

kind is found nowhere else in the animal kingdom. It gives the flat-footed panda the ability to hold small objects and bring them up to its mouth while sitting in a vertical posture. Anthropomorphically this scores heavily in its favour. The elephant is also capable of 'manipulating' small objects with its trunk, another unique structure, and taking them up to its mouth.

The vertical posture so characteristic of our species gives any other animal that can adopt this position an immediate anthropomorphic advantage. The primates in the top ten list, the bears and the panda all sit up vertically on frequent occasions. Sometimes they may even stand vertically or go so far as to take a few faltering steps in this position, all of which helps them to score valuable points. The giraffe, by virtue of its unique body proportions, is, in a sense, permanently vertical. The dog, which achieves such a high anthropomorphic score for its social behaviour, has always been something of a postural disappointment. It is uncompromisingly horizontal. Refusing to accept defeat on this point, our ingenuity went to work and soon solved the problem—we taught the dog to sit up and beg. In our urge to anthropomorphise the poor creature, we went further still. Being tailless ourselves, we started docking its tail. Being flat-faced ourselves, we employed selective breeding to reduce the bone structure in the snout region. As a result, many dog breeds are now abnormally flat-faced. Our anthropomorphic desires are so demanding that they have to be satisfied, even at the expense of the animals' dental efficiency. But then we must recall that this approach to animals is a purely selfish one. We are not seeing animals as animals, but merely as reflections of ourselves, and if the mirror distorts too badly we either bend it into shape or discard it.

So far we have been considering the animal loves of children of all ages between four and fourteen. If we now split up the responses to these favourite animals, separating them into age groups, some remarkably consistent trends emerge: For certain of the animals there is a steady decrease in preference with the increasing age of the children. For others there is a steady rise.