Animal Observation Recording
Teaching Notes

Students will observe and record animal behaviour using ethograms. This task can be completed either in park, or using our live webcams. Our live webcams can be found here:
https://www.blairdrummond.com/animals/webcams/

Pre-visit:

Prior to their visit, students should ideally have some understanding of animal behaviour. Behaviour is the way an organism responds to its environment. An animal's survival depends upon its behaviour. There are two kinds of behaviour: innate and learned.
Students can create their own ethograms to use on the day of their visit, or they can use the ethograms provided on our website.
If students are creating their own ethograms, they should think about what behaviours they would expect to see from their chosen animals and list these in their table. They should also decide what time intervals they would like to use for checking behaviours off, we suggest 30 second interval for 5 minutes in our prepared worksheets. Behaviours can be categorised as active or inactive behaviours.

During your visit:

Students will be given the task of observation recording whilst in the park using the ethogram provided. Students will check off behaviours at regular intervals in order to record a variety of actions exhibited by an animal/animals. This can be done with any of our animals, but we recommend using our meerkats or red-ruffed lemurs (both of which can be found in Pets Farm) as they are able to be viewed close at hand.

Using our website:

The task can be performed just as above using our live webcams. We have webcams in our Giraffe and Rhino enclosures.

Post-visit:

Students should represent and relay their findings in an appropriate format. This could be achieved by representing their findings in graph form. Students should then reach a conclusion about their findings. In the worksheet provided, we have asked students to tally up the number of behaviours, calculate the total of active/inactive behaviours, and then come up with a percentage for each.

- Which behaviour was displayed most/least frequently?
- What percentage of the behaviours were active/inactive?
- What kind of graph will be used to relay my findings?
- What conclusion has been reached?

SOC 2-08a	I can discuss the environmental impact of human activity and suggest ways in which we can live in a more environmentally-responsible way.
TCH 2-06a	I can analyse how lifestyles can impact on the environment and Earth's resources and can make suggestions about how to live in a more sustainable way.
TCH 2-07a	I can make suggestions as to how individuals and organisations may use technologies to support sustainability and reduce the impact on our environment.
MNU 2-20b	I have carried out investigations and surveys, devising and using a variety of methods to gather information and have worked with others to collate, organise and communicate the results in an appropriate way.