

# *The Jeff Corwin Experience*

## *Nepal: Majestic Environment*

### Teacher's Guide

**Grade Level:** K–8

**Curriculum Focus:** Life Science

**Lesson Duration:** Three class periods

#### **Program Description**

Jeff's journey takes him from the foothills of the Himalayas on the Indian border, through the heart of Nepal to the Kathmandu valley. On this trip he encounters some of the most rare and majestic animals in the world.

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#### **Video Index**

##### **Segment 1: Welcome to Nepal (15 min.)**

###### *Description*

Explore the pristine habitat that borders the bustling city of Darjeeling in Nepal. Check out the adorable red panda and the slow loris. Then travel to Kathmandu to find the lively rhesus macaques.

###### *Pre-viewing question*

Q: What kinds of animals live in Nepal?

A: Answers will vary, but students may mention elephants, snakes, bears, and tigers.

###### *Post-viewing question*

Q: What is a special feature of the slow loris?

A: It has a toilet claw for grooming.

##### **II. Tracking the Asiatic Rhino (10 min.)**

###### *Description*

Join Jeff in Royal Chitwan National Park as he searches for the Asiatic rhino. Along the way, discover the glossy-bellied racer and a herd of Asian elephants.

###### **Pre-viewing question**

Q: Why would Jeff be so eager to find the Asiatic rhino?

A: Answers will vary, but some students may know that the rhino, once close to extinction, is making a comeback.

###### *Post-viewing question*

Q: What makes up a herd of Asian elephants?

A: A herd of Asian elephants includes females and their young. The dominant elephant is the matriarch, the oldest and largest female; she often helps the females when they're giving birth.

### **Segment 3: Up Close: Rhinos and Elephants (16 min.)**

#### **Description**

Get a close-up look at the Asiatic rhino to see its massive body and single horn. Discover an efficient form of transportation: the Asian elephant.

#### **Pre-viewing question**

Q: What is the relationship between an Asian elephant and its mahout?

A: Answers will vary, but some students may know that mahouts train and take care of elephants.

#### **Post-viewing question**

Q: Why are rhinos important to this ecosystem?

A: Answers will vary, but some students may know that they clear paths when they walk and spread seeds and nutrients through their dung.

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## **Lesson Plan**

### **Student Objectives**

- Learn about the animals of Nepal.
- Think about the relationships between people and animals in Nepal.
- Write an essay describing these relationships.

### **Materials**

- *The Jeff Corwin Experience: Nepal: Majestic Environment* video and VCR, DVD and DVD player
- Computer(s) with Internet access
- Newsprint and markers
- Paper and pencils

### **Procedures**

1. Begin the lesson by showing students *The Jeff Corwin Experience: Nepal: Majestic Environment*. Ask students to pay close attention to the relationships between people and animals portrayed in the video.
2. After watching the video, ask students to identify the relationships between people and animals that they noticed in the video. Write their ideas on a sheet of newsprint. The suggestions may include the following:
  - Featuring the red panda at the Darjeeling Tea Festival



- Rhesus macaques interacting with people at a temple in Kathmandu
  - Elephants being trained to do work for people
3. Ask students to elaborate on the relationships between people and animals in an essay. The essay should present a thesis, and examples should be used to illustrate the thesis. For example, students may decide that their thesis is, "People take advantage of animals." Then they can use portions from the video to prove their point. Tell students that their essays should be four paragraphs—a paragraph identifying the thesis, two paragraphs citing examples, and a final paragraph with a concluding statement.
  4. Give students time in class to work on their essays. Near the end of the period, ask for volunteers to read their essays. Try to hear as many different points of view as possible.
  5. Conclude the lesson by discussing students' thoughts on this topic. Overall, do students think that the people of Nepal have a positive relationship with animals? Or do they see the relationship as having many different sides? There may be no simple answer to this question, but it is interesting to discuss the nuances and hear what students think.

## Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

- 3 points: Students were highly engaged in class discussions and wrote an interesting and thoughtful essay.
- 2 points: Students participated in class discussions and wrote a satisfactory essay. .
- 1 point: Students participated minimally in class discussions and did not complete an essay.

## Vocabulary

### Asian elephant

*Definition:* A type of elephant found in South and Southeast Asia; smaller than the African elephant

*Context:* Asian elephants come in handy in Nepal, where they are the main source of transportation for people in rural areas.

### Nepal

*Definition:* A country in south-central Asia that borders India; it is dominated by the Himalayas, the world's highest mountain range

*Context:* Nepal is a country of contrasts with isolated pristine environments and bustling cities.



### **red panda**

*Definition:* A rare mammal that lives in the Himalayas and eats only bamboo

*Context:* The red panda is an endangered species because it has lost much of its habitat to human activities.

### **Asian rhinoceros**

*Definition:* A mammal characterized by its large size and a single horn on its face that will continue growing throughout its life; also known as an Indian rhinoceros

*Context:* The Asian rhinoceros was poached for its horn, which people believed had medicinal properties when it was ground and made into a powder.

### **slow loris**

*Definition:* A primate in South and Southeast Asia

*Context:* One unique trait of the slow loris is its toilet claw, which it uses specifically for grooming.

## ***Academic Standards***

### **National Academy of Sciences**

The National Academy of Sciences provides guidelines for teaching science in grades K–12 to promote scientific literacy. To view the standards, visit this Web site:

<http://books.nap.edu/html/nses/html/overview.html#content>.

This discussion guide addresses the following national standards:

Grades K-4

- Life Science: Organisms and environments

Grades 5-8

- Life Science: Populations and ecosystems
- Diversity and adaptations of organisms

### **Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)**

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>.

This discussion guide addresses the following national standards:

Life Sciences: Understands the relationships among organisms and their physical environment



Language Arts – Viewing: Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media; Writing: Gathers and uses information for research purposes

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## Support Materials

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the Discoveryschool.com Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- <http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html>

