



## What's going on this week?

A new study published in Science magazine found that in Gorongosa National Park, Mozambique, a rare genetic condition, that causes tuskless elephants, has become more common. Ivory poaching has pushed the species to the brink of extinction but the few tuskless elephants left could now increase in numbers. In 1969, Gorongosa National Park was home to over 2200 elephants, but now there are just over 700 in the Park.

### Main question:

### Should we do more to protect elephants?

#### Listen, think, share

- Look at this week's poster and share what you already know about elephants. Is there anything in particular that you notice about the elephant in the poster? Did anyone notice it doesn't have tusks? A new study has found that in one national park in Mozambique, Africa, there has been a huge increase in the number of elephants born without the ability to grow tusks due to the impact of poachers. As the poachers left the elephants alone who didn't have tusks, these elephants have bred more widely.
- Read the information found on the assembly resource, which explains further details about the study. How does this week's story make you feel? Do you think enough is being done to protect elephants?
- Watch this week's useful video (link found overleaf), which explains the importance of elephants' tusks and trunks. Talk about the reasons why elephants have each.
- Talk about how our actions can have consequences. Can we think of any examples? E.g. what would happen to our rubbish if we didn't recycle or if we left all of the PE equipment out – how would it affect the next class?

#### Reflection

Our actions have a direct impact on the world around us. In Mozambique, the actions of poachers have meant that there is an increase in numbers of tuskless elephants. It's important we understand how our actions shape the future and choose actions that have a positive impact!



## KS1 Focus

### Question:

### Why do elephants have tusks?

#### Listen, think, share

- Write the word 'tusks' on the board. Do you know what tusks are? Can you think of any animals that have tusks e.g. elephant, wild pig, walrus?
- Explain that a tusk is a long, pointed tooth. Some elephants have two tusks. Share the picture of an elephant with tusks, found on resource 1. Can you describe its tusks? Do you like them? Why?
- Discuss why you think some elephants have tusks. What do you think they might use them for?
- Look at resource 1, which shares some of the things elephants use their tusks to help them do. Do you think an elephant without tusks might be able to do all of these things? If so, how?
- Elephants, like the one in this week's poster, can survive without their tusks, they might just have to change the way they do things.
- Have you ever lost a tooth? What did it feel like? Did you have to change the way you ate for a little while?
- Can you think of any other examples of when we might change the way we do everyday tasks?

#### Reflection

Some elephants have tusks; others do not. Tusks can be very useful and can help elephants do many different things.



## KS2 Focus

### Question:

### What are the consequences of elephants losing their tusks?

#### Listen, think, share

- Explain there has been an increase in tuskless elephants. This means that, over time, the African elephant species is losing its tusks. Recap the reasons why this has happened.
- Elephants losing their tusks has consequences. What are consequences? Explain that consequences are the results or effects of something, often unwelcome or unpleasant. Can you think of a time when your actions had a consequence?
- Look at resource 2, where some people share their opinions about the consequences of the African elephant species losing its tusks. Do you agree that these are all consequences? Can you think of any other consequences?
- Naaz said 'The actions of humans have caused more elephants to be born without the ability to grow tusks.' What do you think about this?
- Elephants' tusks either becoming shorter or not existing at all has happened over the last 150 years. It has been caused as a direct result of hunting. Discuss what might happen if elephants were no longer illegally hunted. Do you think over the next 150 years, they may stop losing their tusks?

#### Reflection

The actions of people choosing to hunt elephants for their ivory tusks have had consequences. It is important to remember that our choices and actions can also have consequences.

## KS2 Follow-up Ideas

**Option 1:** Look at a world map and locate where we find African elephants in the wild. Ask the children to read and research to find out more about African elephants. You could use the following to guide the research:

- What is an African elephant's habitat?
- What is their average size/weight?
- What is their diet?
- What is their lifespan?

Share some of their findings with each other and explain how you can cross-reference some of the facts found. Ask the children to use the information to create a fact file or as part of a persuasive poster to raise awareness about the issues African elephants are currently facing.

**Option 2:** Explain that in the Hindu religion the elephant is a significant and sacred animal. It often represents strength, power, intelligence, loyalty and determination. Ask the children to look at a picture of an elephant.

- What does an elephant represent to you?

Ask the children to think about themselves.

- Is there an animal that you have a connection with or you feel is a representation of you? Why?

Ask the children to draw a picture of their animal in the centre of a piece of paper then record how it represents them around the edge. If children feel confident enough, they can share their work.

## KS1 Follow-up Ideas

**Option 1:** Explain that an African elephant has four toes on its front feet and three on its back.

- Can you count to four?
- How many toes does an African elephant have on its front feet/back feet/altogether?
- How many toes do you have? Can you count them?
- How many more toes does an African elephant have than you?
- How many toes would there be on two African elephants?
- How many toes are there in your class?

**Option 2:** Ask the children to design and make some milk bottle elephants! You can find plenty of examples to inspire your designs using a quick internet search or use the picture below. Think about:

- What colours will you use?
- What materials will you use?
- How will you attach/stick items to your milk bottle?
- How will you create the ears/eyes/tail?
- Will your elephant have tusks?



Source: @Bansgoreschool

## This Week's Useful Websites

This week's news story

[www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-59008037](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-59008037)

## This Week's Useful Videos

Elephants' tusks and trunk

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTEJw7WtRRA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTEJw7WtRRA)

## This Week's Virtual Assembly

[www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss](http://www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss)

## This Week's Useful Vocabulary

**Brink** – the point at which something, usually unwelcome, is about to happen.

Ivory poaching has pushed the species to the **brink** of extinction.

**Consequences** – the results or effects of something, often unpleasant.

Our actions can have **consequences**.

**Extinction** – the extinction of a species of plant or animal is when there are no longer any living members; they no longer exist.

Ivory poaching has pushed the species to the **brink** of **extinction**.

**Genetic condition** – something that occurs as a result of a change to DNA. Living things are born with it.

A rare **genetic condition** that causes tuskless elephants has become more common.

**Poachers** – a person who illegally hunts wild animals. The **poachers** left the elephants alone who didn't have tusks.

**Protect** – keep safe from harm or injury.

Do you think enough is being done to **protect** elephants?