WHAT IS ANTHROZOOLOGY?

This lesson plan was developed from an anthrozoological perspective. Anthrozoology is a study that focuses on the many and varied ways in which humans perceive, engage, compete and co-exist with non-human animals. In order to understand our complex relationship with animals we humans share space with, anthrozoology takes an inter-disciplinary approach to human-animal interactions by gathering information from anthropology, sociology, human geography, ethnozoology, biology, psychology, law, philosophy and veterinary medicine, behavioural science and history.

If you are interested in learning more about anthrozoology and how it adds to our understanding of human-animal interactions, the following book is a good starting point: Humans and Other Animals Cross-Cultural Perspective on Human-Animal Interactions by Samantha Hurn.

LESSON PLAN FOR ELEPHANATICS (for grade 10 to grade 12 students)

General questions about animals and how the students think about animals in general:

1. Is a human an animal?
2. Are insects, fish, rodents or reptiles animals – if not what are they?
3. What do you think culture is?
4. How does culture effect our relationship with animals?

Questions about elephants:

1. A sentient being is something that feels and expresses emotions. Do you think elephants are sentient beings?

2. What characteristics would you expect an elephant to display?

3. List the ways elephants interact with humans.

4. With each interaction between humans and animals, list the pros and cons of that interaction for elephants and humans.

How Elephants interact with Humans	Pros for Elephants	Cons for Elephants	Pros for Humans	Cons for Humans
Tourism: tourist ride on elephants				
Hunting as a trophy and/or ivory				
Zoos				
Circus				
Logging				

5. Who benefits the most, the human or the elephant from these interactions?

6. When we carry out interactions such as putting them in zoos, using them for tourists to ride, using them as working animals (farming), do we ask their permission to do this?

7. Should we ask them for permission?

8. If we do not need to ask them for permission, why not? What is the logic behind not needing to ask another sentient being permission for its service?

9. Do elephants compete for resources with humans?

10. If so, how does this effect our relationship with elephants?

11. How do you think cultural upbringing influences the relationship of people who live near or with elephants?

12. How would you go about trying to change the way people view elephants so that they view them as sentient beings?

13. Why do you think it is important that we in western world understand the plight of the elephant?

14. How does the plight of elephants relate to the environment?

15. Why is it important that organizations like Elephanatics promote the well being of elephants?

NOTE: NOT ALL QUESTIONS WOULD BE ASKED. IT WOULD DEPEND ON HOW INTERACTIVE THE STUDENTS WERE AND WHERE THE STUDENTS TOOK THE CONVERSATION.