



Looking after my baby

By the end of the lesson the learners will be able to:

- Name the different ways in which parents look after their young in the animal kingdom.
- Act out parental scenes and express how they think animals feel in different situations.

Materials and preparation

- *Looking after my baby – mother and young images cards A3* for the starter activity.
- Set of *Looking after my baby – Examples of parenting info sheets A3* (six different animals).
- On the board, write the words needed for the starter activity: cleaning; grooming; feeding; protecting; playing; showing affection; teaching.

Key words

instinct

The behaviour of an animal that hasn't been learned. Animals are born with instincts which tell them, among other things, what to do to protect themselves and their young.

grooming

Gently removing fleas or ticks, scratching or licking another animal of the same species. Some animals do this to reinforce their relationships and bonds.

matriarchal

A group of animals organised around females.

affectionate

Showing you like someone. An animal being affectionate can lick another animal, press themselves against them or snuggle with them.

Starter

*Discussion with
pictures
15 min*

1. Write the following words on the board before the lesson starts:

Cleaning, grooming, feeding, protecting, playing, showing affection, teaching

2. Show the class the *Mother and young picture cards A3* featuring mothers looking after their young in different ways.
3. Ask the group what they think is happening in the picture and how the animals might feel: is the mother grooming her young? How does she feel? How do her young feel?
4. Repeat for each selected picture.

After going through all the pictures, ask the following questions:

- How similar are the activities we have just seen to human activities?
- Why do you think parents want to protect their young?
- Do you think that animal parents can feel love for their young? Why? Why not?

Main activity

*Reading
15 min*

Reading

Read out each *Examples of parenting info sheets A3* to the class. When reading, make sure everyone can see the pictures illustrating each example and let learners discuss what they have just heard if needs be.

*Discussion
15 min*

Alternatively, if you are able to photocopy the sheets, you can make enough sets for learners to read them independently in groups of four. If this is too much to read, select three or four examples instead.

Discussion

Once all six information sheets have been read, ask learners to answer the following questions as part of a general class discussion:

- Who is the most amazing parent out of the six animals you have just heard about? Why?
- What do some animal parents do, that human parents do as well? What do some animal parents do, that human parents don't need to do?
- Why do you think animal parents spend so much energy protecting their young?

Plenary

Acting out
parenting scenes
15 min

Split the class into groups of three or four. Ask each group to choose one of the scenes featured in the starter activity. Learners should get up from their seats and re-enact the scene.

Walk around the classroom, observing the drama. Stop by a group and asking them what is happening in the picture, how they feel and why. Repeat with other groups.

Alternatively, ask them to select one of the scenes and to write a diary entry in their book from the point of view of the parent or the young. For example, the learner could write: 'I feel so snug, resting my head on my mother. I feel safe and warm inside.'

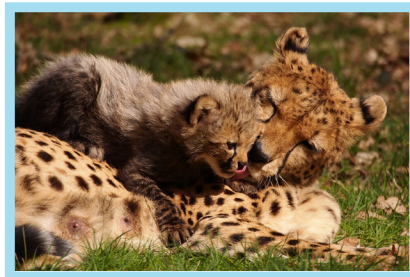
Information for the teacher



Elephant mother caressing her young



Mother bear playing with her cub



Cheetah cleaning her cub



Sunbird feeding her chicks



Elephant mother teaching her young to dig for water from a dry riverbed



Mother lioness growling to protect her cubs



Mother monkey grooming her young