enclosures to encourage animals to act out natural behaviours.

Why do zoos give animal enrichment?

- Increases natural behaviours
- Satisfy social, physiological, behavioural, and psychological needs
- Provides animals choices
- Creates a more entertaining living environment for the animal
- Can make the animal easier to approach if they need vet care (animal training)

Examples of animal enrichment

- Keeper training animals
- Food toys
- Adding furniture or novel items in enclosure
- Adding scents into enclosures
- Changing outlook and features of enclosure (trees, water hole etc)
- Adding real prey
- Adding sounds
- Include new animals into enclosures
- Modifying diet, way fed and food types, position where animals are fed

What do you need to know before giving an animal a type of enrichment?

- What the animal likes to eat
- What they like to do
- How good their senses are
- How strong they are
- How they like to catch or collect their food
- Materials that are safe to use for your animal

It is no good just giving all animals the same type of enrichment because not every animal has the same requirements. All animals have different needs and it is these needs that must be known before you can design any enrichment device. It is no good giving a food toy to an animal that doesn't have the necessary body parts to get the food out of the toy, or giving a food toy that contains food the animal doesn't eat.

Examples of enrichment we give animals at the Hamilton zoo

Kea

The kea at Hamilton zoo have special toys made for them. They are incredibly intelligent birds and can often work their way through puzzles in 15 minutes. To check out some of the enrichment toys we use for kea go to:

http://www.rsnz.org/education/bp_chall/2006/zoo.php






Resources to use at school or at Hamilton zoo

Activity 1: Designing an enrichment toy.

Instructions: Your mission is to design an enrichment device for your chosen animal that you can put food into.

Your toy must have a purpose such as increasing foraging behaviour (behaviour used to look for food, increase animals exercise, play etc)

- 1) Decide which animal you would like to make an enrichment toy for
 - 2) Find out the answers to the following questions
 - What it can and can't do?
 - The habitat it lives in?
 - Who it lives with?
 - What it likes to eat?
 - How it catches its food?
 - Describe how it moves around?
 - How does it eat its food?
 - 3) Describe the purpose or aim of the enrichment device?
 - 4) Draw a picture of what you would like your prototype device to look like.
 - 5) What materials will the toy be made out of?
Remember to think about how big and strong your animal is and where your toy might be used. You need to use materials that will be safe for the animal.
 - 6) What food will you put inside your toy? How will your animal get the food?
Remember to think about the types of food your animal eats in the wild and the types of food you have available to you
 - 7) Where would you put the toy inside the enclosure and why? Describe how you would use the toy
 - 8) Could you modify your toy to be used for another animal? What animal could you modify it for? What changes would you make to suit a different animal?
- 



Chimpanzee Behaviour

Modern zoos design and build enclosures that illustrate the habitat of an animal in order to encourage natural behaviours as well as educate visitors.

Watch for these chimpanzee behaviours and tick those you observe.

Try to explain the reason for the behaviour.

Behaviour	Observed?	Reason for behaviour
Playing together		
Fighting		
Hiding		
Making noise, vocalising		

Wild Whanau.

Why do you think it is beneficial for chimpanzee to live in family groups (troops)?

Behavioural Enrichment at Hamilton Zoo

This is something that you may have seen but not recognised or understood. It includes a whole range of activities and devices designed to stimulate zoo animals to behave in a natural way.

(Obviously living in the zoo is very different to living in the wild.)

Imagine you are one of the chimpanzees here: what are some good things and bad things about living in a zoo compared to living in the wild?

GOOD: In the zoo, chimpanzees

BAD: In the zoo, chimpanzees

Overall, living in modern zoos is a safer existence, but it may become boring or stressful. Behavioural enrichment is how we give animals something to do to keep them occupied and thinking, in a way that encourages similar behaviour to wild animals. A lot has to do with the enclosure design and construction.

Behavioural enrichment is about taking that further and really thinking about what an animal could, would and should be doing, then finding a way to encourage that behaviour in a safe, interesting and economical way.





Why do wild chimpanzees climb?

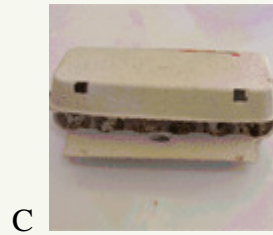
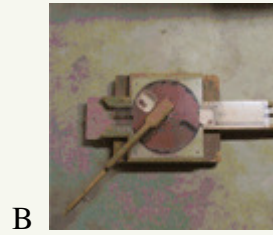
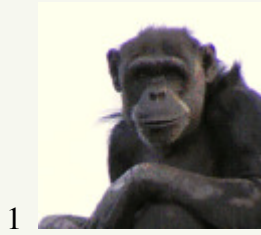
Should Hamilton Zoo encourage their captive chimpanzees to climb?

Explain your reasoning.

Describe and draw any other enrichment items that you see.



Match the enrichment with the correct animal at Hamilton Zoo



Why did you make those choices?

