



Project Chimps

Activity Name: Chimpanzee Legislation

Learning Objectives: S7L1, S7L4, SB5.b, L6-8WHST1, VAHSDR.PR.1

Grade/Age Level: 6-12

Estimated Time: 3-4 hours onsite w/ tour, 60-90 min. in classroom/virtual

Materials: poster boards, markers, crayons, colored pencils, rulers, crafty supplies

Methods: discuss, research, review, write, think, create, analyze, compare and contrast

Goal: Examine and explore legislation throughout the years that has had an effect on the lives of chimpanzees.

Background:

1. **Animal Welfare Act (AWA- 1966)** – AWA was the first federal law to protect animals, signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on August 24, 1966. It is the main law in the United States to protect animals used in research and exhibition and it sets minimal standards for humane animal treatment.

AWA is a federal law that establishes requirements concerning the transportation, sale, and handling of certain animals. Regulations established under AWA set standards for the humane care and treatment for certain animals that are exhibited to the public, sold for use as pets, used in research, or transported commercially. Facilities using regulated animals for legally allowed activities must provide their animals with adequate housing, sanitation, nutrition, water, and veterinary care. In addition, they must protect their animals from extreme weather and temperatures.

While chimpanzees and many mammals are covered under AWA, the following animals are not covered: farm animals used for food or fiber, cold-blooded species, horses not used for research, fish, invertebrates, birds, rats and mice.

AWA has been amended 8 times since it was passed. The **Food Securities Act** passed in **1985** was the third amendment and made a difference in the lives of chimpanzees as well as other primates. This amendment brought awareness to the psychological lives of primates and took into consideration the actual animals themselves. It set a new minimum of standards for basic care and housing as well as exercise and assessment of the overall well-being of the animals covered under the law.



Project Chimps

2. **The Endangered Species Act (ESA- 1973)** – ESA identifies and protects animals that are threatened with extinction throughout the world. The level of protection that a species is afforded under the Act depends primarily on whether it is listed as “threatened” or “endangered” by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Gorillas, bonobos, orangutans, gibbons, and wild populations of chimpanzees are listed as “endangered” under ESA, meaning they are afforded the highest level of federal protection under ESA.

Captive populations of chimpanzees were, at this time, listed as “threatened” because USFWS did not want to interfere with research facilities, zoos, and entertainment operations. Consequently, captive chimpanzees were not provided the same level of protection as wild populations.

- **Endangered** – “any species that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range”
- **Threatened** – “any species that is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range”
- In simple terms
 - Endangered species are at the brink of extinction now.
 - Threatened species are likely to be at the brink in the near future.

However, on September 14, 2015 this law was amended, ending the split listing of chimpanzees and giving captive chimps endangered status, therefore making it illegal to do biomedical research on chimpanzees!!

3. **The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES - 1975)** - CITES is an international treaty to prevent species from becoming endangered or extinct as a result of international trade. Under this treaty, countries work together to regulate the international trade of animal and plant species to ensure this trade is not detrimental to the survival of wild populations. Any trade in protected plant and animal species should be sustainable, based on sound biological understanding and principles.

According to this law, chimpanzees could no longer be removed from the wild, legally. But it is an international law that depends on individual countries to follow through. While this drastically changed things for chimps in the US, worldwide chimpanzee populations continued to struggle. To this day chimpanzees continue to be illegally taken from the wild.

One unfortunate by product of this law was that it put chimpanzee breeding programs into high gear. Since chimps could no longer imported from the wild, labs started taking it upon themselves to increase their numbers.



Project Chimps

4. **Chimpanzee Health Improvement, Maintenance and Protection Act (CHIMP Act- 2000)-**

CHIMP was signed into law December 20, 2000 by President Clinton. CHIMP Act established a sanctuary system for chimpanzees that have been retired from biomedical research. It set standards and requirements for facilities housing chimpanzees and dictated the type of living arrangements provided to them, with the expectation they would receive lifelong care. It banned euthanasia in cases of convenience and declared that the federal government should pay 90% of the costs for the federally owned chimps to be retired and 75% of the costs to maintain their lives in sanctuary. Chimp Haven currently is the only recipient of these federal funds.

Throughout the years there were a few unfortunate circumstances where chimps in sanctuary were sent back to the labs to once again be used in medical research. In 2007, CHIMP Act was amended to prevent any chimps in sanctuary from ever being called back to a lab.

Up until 2013 there was a cap on the amount of money that the government could spend to move and house federally owned chimps to sanctuary. In November 2013, an amendment removed the \$30 million cap on spending for the chimps. It also became acceptable for labs to receive these funds if they retired their chimps to sanctuary. Numerous labs created their own “sanctuaries” to keep their chimps and to get this funding.

- **Texas Biomedical Research Institute** in San Antonio, TX became the **Southwest National Primate Research Center (SNPRC)** and built a “**Chimpanzee Retirement Village**” where over 100 chimpanzees live. They want to keep their chimps in case of any future research possibilities. While biomedical research cannot be done on chimpanzees, behavioral studies can and continues.
- **Alamogordo Primate Facility** in New Mexico is also federally funded. Chimps from the Coulston Foundation and Holloman Air Force base that did not make it to Save the Chimps, Chimp Haven or another sanctuary still live here. They currently have 44 chimps. After retiring 51 chimps to Chimp Haven in 2017 and 9 of those chimps dying after 2 years, they decided not to give any more chimps to sanctuary and instead to keep them where they are.
- **MD Anderson Cancer Center** has the **National Center for Chimpanzee Care** in Bastrop, TX where they continue to do voluntary behavioral research. They have retired some of their chimps to Chimp Haven but are holding onto over 100 chimpanzees at their Texas facility.
- While not a sanctuary, **Yerkes National Primate Research Center** at Emory University in Atlanta has 47 chimpanzees and continues to conduct behavioral research on them as



Project Chimps

well as many other types of primates. Studies include addiction, specifically cocaine related, in addition to looking at how primates deal with stress. While these studies are not “invasive” they are inhumane. Yerkes is currently under review by the USDA. They received \$80 million from the NIH in 2017.

Procedures:

1. **Discuss:** Have a discussion about the 4 main laws that have affected chimpanzees.
2. **Tour.** If onsite- take your tour!
3. **Activities.** Complete 1 or more of the activities below. All lesson plans can be shared to complete more activities back in the classroom post field trip.
4. **Assessment.** Discuss the assessment questions below.

Activities:

- **Analyze.** (6-12) Take a look at each of the 4 laws and complete the [Chimpanzee Legislation worksheet](#).
- **Create** (6-12) Split into 4 groups and assign each group a law. Use markers, crayons, colored pencils to write, draw and explain your law on poster board. Use the [Chimp Legislation Assessment Questions](#) and the [Chimpanzee Legislation worksheet](#) to help. Allow groups to share their work.
- **Write** (6-12) Write a law to protect chimpanzees. What things do you need to take into consideration? What do you need to include to make sure chimps are protected and well cared for?
- **Write** (6-12) Write a letter to the National Institute of Health encouraging them to stop all experiments on primates. [NIH Letter Writing Campaign](#)

Assessment:

Answer the following questions on your poster. Be creative. Use pictures, timelines and drawings.

1. Is this law just?
2. Does this law protect chimpanzees?
3. Could this law have done more to protect chimpanzees?
4. Would you change anything about this law, and if so, what?
5. Where were the loopholes in this law?
6. If your law changed over time use a timeline to show the changes.

Conclusion:



Project Chimps

While we have 4 main laws to protect chimpanzees, some have loopholes and have not done all that they could to protect chimps. The most recent amendment of ESA, ending the split listing of chimpanzees and declaring chimps in captivity as endangered, has had the largest impact concerning quality of life for chimpanzees. With chimpanzees in labs no longer being used in medical research, it is important that we help them find sanctuary where they can live their remaining lives in safety and security.

Taking it further:

- Research why primates are not good research test subjects. More details can be found in the [NIH Letter Writing Campaign](#).

Notes to Instructor:

- [Chimp Legislation Assessment Questions](#)
- [Chimpanzee Legislation worksheet](#)
- [Chimpanzee Legislation worksheet \(key\)](#)
- [NIH Letter Writing Campaign](#)
- Thank you for being a part of our community! By visiting us on field trips, participating in our lessons virtually and spreading the word about the need for Project Chimps, you and your students are helping in the process to get all research chimps to sanctuary.