

Classroom Resources

NEWS ENGLISH Online Dating for Animals

| | |
|--|--|
| Learning Objectives: For lower-level students to develop vocabulary, discuss the ideas in the article, and write an online dating profile for an animal. | Preparation Time: 5 minutes |
| | Completion Time: 25–45 minutes |
| Skill/Grammar: Reading, speaking, writing | Age/Level: Pre-Intermediate–Intermediate |
| Resources: Online Dating News Article Worksheet (Lower Level), Profile Templates | |

Teacher's Notes

1 Warm-up (5 minutes)

- Hand out the worksheets.
- Ask the students to match the words to the pictures. Ask if anyone knows what monogamous means; if not, explain what it means and ask the students to guess which of the animals in the pictures are monogamous (eagle and swan).
- Encourage students to suggest other animals they know to be monogamous.

2 Reading Activities (20 minutes)

- Ask the students to read the article and complete *a*. Check through the answers quickly.
- Now ask the students to complete *b* and *c* in pairs or alone. Check through the answers as a class.
- Divide the class into pairs or small groups and ask them to discuss the ideas in *d*.

Answer Key:

- a 3 and 6 are true
 b 1 expand 2 matchmaking 3 species 4 mate 5 endangered
 c 1 behaviour 2 official 3 give birth 4 monogamous

3 Extension (10–30 minutes)

- In this activity, students will pretend to be an animal of their choice and complete a profile sheet for that animal.
- Hand out a profile sheet to each student, and ask them to complete the fields and write a couple of paragraphs about themselves (as an animal). You may wish to write an example profile on the board to give the students some ideas. Encourage them to be silly – this is not a serious exercise!
- After the students have had some time to write their profiles, take all the profile sheets in and stick them on the wall. As you are doing so, assign each student a different animal, and tell them that they must read all the profiles and find the best match for this animal. Try not to assign anyone the profile they wrote.
- After the students have had some time to read the profiles, ask them to tell the class who they have chosen to match their animal with and why. There are likely to be some disagreements, so encourage students to discuss these!

Online Dating Not Just For Humans!

Humans are not the only ones hoping to find love through online dating.

Zookeepers in the United States are now using an animal *matchmaking* website. They want to find partners for their animals, particularly *endangered species*.

The Species Survival Plan aims to match animals with possible partners. This gives them an opportunity to breed and *expand* their species. Some *monogamous* species, such as the agile gibbon or the gray wolf, benefit the most. Matchmaking saves their species, and it also saves the animal from a life alone.

Each animal in the database has a profile page. The page shows where the animal is and how endangered the animal is. Unlike most human online dating profiles, no photos are included. There is, however, genetic data and descriptions of the animal's *behaviour*.

Zoo employees think about how long the animal lives and how often they *give*



birth. This helps them to decide which animal needs to breed first.

The idea of zoos sharing information on animals began in 1981. Recently, organisation *officials* created a website to share the information. It has already had several successes.

Two otters were matched, and they mated at Oakland Zoo in California. A couple new otters were born in 2011. Each otter will be sent to a different zoo to *mate* with other otters.

Profile Template

Name:

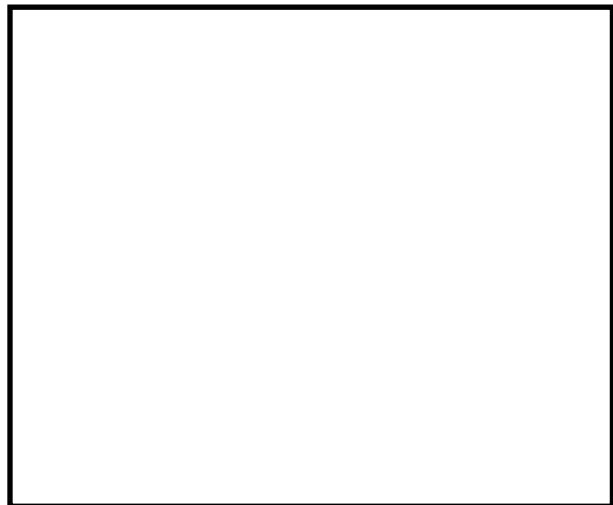
Picture:

Species:

Age:

Location:

Endangered status:



Write something about yourself that might attract an ideal partner. You may like to include information about your personality, behaviour, habits, likes, dislikes and what kind of partner you are looking for.

1 Match the animal names to the pictures. Which of these animals do you think are monogamous?



swan

lion

zebra

eagle

- Do you know of any other animals that are monogamous?

2 Read the article and complete the tasks below.

a Tick the sentences below that are true.

- 1 ___ Zookeepers all over the world use the Species Survival Plan website.
- 2 ___ Only endangered animals are included in the database.
- 3 ___ The gray wolf is a monogamous species.
- 4 ___ Every animal has its own profile page with a photo.
- 5 ___ The website began in 1981.
- 6 ___ A pair of otters were born in California.

b Use the words in bold to replace the underlined words and phrases in the sentences below.

- 1 The business will probably grow in the next few years.
- 2 My sister enjoys finding partners for other people.
- 3 There are not many of that type of animal left in the world.
- 4 Pandas don't breed easily in zoos.
- 5 Pandas are in danger of becoming extinct.

c Match the remaining words in bold to the following definitions:

- 1 The way someone acts _____
- 2 Somebody completing duties for an organisation _____
- 3 Have a baby _____
- 4 Having only one partner at a time _____

d In pairs, discuss the following questions:

- Is online dating a good way to find a partner? Why or why not?
- Would you use a matchmaking website? Why or why not?

3 Imagine you are an animal and complete the profile sheet your teacher gives you.