

RESOURCE LIBRARY | ACTIVITY : 1 HR 40 MINS

Wish? Grant It.

Students create their own grant proposal for the solution they think will best meet the needs of their target species while considering the needs of humans and other local species.

Students will tell a compelling story, identify why their solution is the best option, and provide evidence supporting their choice to pursue a solution that is more or less cost-intensive for their species. After preparing a draft of their proposal, students provide peer feedback to improve their work.

GRADES

6, 7, 8

SUBJECTS

Biology, Ecology, Conservation

OVERVIEW

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For the complete activity with media resources, visit:

<http://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/wish-grant-it/>

In collaboration with

DIRECTIONS

This activity is part of the *Extinction Stinks!* unit.

1. Review the characteristics of strong grant proposals.

- Remind students about the conclusions they drew from the *Helping the Sumatran Rhino* activity after evaluating two competing grant proposals to help conserve the Sumatran rhino.
- Ask students to list some of the strengths they saw in those proposals. Based on their evaluations, these may include:
 - Clear storytelling that draws in the reader
 - Justification rooted in research about the issues faced by the species
 - Connects to other species besides just the target species
 - Considers needs of human populations as well as nonhuman species
 - Reduces costs when possible, but is realistic when costs need to be high to save a species in crisis
- Remind students about the importance of telling a good story.
 - Use the *Elements of Storytelling* infographic to guide students to tell a story that draws in the audience and makes them want to learn more.

2. Give students time to work in their small groups on their grant proposals.

- Have students organize into their project groups and retrieve their *Grant Proposal* handout from the *Helping the Sumatran Rhino* activity.
- Facilitate collaboration among students as they draft each section of their grant proposal.
 - Remind them to follow the structure of the *Grant Proposal* handout and refer to the first four rows of the *Proposal and Pitch Rubric* to ensure that their proposal meets the criteria for the project.

3. Have students provide peer feedback on grant proposals and groups' solutions.

- Once students have worked on their proposals, have student groups exchange proposals to provide constructive feedback using the project rubric.
- Ask students to consider:

- *What strengths can you identify in each other's work? Where could they improve?*
- *If you were funding projects, what would persuade you to accept the proposal?*

Tip

Step 3: Instead of having groups exchange with another group, students could do a “gallery walk” of all the proposals to observe strengths and points of growth for grant proposals. Read more about this work-sharing technique at the [The Teacher Toolkit](#) website.

Tip

Step 3: Peer review can be a valuable process when it is executed well. Learn more about best practices in peer review from one English teacher who iterated his process over time to meet the needs of his students in this [Edutopia](#) article.

Informal Assessment

While students are working on their grant proposals, circulate and provide timely feedback if particular portions of the proposal could use more support. Intervene as needed if you notice interpersonal conflict, imbalance in work responsibility, or if a group is not on track to complete their grant proposal as scheduled. You can also use peer feedback as informal assessment of students' work based on the depth and clarity provided to one another.

Extending the Learning

Have students explore what grants are available in real life for the kind of conservation they are trying to do. Several websites list grant applications and deadlines for those working with wildlife, including the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#), the [Land Trust Alliance](#), and the [Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund](#). These grant submission websites often provide samples of strong grant proposals that show the level of detail needed to create a successful professional-level grant proposal.

OBJECTIVES

Subjects & Disciplines

Biology

- [Ecology](#)

- Conservation

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Collaborate to write a grant proposal to support their idea for helping their target species.
- Provide peer feedback on others' proposals.

Teaching Approach

- Project-based learning

Teaching Methods

- Cooperative learning
- Information organization
- Writing

Skills Summary

This activity targets the following skills:

- 21st Century Student Outcomes
 - Learning and Innovation Skills
 - Communication and Collaboration
- 21st Century Themes
 - Environmental Literacy
 - Global Awareness
- Critical Thinking Skills
 - Analyzing
 - Applying
 - Creating
 - Evaluating
 - Remembering

- Understanding
- Geographic Skills
 - Analyzing Geographic Information
 - Answering Geographic Questions
 - Organizing Geographic Information
- Science and Engineering Practices
 - Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)
 - Engaging in argument from evidence
 - Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

National Standards, Principles, and Practices

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS & LITERACY

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.1:

Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

NEXT GENERATION SCIENCE STANDARDS

- Crosscutting Concept 2:

Cause and Effect

- ETS1.B: Developing Possible Solutions:

There are systematic processes for evaluating solutions with respect to how well they meet the criteria and constraints of a problem.

- MS. Interdependent Relationships in Ecosystems:

MS-LS2-5. Evaluate competing design solutions for maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem services.

- Science and Engineering Practice 7:

Engaging in argument from evidence

- Science and Engineering Practice 8:

Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

Preparation

What You'll Need

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY

- Internet Access: Required
- Tech Setup: 1 computer per classroom, Projector

PHYSICAL SPACE

- Classroom

GROUPING

- Small-group work

BACKGROUND & VOCABULARY

Background Information

Grant proposals are a common way that nonprofit organizations secure funding for important projects that support causes like protecting endangered species. The goal of a grant proposal is to convince a potential funder that your work will be effective and is worth the financial investment. Telling a clear and compelling story is essential to getting funding for the project, as grants are usually highly competitive and hard to obtain.

Prior Knowledge

Recommended Prior Activities

- [Helping the Sumatran Rhino](#)

Vocabulary

Term	Part of Speech	Definition
conservation	<i>noun</i>	management of a natural resource to prevent exploitation, destruction, or neglect.
endangered species	<i>noun</i>	organism threatened with extinction.
extinction	<i>noun</i>	process of complete disappearance of a species from Earth.

Term	Part of Speech	Definition
grant	<i>noun</i>	money given to a person or group of people to carry out a specific project or program.
grant writing	<i>noun</i>	process of applying to a person, business, or other organization for money or other funding.



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