

TOPIC PACKS · YEAR 1-2 / K-GRADE 1

# Project: Mini Zoo

Y1-2 cross-curricular, 3 weeks

## About this project

Project-Based Learning (PBL) is the approach where children apply learning across subjects to a concrete outcome they care about. It is the opposite of 'do this worksheet'. Children build something, investigate something, or solve something. Subjects show up because they are NEEDED, not because the timetable says so. This Y1-2 project takes 3 weeks (roughly 8 hours of work, spread across literacy, numeracy and topic time). Children plan, build and open a mini zoo. By the end, they have a real artefact, real maths, real writing, and real speaking experience. It is forgiving — works in classrooms with no special resources. Total cost typically under £15 in art materials.

## Subjects integrated

Subject	How it shows up
Science	Animal classification, habitats, food chains, what animals need to live
Literacy	Animal fact files, instructional signs, ticket text, presentation
Maths	Counting visitors, ticket prices, money, addition for total takings
Art / DT	Designing animal enclosures, making the zoo layout, sign-making
Speaking & Listening	Pitching their zoo, presenting to another class
PSHE	Ethical questions: should zoos exist? are these animals well looked after?



## Week 1 — Research and plan

DAY 1 (1 hour): Hook lesson • Look at photos of real zoos (London Zoo, Chester Zoo, Edinburgh Zoo) • Discuss: What animals would YOU put in YOUR zoo? Why? • Each child picks 2 animals to research. DAY 2 (1 hour): Animal research • Research one of your animals: where does it live? what does it eat? what does it need? Use books, simple websites, animal cards. • Fact file template — see page 6. DAY 3 (1 hour): Habitat thinking • What does this animal need in its enclosure? Space, water, shade, food, hiding places. • Sketch a top-down plan of one enclosure. DAY 4 (1 hour): Zoo layout • Children work in groups of 3-4. Each group is a 'zoo team'. • They combine their animals into a zoo: how do enclosures fit together? Where's the entrance? Cafe? Toilets? • Big-paper plan of the whole zoo.

## Week 2 — Build and write

DAY 5-6 (2 hours): Build • Each group builds their zoo using boxes, paper, modelling clay, paint. Mini-figures are the animals. • Each enclosure has a sign with the animal's name. • If short of resources: draw the zoo big on paper instead. DAY 7 (1 hour): Information signs • Each enclosure needs an INFORMATION SIGN with two facts about the animal. Children write these. • Differentiation: emerging writers do single-word labels and one fact; secure writers do 2-3 facts and a question for visitors. DAY 8 (1 hour): Tickets and money • Group decides ticket prices: 50p adult, 20p child? £1 family? • Make tickets to sell. Calculate: if 6 adults and 4 children visit, how much money? • Differentiation: KS1 keep prices in 10s and 5s. Y2 handle multi-step money.

## Week 3 — Open and reflect

DAY 9 (1 hour): Tour rehearsal • Each group rehearses giving a tour of their zoo. They take it in turns to be tour guide. • Each child has at least one animal to introduce. DAY 10 (1 hour): ZOO DAY • Invite another class as visitors. Children take turns being tour guides and ticket sellers. • Visitors are encouraged to ask questions. DAY 11 (45 mins): Reflection • Three questions: What were you proud of? What was hard? What would you do differently? • Whole-class discussion: should zoos exist in real life? (Open-ended; children may disagree.)

### Differentiation suggestions

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**Common pitfalls**

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