



Key Stage 3

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 2 Writers' viewpoints and perspectives
Year 8 Pack 3

Insert

The two Sources that follow are:

Source A: 21st Century non-fiction

Why zoos are good by Dr David Hone

An article from *The Guardian* newspaper written in 2014.

Source B: 19th Century literary non-fiction

The Zoo by Edward Frederic Benson

An extract from an essay written in 1893.

**Please turn the page over
to see the Sources**

Source A

People have mixed opinions of zoos and the conditions in which animals are kept. In this article the writer, Dr Dave Hone, sets out his argument on the topic.

Why zoos are good

- 1 The days of the Victorian menagerie¹ are over, but modern zoos are much more than a collection of animals and more important than ever.

I am a lifelong fan of good zoos (note the adjective) and have visited dozens of zoos, safari parks and aquaria around the world. I also spent a number of years working as a volunteer
5 keeper at two zoos in the U.K. So it is probably fair to say I'm firmly in the pro-zoo camp.

However, I am perfectly willing to recognise that there are bad zoos and bad individual exhibits. Not all animals are kept perfectly, much as I wish it were otherwise, and even in the best examples, there is still room for improvement. In either case, zoos (at least in the U.K. and most of the western world) are generally a poor target for criticism in terms of animal welfare – they
10 have to keep the public onside or go bust and they have to stand up to rigorous inspections or be closed down. While a bad collection should not be ignored, if you are worried about the care and treatment of animals in captivity I can point to a great many farms, breeders, dealers and private owners who are in far greater need of inspection, improvement or both.

If you are against animals in captivity full stop then there is perhaps little scope for discussion,
15 but even so I'd maintain that some of the following arguments (not least the threat of extinction) can outweigh arguments against captivity. Moreover, I don't think anyone would consider putting down a 10000 kilometre long fence around the Masai Mara² to really be captivity, even if it restricts the movement of animals across that barrier. But at what point does that become captivity? A 10000 metre fence? 1000 metre fence? What if veterinary care is provided or extra
20 food as in many reserves or as part of conservation projects? I'm not pretending that an animal in a zoo is not in captivity, but clearly there is a continuum from zoos and wildlife parks, to game reserves. Degree of care and degree of enclosure make the idea of 'captivity' fluid and not absolute.

What I would state with absolute confidence is that for many species (but no, not all) it is
25 perfectly possible to keep them in a zoo or wildlife park and for them to have a quality of life as high or higher than in the wild. Their movement might be restricted (but not necessarily by that much) but they will not suffer from the threat or stress of predators (and nor will they be killed in a grisly manner or eaten alive) or the irritation and pain of parasites, injuries and illnesses will be treated, they won't suffer or die of drought or starvation and indeed will get a varied and high-
30 quality diet with all the supplements required.

So a good zoo will provide great care and protection to animals in their care. These are good things for the individuals concerned, but what do zoos actually bring to the table for the visitors and the wider world?

Conservation: It's not an exaggeration to say that colossal numbers of species are going extinct
35 across the world, and many more are increasingly threatened and risk extinction.

Education: Many children and adults, especially those in cities will never see a wild animal beyond a fox or pigeon, let alone a lion or giraffe.

Research: If we are to save many wild species and restore and repair ecosystems³ we need to know about how key species live, act and react.

- 40 All in all with the ongoing global threats to the environment it's hard for me to see zoos as anything other than being essential to the long-term survival of numerous species. Sure there is always scope for improvement, but these benefits are critical to many species and potentially at least, the world as a whole. The animals are so well kept and content, that I think there can be few serious objections to the concept of good zoos and what they can do. Without them, the world would be, and would increasingly become, a much poorer place.

Glossary:

menagerie¹ – a place for keeping wild animals for exhibition; a travelling collection of such animals popular in Victorian times.

Masai Mara² – a large animal reserve in Kenya.

ecosystem³ – all the animals and plants in a particular area which depend upon each other to live.

Turn over for Source B

Source B

When first opened, London Zoo was a popular tourist attraction and form of education. Here the writer, Edward Benson, reflects on a visit he made there.

The Zoo

- 1 Some of the saddest sights that I know in the saddest city of all the world, our English London, are to be seen at the Zoological Gardens. Whilst you may see there some amusing comedies, most are tragedies.
- 4 One of the most charming little comedies is performed by a stork¹ and a small seal. It is
 5 worth seeing more than once. The little seal spends his life locked up in a cage with a bar in front, a tiny enclosure in the centre of which is a sunken iron basin full of water, and he passes the day in swimming rapidly round it, coming up every now and again to take breath, or to look at the view. He balances himself on the edge of the basin with one fin, and regards the world with a serious contemplative air.
- 10 Sooner or later the stork, who lives in the next enclosure, walks up to the wire netting, which separates them and looks coldly at the seal. The seal has a warm heart and he doesn't like it; so by way of amusing his friend he drops back into the iron basin and races round it at express speed. When he is tired, he comes up and looks wistfully² at the stork. The stork opens and shuts his mouth like a middle-aged gentleman, waking up from an after-dinner
 15 nap, and says, "How very improper." Poor little seal!

- Even the comedies for the most part are really tragedies though, for they end rather sadly. The small black bears who stand on their hind legs, when you look at them, and keep their mouths permanently open, in case a piece of bun³ wanders by, are not properly comedians. Sometimes the bun strikes a bar of their cage, and falls where neither you nor they can reach
 20 it, and as you turn to go, they drop down on all-fours, and wait rather sadly for the next bun-bearer. I once saw a boy throw a pebble into the bear's mouth. The bear snapped his teeth upon it, and then dropped it on the floor, but opened its mouth again, in case a bun flew in. But before he dropped the pebble he looked at us. He was surprised, and sorry, not angry, but puzzled.

- 25 I do not talk about the snakes, and I cannot feed them, because they have glass instead of wire in front of their dens; I go merely to look at what seems to me an embodiment of all that is low and hateful and mean; for the same reason I would go to look at the Devil.

- It is possible to catch a snake's eye. He will not look at you for long, but in one second of the glance you will get to know something of the eternal mystery of evil, which you will scarcely
 30 learn elsewhere. It was the most awful motion I ever saw; though the head and the end of the tail of the beast remained still, the great coil stirred and glided along one another, parallel lines moved in opposite directions, and passed and repassed silently and smoothly.

- But the creatures who know best the anguish of not being able to think, and the pain of frequent striving after thought, are the monkeys. And what makes their existence so much
 35 sadder is that they are by nature, as it were, philosophers, with the craving but not the power for thought.

If you have ever watched monkeys at play, you will know what I mean; light-hearted mischief is not their nature; the infinite sadness of their eyes is a contradiction to their play. They chase each other round the cage with anxious care-worn faces, muttering and scolding to themselves, and when they are tired they do not go to sleep contentedly like other animals; 40 they sit down mournfully, and from their eyes looks forth a lost soul. Their existence comes near to being a problem to them, and thus they come near to being the saddest things on earth.

Glossary:

stork¹ - a long-necked, long-legged wading bird

wistfully² – sadly

bun³ – a kind of sweet cake

END OF SOURCES

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Source A: *Why zoos are good* by Dave Hone © The Guardian 2012

Source B: *The Zoo* by Edward Frederic Benson, 1893

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