

American International School of Bucharest

Kinder class: Our Program of Inquiry Unit was **We have a Responsibility for Caring for Animals**

Process: We first made a connection to the basic needs humans have and the needs of animals.

We made two visits to the zoo.

- Visit One to just see what animals were at the zoo and to look at habitats. In class, the children chose a zoo animal to research. Next was a library visit to find books. They also used the Internet to find out the basic needs of their animal. Parents were also asked to help.
- Visit Two had the children in groups to observe their animal and the specific habitat. They drew the results on paper with clipboards. Back in the classroom, children discussed their findings. Questions were used to guide their thinking:
 - ▶ Do you think your animal is happy in their habitat at the zoo?
 - ▶ Was it a good Habitat? Why or why not? What was missing?
 - ▶ What could the zoo do to make the animal happier?
 - ▶ Do you have an idea that you could give the zookeeper? What could you do to help?The children were encouraged to write a letter to the zookeeper to tell their ideas.

Activity: The children used shoe boxes and designed their own habitats for their animal in order to ensure they would be happy and healthy. This was part of the learning assessment. Children also made a poster of a habitat that would be ideal for their animal. This was presented to the class and to their 3rd grade buddies.

Action: We wanted the children to take action and make a difference to a zoo animal so they ended up adopting chimpanzees through the Jane Goodall Institute. From their website, children learned reasons that the chimps needed our help. We read books about the chimps written by Jane Goodall. The children were told that any money contributed would benefit the chimps with food, medicine and to help the people who stay and look after them. The children then:

- baked animal cookies in the classroom to sell at our bake sale.
- made posters for school about helping the chimps and the fundraiser we were having.
- in each Kinder class made an ABC coloring book about animals that they sold at the sale.

Teachers informed the school community about the sale. The children worked at the sale and sold the cookies and coloring books themselves. Almost \$1000 was raised! They learned that even they can make a difference!

Ideas for Next Time (the best service learning includes teacher reflection!):

- Make a contact with the zoo (hopefully someone who speaks English or get a translator) before we go and inform them about what we are trying to do with the kids and get their feedback on how the kids could help the animals at the zoo. Maybe the next fundraiser can go directly towards buying some toys for the animals or with fixing a new habitat enclosure.
- The children would interview the zoo keeper when we got to the zoo or through a school visit.

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