



OKLAHOMA Education

WRITING/CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE
ANCHOR PAPER EXEMPLARS
GRADE 8 ARGUMENTATIVE



Writing Topic:

People have different viewpoints about whether animals, including endangered animals, should live in the wild or in man-made environments. Write an argument whether any animal should be kept in a controlled environment, such as zoos or nature parks. Be sure to state a claim and address an opposing claim using evidence presented in both passages.

Before you begin planning and writing your response, read the two passages:

1. "The Impact of Animal Protection"
2. "Do Animals Lose in Zoos?"

The Impact of Animal Protection

- 1 Throughout history, human activities have changed or destroyed the habitats that animals need to survive. One of these activities has been the construction of roads and buildings in areas that were once wild. Building in these areas has destroyed animal homes, food, or water supplies. People have also cut down trees for lumber, which has destroyed the homes of animals living in those trees. Likewise people have hunted animals for their meat, fur, or other body parts. In addition, pollution caused by humans has affected some of the places that animals live.
- 2 Due to animals habitats being disturbed as well as other reasons, scientists and researchers track animals in the wild to see if their numbers are changing. When an animal's numbers decrease until they are at risk of disappearing completely, they may be classified as threatened or endangered. When there are no more of the species left in the world, they are classified as extinct. As some animals become extinct, other animals are affected. Because some human activities can have a negative impact on animals, many people believe that animals must be protected.
- 3 One way that people have tried to protect animals from extinction is to establish nature parks and sanctuaries. People cannot build or hunt in those areas, and rangers are there to watch over the animals. The public is often allowed to enjoy these animals by driving through the reserves and viewing the animals in a wide-open atmosphere.
- 4 Many nature parks have programs that keep animals in protected places. By putting them in controlled environments, the animals can live safely,



Grade 8 WRITING

and their numbers can increase through supervised breeding programs. However, in these environments animals many times cannot choose their own mates as they do when living in the wild. Issues with this type of forced breeding have been seen in zoos when a male and female fail to have offspring.

- 5 In man-made animal habitats, animals are fed on a regular schedule, receive medical care, and are protected from predators and hunters. The goal is to properly care for animals that may not survive in the wild. After time though, some of these animals may be released back into their wild habitats. However, if not handled properly, this release can be dangerous for animals since they will now be forced to hunt for prey and use their instincts and survival skills once again.
- 6 Keeping animals protected has proven to be beneficial and increase the populations of endangered animals. These programs have helped bring several animals—black-footed ferrets, California condors, red wolves, golden lion tamarins, and others—back from near extinction over the last 30 years.
- 7 Despite saving animals that were close to extinction, protecting animals in a controlled environment is not always the best plan. When animals are in these environments, they are isolated from other animals, their ability to hunt and their natural diet is limited, and the space they have to roam is decreased. In the wild, animals share their territory with other species, and the idea of survival of the fittest is very apparent. When animals are taken out of the wild, the innate instincts they have to survive are suppressed and, in some cases, completely gone.
- 8 By allowing endangered animals to live in a protected environment, animals are able to reproduce and be saved from extinction, but it is not a catchall to resolve all of the issues when protecting animals. For those that are released into the wild, the hope is that they can relearn how to find food and take care of themselves. Even though nature parks are trying to mimic the wild, they are not able to do that completely.



Do Animals Lose in Zoos?

- 1 Zoos have been around for centuries. In the past, zoos were a simple collection of animals in cages. Many animals in early zoos were diseased and treated poorly. Zoos today are very different. Modern zoos pride themselves as centers for scientific study and research. They focus on animal welfare and are on a mission to educate people about animals and protect the animals in the wild.
- 2 Animals in zoos live longer than animals in the wild. They are well fed, protected from predators, and treated by veterinarians. Seeing majestic animals in a controlled environment creates a sense of amazement and wonder. A study published by the National Science Foundation actually shows that visiting a zoo changes a person's attitude toward animals. If people are not able to see the animals, they will not be inspired to protect them.
- 3 However, critics of the modern zoo compare the zoo to a prison. Animals need room to climb, fly, swim, roam, or run. They need room to live a healthy life. When animals are confined in small spaces, it has a negative impact on their behavior and health. Polar bears have been observed swimming in circles. Parrots have groomed themselves until they have no feathers left. Big cats have been seen endlessly pacing. When animals are not behaving as they normally would in the wild, visitors are not observing natural behaviors.
- 4 Zoos spend millions of dollars to create bigger and better animal enclosures in order to improve the conditions for the animals. Zoos also help to raise millions of dollars to support conservation projects in Africa and Asia. Some of the money is used to create sanctuaries to help protect animals in their natural environment. Although animals should be protected in these nature preserves, some countries do not cooperate. They do not enforce penalties for illegal hunting of protected animals.
- 5 Nevertheless, not all zoos are created the same. Many organizations, like PETA, oppose zoos because the "homes" made for zoo animals meet only their basic needs. Even with man-made areas to fly, swim, climb, and explore, animals are still restricted in their behavior. These groups feel that zoos and even wildlife parks show cruelty against animals that would thrive so much better if they were allowed to live in the wild and be free.
- 6 More often than not, zoos cater to what people want to see. That usually means something large, charismatic, or cute is selected to live in a zoo and be on display. Another attraction to zoos is to see baby animals. In order to get more business, some zoos initiate a breeding program to have babies be on display more frequently. This leads to a surplus of animals at



Grade 8 WRITING

the zoo. Zoo enclosures are made for a certain amount of animals, so this overpopulation, even with babies, makes for crowding and a less than ideal living situation for the animals.

- 7 Supporters of keeping animals out of zoos and nature parks, feel it is better for wild animals to live in a natural environment so they can hunt and eat a natural, varied diet. It has been shown that in the wild, animals interact with other species of animals which promotes natural behaviors. Wild animals roam over long distances in search of a mate, food, or water. Also many animals are a part of a social group or live in communities. Living within a community allows them to interact normally and create a social order where a dominant animal can emerge. Living in a zoo or protected environment can restrict all of these innate or inborn behaviors.
- 8 It is true that many of today's zoos are more than just a place to see animals. They have programs to protect endangered species from extinction. Visitors to zoos, or those planning a visit, should also realize that some situations they see are not the best environment for the animals they are planning to see. There are benefits to having zoos, but there are still negative impacts to animal's lives. Perhaps the best way to help animals is to protect them in zoos for a short time and release them back into nature while they still are wild animals.



WRITING/CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE RUBRIC

OSTP Grade 8 Holistic Writing Rubric



Score	Description
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content is well-suited for the audience and task/purpose and the writing maintains a clear focus; ideas are fully developed. For an argumentative response, at least one counterclaim is present. • Organization is strong and sustained, creating unity and coherence; contains an engaging introduction, an effective conclusion that follows logically, and smooth, effective transitions that contribute to logical sequencing. • Word choice is varied and conveys meaning; language is effective and connects to the audience. • Sentence structure is clear and correct, and the writing demonstrates a rich variety of structures, types, and lengths; any errors are minor. • The writing demonstrates appropriate control of grammar, usage, and mechanics; errors are minor and do not affect readability.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content is adequate for the audience and task/purpose and the writing has an evident focus; ideas are somewhat developed. • Organization is adequate, creating some unity and coherence; introduction and conclusion are appropriate, and sequencing is logical with limited transitions. • Word choice is general and includes some variety; language is adequate and attempts to connect to the audience. • Sentence structure is correct and the writing demonstrates an adequate variety of structures, types, and lengths; errors may be present but do not interfere with fluency. • The writing demonstrates adequate control of grammar, usage, and mechanics; errors are noticeable but do not significantly affect readability.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content is inconsistent for the audience and task/purpose and the writing has an unclear focus; ideas are minimally developed and may be listed. • Organization lacks clarity, demonstrating weak unity and coherence; introduction and conclusion are ineffective, there is little or random sequencing, and transitions are limited. • Word choice lacks precision and variety; language may be inappropriate, ineffective, simplistic, or vague. • Sentence structure lacks control and the writing demonstrates limited variety of structures, types, and lengths; errors interfere with fluency. • The writing demonstrates limited control of grammar, usage, and mechanics; errors are distracting and may interfere with readability.
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content is irrelevant for the audience and task/purpose and the writing has a confusing focus; ideas are repetitive or lack development. • Organization lacks logical direction; there is no evidence of unity or coherence. • Word choice is extremely limited or inaccurate; language fails to communicate meaning. The writing may be too short to demonstrate variety. • Sentence structure is inappropriate and the writing demonstrates no variety of structures, types, and lengths; errors interfere with fluency. The writing may be too short to demonstrate control of sentence structures. • The writing demonstrates minimal control of grammar, usage, and mechanics; errors are numerous and impede readability.

Responses receive a score designation of “unscorable” and a performance level of "Below Standard" if they meet any of the following conditions:

- restatement of the task (prompt) or a refusal
- in a language other than English
- illegible, incomprehensible, or otherwise indecipherable
- about a topic different from the assigned task



WRITING/CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE
HOLISTIC ANCHOR PAPER
EXEMPLARS

Writing Topic:

People have different viewpoints about whether animals, including endangered animals, should live in the wild or in man-made environments. Write an argument whether any animal should be kept in a controlled environment, such as zoos or nature parks. Be sure to state a claim and address an opposing claim using evidence presented in both passages.

Have you ever thought that keeping animals in zoos is actually beneficial to them in many ways? That is true because animals are threatened in the wilderness and are exposed to some unhealthy living conditions. However, some people say otherwise because they think animals are not given the same type of freedom as they are in the wild. That might be true in some cases but the reason why they should be kept in zoos or nature parks far outweighs the cause than why they shouldn't. Animals should be kept in zoos or nature parks because, they are being treated with love and care, also they are protected from all hurt, harm, and danger, and also it's increasing the population of endangered species.

Animals that are being kept in zoos are being treated properly with love and care. For example, they are being fed a proper nutrient diet on a regular schedule so they are able to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Also, animals are receiving medical care from veterinarians to make sure they are properly nourished. Animals are also being protected from wildlife predators and hunters. For example, with the animals being in the zoo they have rangers to watch over them just in case they are endangered by anything. All of these benefits allows the animals to live longer than they would in the wilderness.

With animals living in the zoo comes the benefit of animals being able to be protected from hurt, harm, and danger. They are given the opportunity to live in a safe environment, without having to worry about being threatened by the wildlife. Also, they live in great living conditions. According to the passage, "zoos spend millions of dollars to create bigger and better animal enclosures in order

Grade 8 WRITING

in order to improve the conditions for the animals' lives. Animals' lives were also affected in the wild from pollution caused by humans, with animals living in zoos they are protected from that happening.

Zoos are increasing the population of endangered animals. That is because they are able to reproduce more. According to the passage, animals that are in controlled environments, their numbers can increase and prevent extinction. Animals that have been near extinction have been saved due to being properly cared in zoos. Although some might think the zoo is just a place to see animals, the zoos also have programs to protect endangered animals from extinction.

As you can see, although many people think animals should be kept in the wild for their own benefits, the reason why they shouldn't live in the wild far outweighs why they should. Zoos and nature parks are providing beneficial needs to the animals that can't be provided in the wilderness.

Score Point 4 ID: 1594469935

The content is well-suited for the audience and purpose. The writer maintains a clear focus and the argument is fully developed through the use of a compelling relevant claim, counterclaims, accurate text-based evidence, and logical reasoning on whether any animal should be kept in a controlled environment, such as zoos or nature parks. Organization is strong, the introduction gives a clear argument, reasons and information are logically ordered, transitions provide coherence, and there is sustained focus on content and structure. The conclusion is effective and supports the argument. Word choice conveys meaning; language is effective and connects to the audience ("... treated properly with love and care," "All of these benefits allows the animals to live longer than they would in the wilderness"). Varied sentence structure is mostly correct, and the writing demonstrates appropriate control of grammar, usage, and mechanics. A few errors in usage (their/they are/there) and mechanics do not affect readability.

Writing Topic:

People have different viewpoints about whether animals, including endangered animals, should live in the wild or in man-made environments. Write an argument whether any animal should be kept in a controlled environment, such as zoos or nature parks. Be sure to state a claim and address an opposing claim using evidence presented in both passages.

Should animals live in zoos or man-made environments?

I think yes, they can get better health care, they can reproduce if close to becoming endangered, and they are also protected from predators.

Good health is a key thing to have for any living thing. At zoo's animals can get better health care than they can get out in the wild. Sometimes animals are sent to places like zoo's just for health care and when the animal is strong enough they are sent back to their natural habitat. This information was found in the articles of "The Impact of Animal Protection" and "Do Animals Lose In Zoo's?"

Some indangered animals are rescued and are brought to zoo's so they can reproduce. Animals such as the Black-footed Ferret, California condors, red wolves, and golden lion tamarins were all about to disappear of the earth, but

thanks to zoo's they are now no longer on the endangered list. This information was also found in the articles of "The Impact of Animal Protection" and "Do Animals Lose In Zoo's?"

Predators are a common problem in the wild. Some animals in the wild were hunted until extinction. Animals in Zoo's or nature parks are protected from hunters. In some area's that's not in zoo's or nature parks it is illegal to hunt any animal with or without a hunting permitt. This information was found in the articles of "The Impact of Animal Protection" and "Do Animals Lose In Zoo's?"

Zoo's may not be all the right choice for animals. Zoo's and nature parks are very limited on the amount of space that's given to the animals. People say that they have seen big cats pace around their enclosures, and that polar bear's are seen swimming in circles. It may sound bad but all of the "goods" out weigh the bad. All of the information that is used was found in the articles of "The Impact of Animal Protection" and "Do Animals Lose In Zoo's?"

Score Point 3 ID: 1594350642

The student addresses the task with a somewhat developed argument using a claim, counterclaim, and reasoning. Organization is appropriate, creating unity for the argument. The first body paragraph establishes a claim that in man-made environments, animals receive better care, reproduce to prevent extinction, and are protected from predators. The body paragraphs build on the three ideas by using text-based evidence and paraphrasing in support of the ideas. The introduction and conclusion are appropriate, but the counterclaims in the final paragraph lose impact with placement there. Sentence structure is correct, and the writing demonstrates adequate control of grammar, usage, and mechanics; minor errors in spelling and punctuation ("predators," "zoo's," "area's") do not affect readability.

Writing Topic:

People have different viewpoints about whether animals, including endangered animals, should live in the wild or in man-made environments. Write an argument whether any animal should be kept in a controlled environment, such as zoos or nature parks. Be sure to state a claim and address an opposing claim using evidence presented in both passages.

In my opinion, I think animals should be kept in the wild. ~~If they~~ are put into zoos or nature parks, their life could come crashing down. People who love animals wouldn't want to see their favorite animals in this kind of state, would they? Putting animals in zoos or nature parks, is like forcing us humans to be in a world where we have no control or power over anything. I think animals should live in the wild.

I have many reasons for this opinion. One, animals would be able to have a regular or natural diet of different types. Two, they would have more space to roam around instead of being in a contained space where they

are isolated from others of their species.

Three, these animals will get to pick their own mate. Four, they will be able to be part of a social group with other animals. Lastly, the animals' behavior will be more positive as studies show.

In the end, I strongly believe that animals should live in the wilderness. Yes, if they lived in a zoo or a nature park, a vet would nurse them if they are injured, but that's not enough for them! They need more space, a good natural, varied diet, the ability to pick their own mates, and to be part of a social group. If they lived in zoos, nature parks, they wouldn't get these things. This is why I think animals should live in the wild.

Score Point 2 ID: 1593025058

Content is inconsistent for the audience and purpose. The writing has an unclear focus; it begins with a basic argument: "In my opinion, I think animals should be kept in the wild." Limited and listed information is found as the four basic arguments for living in the wild are minimally supported with text-based evidence. There is a little sequencing, and few transitions are present. Word choice lacks precision and variety; language is simplistic and conveys a basic meaning ("One, animals would be able to have a regular or natural diet of different types"). There is control of sentence structures, and sentences are correct, but there is a lack of variety in length and type. The writer demonstrates control of grammar, usage, and mechanics throughout the paper.

Writing Topic:

People have different viewpoints about whether animals, including endangered animals, should live in the wild or in man-made environments. Write an argument whether any animal should be kept in a controlled environment, such as zoos or nature parks. Be sure to state a claim and address an opposing claim using evidence presented in both passages.

There are good sides and bad sides to zoos and reservations, like that the enclosures are so small, and they have nowhere to come around, but they do have other animals of their kind so that's a plus. Reservations are a little closer to the wild, and they have more animals, but then again they aren't the wild.

The good thing about zoos is they are helping animals recover from wounds or near extinction. Bad things about the zoo are if animals are in there long enough they could lose their instincts like hunting or escaping.

Predators like wolves or mountain lions.

A good thing about reservations is they are just like the wild and they help the animals regain their instincts. A bad thing about reservations is they aren't the wild, and they don't regain all instincts because they aren't used to being hunted, but in reservations they do have other animals to react with.

Score Point 1 ID: 159031656

The response has a confusing focus to the task. There is no stated claim and ideas are repetitive and lack development. There is little evidence (small enclosures, near extinction, loss of instinct) elicited from the passages in support; information is listed as every good side and bad side to zoos and reservations, and explanations are incomplete. The response lacks logical direction and shows no evidence of organizational structure, no introduction, and no conclusion. The word choice is extremely limited; language fails to communicate much meaning beyond "A good thing . . . a bad thing." The student demonstrates no variety of sentence structures and minimal control of grammar, usage, and mechanics. Errors are common in usage (there/their, rome/roam), spelling, and punctuation.