

## SENIOR VOICE FOR ANIMALS BADGE

**Badge Purpose:** When you've earned this badge, you'll better understand animal issues worldwide and know what you can do to help.

Activity	Materials Needed
<b>Animal Rights 101</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn about the laws that protect animals, then advocate for increased animal welfare legislation.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone or computer with internet access
<b>More Than a Guinea Pig</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look into the pros and cons of animal testing, and discover the animal-free alternatives scientists are using.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone or computer with internet access
<b>We Bought a Zoo</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore how wild animals are cared for in captivity.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone or computer with internet access
<b>Born Free?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examine the case against zoos, and determine your personal opinion about the existence of zoos. Then, write a letter to the editor about your stance on the issue.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone or computer with internet access

### Activity #1: Animal Rights 101

Badge Connection: Step 1 – Find out about domestic animals

Materials Needed: Phone or computer with internet access

- Dogs, cats, and other furry (and winged and scaled!) creatures have come a long way in how they're treated and recognized as animals deserving of rights. But, there's still more that we as humans can do to advocate on their behalf.
- One of the most effective ways to ensure that the animals we love are cared for and treated humanely is by enacting laws that protect their wellbeing. Look into issues that concern the animal community, and what laws are currently in place to protect animal welfare. (Often, these laws vary not just state-to-state, but township-to-township too).
  - [animalhumanesociety.org/current-animal-welfare-laws](http://animalhumanesociety.org/current-animal-welfare-laws)
  - [aspca.org/animal-protection/public-policy](http://aspca.org/animal-protection/public-policy)
- Then, learn what you can do to make sure animals are protected. Find an animal shelter or welfare organization in your community and ask them about their advocacy efforts. How can you help them push legislation through the pipeline? A letter writing campaign? A petition?
- If there isn't a humane society close to you, you can also sign up online to receive news and info about legislation impacting animals: [animalhumanesociety.org/become-animal-advocate](http://animalhumanesociety.org/become-animal-advocate).



## Activity #2: More Than a Guinea Pig

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Badge Connection: Step 2 – Investigate animals used for science

Materials Needed: Phone or computer with internet access

1. Where do you stand on the issue of animal testing?
2. Many of the medical advances developed and discovered over the past century have been because of studies with mice, monkeys, dogs, and other animals. At the same time, popular opinion about using animals for these medical breakthroughs has shifted.
3. Read up on the pros and cons of animal testing:
  - [animal-testing.procon.org](http://animal-testing.procon.org)
  - [bit.ly/sciencewithoutanimaltesting](http://bit.ly/sciencewithoutanimaltesting)
4. Then, look into how scientists are developing new ways to advance science without using animals:
  - [bit.ly/thethreeRs](http://bit.ly/thethreeRs)
  - [bit.ly/alternativestoanimaltesting](http://bit.ly/alternativestoanimaltesting)

## Activity #3: We Bought a Zoo

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Badge Connection: Step 3 – Explore animals in husbandry and Step 5 – Look into an animal issue

Materials Needed: Phone or computer with internet access

1. When we think of animal husbandry, we usually think about cows, pigs, and other farm animals typically raised for food (meat, eggs, and milk).
2. As habitats around the world disappear and/or become critical, however, zoos are playing a bigger and bigger part in guarding the dwindling wildlife population. Animal husbandry in zoos looks very similar to the practices used on the farm. Zoos try to create an environment that supports and nurtures the animals in their care. They also tend to the animals' health and social needs (such as rehabilitating injured wild animals, housing animals in pairs, etc.).
3. Some zoos, aquariums, and other conservation institutions are also involved in captive-breeding programs that try to breed endangered or threatened animals to bolster their population and/or reintroduce a species back into their natural habitats.
4. Take a dive into these captive breeding programs by tracking a species that's currently being bred in captivity. Why is the species currently threatened? What is the process involved (are there two mates in one zoo, or do the mates need to be shipped in from another area)? What are some challenges that this captivity-breeding program faces? How effective is the breeding program?

## Activity #4: Born Free?

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Badge Connection: Step 4 – Take a look at animals used for sports and entertainment and Step 5 – Look into an animal issue

Materials Needed: Phone or computer with internet access

1. Now that you've taken a look into how zoos promote themselves to the public as defenders of animal welfare, take a more critical view of zoos as entertainment. Zoos justify their existence by saying that without their aid, many animals in the wild would be extinct, and that the animals currently in the zoos are safe, comfortable, and cared for.
2. Choose one zoo (it can be one in your area, national, or international), and research their welfare guidelines. How do they ensure the general wellbeing of their animals? How do they meet the animal's biological needs (like a lion's need to roam, a gibbon's need for social relationships)?



3. Then, look into how these animals in captivity compare to animals in the wild. How big is the enclosure or habitat of the animals in captivity? What's the animal's range in the wild?
4. Research the case against zoos. It's true that zoos have changed a lot in the past decades—moving beyond glass enclosures to more “natural” environments, but some argue that we should do away with zoos altogether.
5. After reading up on both sides, what's your opinion? Formulate your thoughts, then write a letter to the editor and submit it to your local newspaper.

