

ANIMALS

Do you like animals?

What is your favourite animal?

What animal are you afraid of?

Animals are not always what people think they are. What is the widely accepted image of the following animals?

Polar bear:
Gorilla

Killer whale:
Wolf

Chimpanzee
Pig

Dog
Raven

1. One of the few animals that will actively and deliberately hunt people, the can be a menace to Arctic travellers and hunters. Superbly camouflaged and insulated by its white fur, and capable of a good turn of speed over a short distance, it is a master both of the stealthy stalk and the patient ambush.
2. Its reputation has been the victim of two of the least truthful and minimally intelligent groups of people on Earth: Hollywood and white hunters. It is, in fact, a gentle, sociable vegetarian, much given to chewing bamboo by day and building comfy beds for itself and its young by night. Its worst habit is beating its chest and running up to visitors, but if they stand their ground instead of shooting, the..... backs down. It's all show.
3. Although all the have been getting a good press in recent years, it still strikes fear into the hearts of those who must live and work on and near the sea around Arctic waters. Intelligent and inquisitive, quite capable of co-operating with others of its own kind to tip up an ice-floe or to herd seals and fish into ambush, it thinks nothing of adding a person to the day's menu, and probably distinguishes him or her from a seal only by taste.
4. kill, maim, and disfigure thousands of people every year, all over the world. The statistics in "civilised" countries, such as Britain, are appalling. The problem seems to be that no politician will risk losing an election to protect people from their favourite pet, and no police officer wants to be seen as a-hater. Apart from pet, ferals are a menace. These are pets that have run off and bred in the wild, and their colonies are features of the outskirts of most third-world cities. But they're a big problem in America, too.
5. Darling of the zoo tea party and Tarzan's sidekick in a thousand TV programmes, the wild can also be a cannibal, murderer and killer for kicks. For example, when a new leader takes over a social group, it systematically murders the young of the previous leader. Although primarily vegetarians,s occasionally go on the rampage for meat, killing the young of other animals - even those of "alien" groups - in grisly fashion, then eating them.
6. Intelligent, faithful, clean-living and co-operative animals, they have been the victims of inter-religious propaganda since the dawn of civilisation. Their alleged filthiness derives in part from an absence of sweat glands, which makes it very difficult to keep

cool without wallowing in mud. At various points in history they have been used as forest clearers, seed planters, and pullers of carts. They have also been known to take over from dogs, herding cattle as well as any collie and finding and retrieving game in English forests. To this day, they are used to sniff out truffles delicious and extremely expensive underground fungi - in France.

7. Big, black and mysterious, the lives on the border of superstition and fact. A highly intelligent and adaptable bird, it mates for life and exists on carrion and whatever small animals, from beetles to rodents, it can catch. Despite the legends, it kills nothing larger than a rabbit. It is interesting to compare attitudes towards the, a black and useful scavenger from the mountains, and towards the swan, a white and thoroughly useless bird that does little but pollute lowland pastures and ponds.
8. Co-operative hunters that kill only when they need to, look after each others' young and bring food back to the den for mates and young that cannot hunt, they might be cited as examples of good behaviour, rather than being systematically hunted for "crimes" they seldom commit. It is an interesting fact that there exists absolutely no scientifically proven evidence that a healthy has ever killed and eaten a person in America, and close examination of evidence in Eurasia proves that this is a very rare event there.

Listening:

Why is the first day you bring a new pet into your house important for the pet?

Is Christmas Day a good day to bring home a new pet?

What can sometimes happen when you give young children pets such as dogs or cats?

Which are the easiest animals to look after? Which ones are the most difficult?

Animal idioms:

There are times when you must decide and **take the bull by the horns**.

- (a) make the right decision
- (b) make a bold decision
- (c) make a final decision
- (d) make a wrong decision

He **leads a dog's life** really because his freedom is always curtailed.

- (a) never knows what to do
- (b) sometimes does something wrong
- (c) never goes out
- (d) never does what he wants

No-one ever mentions him because he's regarded as **the black sheep of the family**.

- (a) the one with a sense of humour
- (b) the one with a bad reputation
- (c) the one who is always late
- (d) the one who never washes

You shouldn't sign there I think he's about **to make a monkey out of you**.

- a) to make a fool of you
- b) to make you lose money
- c) to make you feel stupid
- d) to make you lose interest

It's a lovely house and very big but nobody uses it so it's **a bit of a white elephant**.

- (a) something very beautiful and useful
- (b) something very big and useful
- (c) something very cheap and useless
- (d) something very expensive and useless

When the business folded, he took **the lion's share** of the assets.

- (a) the easiest part
- (b) the smallest part
- (c) the biggest part
- (d) the only part

Without my glasses I can't see where I'm going in fact I'm **as blind as a bat**.

- (a) very short sighted
- (b) very long sighted
- (c) very far sighted
- (d) very clear sighted

I would advise you to do that as well and in that way you'll **kill two birds with one stone**.

- (a) get something done two times
- (b) get two things done at the same time
- (c) get two things done twice
- (d) get things done twice

- working like ants
- ants in one's pants
- a little bird told me
- don't bug me
- to let the cat out of the bag
- happy as a flea in a doghouse
- there's more than one fish in the sea
- so hungry I could eat a horse
- when pigs fly