

Year 8 English

Poaching of Elephants and Rhinos in Africa

The wildlife, it is beautiful, is it not? The lush grass plains and small watering holes glinting in the sun; the scene of the African savannahs. These heavenly plains are home to a huge variety of wildlife, but today I will be focusing on two particular creatures the rhino and elephant. These two majestic creatures have one enemy in common, poachers, with their large ivory tusks and horns these creatures body parts can fetch up to \$2,100 per kilogram.

The African elephant and rhino, both fetching quite a hefty price on the market, consequently make for big targets for poachers. However, with as much as possible being done to stop poachers it has very little effect. This is because in our modern world people are coming up with new ways to find, dismember or kill these animals. Poachers sometimes even manage to acquire helicopters, which makes the fences put up around reservations useless; and sniper rifles equipped with a thermal scope to hunt in the night. With all this new technology, it makes it very hard for conservationists to save these animals.

National wildlife parks are all over the savannah which in theory should provide sanctuary for the animals. Yet still, poachers succeed because, not enough funding goes toward creating these sanctuaries in these countries because they cannot afford it. And no matter what they try to protect the animals with the poachers will easily outgun them with their more advanced machinery.

This is easily proven by the fact that at the beginning of 2019 ivory was so commonly found and sold you could buy it for \$500 per kilogram which is relatively extremely cheap. Also, it is estimated at least 800 rhinos died in the year 2018 and 20,000 elephant deaths were estimated; which is on average 55 deaths a day. Currently, there are 415,000 elephants left in Africa and around 29,000 rhinos remain alive.

Finally, I would like to say that we as a wealthier country, could and should be doing more to either help out the conservationists or eradicate the poachers praying upon them. Thank you for listening.

Poaching

Hello, today I am going to talk to you about poaching and its effect on not only the environment but the economy as well. What is poaching? Poaching is when an animal is killed illegally, usually because it possesses something valuable. For instance a rhino horn is used in Chinese medicine and is also a sign of wealth in certain countries. But what the people who buy these products don't realise or don't care about is the affect that this has on the environment, the economy and how it is destroying the world, as we know it.

I remember the first time I went to a safari; I was eight and my family and I went to a safari in South Africa. As soon as we arrived I realised my love for animals. We were told about Tundi: one of the rhinos on the reserve. She is the only rhino who was able to have babies after she was poached. This is an incredible story and being able to see this

'famous' rhino was breath taking. This story compelled me so much that I bought a rhino teddy, and I am sure that you can guess what I named the teddy. Ever since that day I have loved all animals and have wanted to make a change within the world today.

When I did some research into the numbers of poaching attacks I was horrified to find out that WWF estimate that around 20,000 African elephants are being killed each year for their ivory. That is an average of 55 a day. Now there are only 40,000 elephants left in the world today. Rhinos are also at risk; according to the International Rhino Foundation 1100 rhinos were killed last year in Africa. These are also not the only animals in danger, there are only 4000 tigers left in the world and 100 of them are being poached each year. The world has lost 97% of its tiger population in a little over a century. If these numbers of poaching attacks carry on increasing we will lose all of these animals within our lifetime.

Not only are these numbers horrific but the affect that this has on the environment and the economy is terrifying. The environment is affected, as so many animals are being poached and becoming endangered. As well as its effect on the environment poaching also gives devastating consequences for the economy. A lot of poor communities in Asia and Africa rely on the wildlife to bring in money. If the safaris have recently been poached and lost some of their animals it is unlikely the tourists will want to visit it and this will have a negative impact on people visiting local shops, restaurants and rentals. Many locals also work in safaris and if no one is visiting those safaris then no one will be paying the locals.

Finally, we need to do something to help. These numbers are devastating and if we don't do anything they are going to keep increasing. To help we can donate to charities and safaris that actually want to help the animals. They can use this money to create protection programmes to try and decrease poaching numbers. We can also visit safaris, local shops and restaurants so that locals are getting some source of income. Together we need to stop this, for the environment, for the economy and for the entire world.

Writing Challenge – Democracy and British Values Speech

Today I am going to be talking about Democracy and the right to a fair trial as I find these two topics to be interesting and both incredibly important.

Britain is a democratic country. A democratic country is one that is ruled by the people that live there or by specific leaders elected by the public in a free electoral system. We have a high degree of civil and political freedom in Britain as we are a democratic country. There are many different types of a democracy which is why there are generally four elements of criteria which makes a country a democracy rather than a dictatorship. These elements are an electoral system for choosing government officials, human rights, citizens have freedom in civics and politics and laws apply equally to everyone. Many other countries such as Norway, Sweden, New Zealand, and many more are examples of democratic countries.

The opposite of a democracy is a dictatorship. A dictatorship is a government formed by the rule of one leader or a small group that usually come to power just to benefit themselves not for the benefit of the population. They are usually selfish, sneaky, and so full of power that it takes over their mind and their life. Examples of famous dictators include Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong, Kim Jong-un and more. Perhaps one of the most famous dictators however is Adolf Hitler as he came to rule over Germany.

As we are a democracy, we have values and for me one of the main British values is the rule of Law and the right to a fair trial. As we can see by watching the film 12 angry men the right to a fair trial is extremely important and can change someone's life for the better or for the worse. We are all people whether we have behaved properly or poorly, and we all have the right to a fair trial if we have been accused of breaking one of the laws made for us to follow. In this country we are innocent until proven guilty, so sufficient evidence must be given to accuse someone of wrong behaviour. How would you feel if it were you being accused? How would you feel if you were the one about to be punished for a crime you did not commit? The data put forward against you may be strong, but what is more important is the truth that lay behind the facts. Being accused or arrested for a committing a crime is horrible and going to jail for it is worse, but the part that is even more terrifying and disheartening is knowing that you should not be there in the first place. Knowing that the verdict was wrong and if it were not for that data being held against you, you would be free and allowed back into the world.

Personally after watching 12 angry men I believe that this is one of the most important values and it links to mutual respect as we must respect what verdict is decided and we must respect that the right decision has been made whether you agree with it or not. We follow the laws put in place for us and we discuss and try to reach a fair decision if one of those laws is broken. The decision may be wrong, but we cannot blame those who made it because it was their opinion and we cannot blame them for feeling the way that they do.

As I have stated, I personally do believe that Democracy and the right to a fair trial is one of the most important values that we have in this country. So before judging someone, maybe by their look or your first impression get to know them or put yourself in their shoes and feel what it is like to be where they are right now. It is easy to prejudge someone and automatically dislike them but what is harder is to talk to them and understand their feelings and their opinions so think about that next time you go to judge someone.

Monday 11th May

Should Animals be Kept in Captivity?

There are millions of animals around the world held in captivity in zoos, homes, sanctuaries and more. Many of them have been stolen from their mothers in the wild. There are circuses that abuse animals, zoos that deprive natural habitats from animals and people who display wild animals as pets. This is all for our entertainment and satisfaction.

In the UK many exotic animals have been banned as pets unless you own a license. If you have obtained a license you can own many dangerous wild animals including jaguars, cheetahs, lions and tigers. Not only are you captivating innocent animals but putting yourself at risk, and others.

No matter what zoo you visit the animals are being held captive and I do not believe that is right. Many animals develop 'zoochosis' when they are imprisoned in cages and enclosures, this can cause animals to hurt themselves when they are bored or frustrated. Zoos also breed animals because babies make them more money, they then separate the families when they sell, loan or trade animals. Lots of zoos defend themselves by saying they are helping endangered animals, however many animals in zoos are not endangered and those who are will probably never be

released into the wild. Zoos are also not very educational because displays provide very little information and it only teaches people it is alright to imprison animals. In natural disasters animals rarely have means to escape or defend themselves. In America, during Hurricane Katrina nearly 10,000 aquatic animals died at the Audubon Aquarium. Many animals have been mistreated, poisoned by litter, starved and more.

Sanctuaries, though not totally ethical, have many rescued animals who would never have had a chance of survival, so visiting a sanctuary would be better than a zoo. However, some sanctuaries can not prove having rescued animals, and some purposefully hurt animals and then 'rescue' them.

The most moral way to see animals is visiting them in their natural habitats and not in zoos, sanctuaries or circuses. Never purposefully imprison animals that are wild, because how would you feel being held captive? There are hundreds of charities that you can donate to, so wild animals can be protected.

Gender equality

I am here today to speak about the importance of gender equality. Gender equality is intrinsically linked to sustainable development and is vital to the realization of human rights for all. The overall objective of gender equality is a society in which all genders enjoy the same opportunities, rights and obligations in all spheres of life. Unfortunately, this problem, although lessened in certain countries, is still a major issue around the world. No country, in this world can confidently say that they have achieved complete gender equality. No country can say that every gender has the same pay, the same education, the same rights, the same jobs.

This issue is especially prominent in education. Of the 123 million young people between the ages of 15 and 24 who cannot read or write, 61 percent of them are women. There are approximately 130 million girls between the ages of six and seventeen out of school. 15 million primary school aged children, will never see a classroom in their life. So, I want to ask you a question. Why are we letting this happen? We need to ensure that women and men, girls and boys, not only gain access to and complete their education, but are also empowered equally through it, with the same lifelong opportunities.

Instead, women are scared to go to school because of gender based violence. They are scared because as soon as they leave for school they could be subjected to sexual harassment, bullying, assault, abduction and psychological attacks because they are a girl or because they are a woman. Instead, girls that are pregnant, in some countries, as a law, are deemed not a child anymore therefore, in no need of an education and have no adequate support or service when pregnant and after. Instead, girls are caught up in the never ending gender stereotypes of what an accomplished woman or girl should be doing. Girls are often socialised to assume domestic and care responsibilities, with the assumption that they will be economically dependent on men. The stereotype of men as breadwinners leads to the prioritisation of boys' education. This needs to stop. Men and women, girls and boys, should not be subjected to this because of their gender.

Another issue is gender inequality in the work place and unequal pay. Instead of having: equal pay and benefits for comparable roles, equal consideration of needs, equal opportunities for progression and promotion, many jobs do not offer equal pay for men and women or equal opportunities. 23% of women have faced sexual harassment in the work place and only 8% of them have reported it. 43% of mothers face maternity discrimination. 52% of women face mental health issues at work, compared to 42% of men. There is also still the problem of pay gaps between men and women of the same job. In other countries, women might not even get to work because of gender stereotypes. They would have to stay at home and look after children and do the housebound duties. We need to make sure, as a more developed country in gender equality, that we aid other countries in achieving a gender equal country.

We need to come together as a community, not only women but men also, to try and achieve a world where all genders, no matter what age, no matter what race or culture, get equal rights. Equal pay, equal, opportunities, equal education. We need to make sure that all women and girls feel secure and safe as the gender that they are. We need to make sure that all genders come together to make a difference.

Should athletes be allowed to use performance-enhancing technology?

Fellow athletes, we must put a stop to performance-enhancing technology in sport. I believe this is a form of cheating and should be banned.

On the twelfth of October 2019, Eliud Kipchoge became the first athlete to run a marathon in under two hours. A day later, Brigid Kosgei broke the woman's world record. These were great accomplishments, but both wore new shoes made by Nike, which were performance-enhancing. They had much softer bases giving the athlete more spring.

These shoes have now been banned by World Athletics, but Nike have since brought out another version of the shoe. World Athletics ruled that the shoes gave the athletes who wore them an unfair advantage. If the athletes wearing the shoes continue to break new records, how realistic are these new records? Where should the role of technology in sport end?

I believe that the shoes go against the spirit of sport. I believe elite sport should be about the athlete's ability and not the technology they have access to. I believe new technology gives an unfair advantage to those who can afford it.

We should agree and enforce new rules on technology in sport. We must not let technology decide who wins rather than the athlete's ability. We must put a stop to performance-enhancing technology in sport!

Written by James Warren Yr 8

The Benefits of the Xbox According to Ithan

I'm here today to talk to you about why the Xbox is good for children. Before I tell you why, I will explain what an Xbox is. An Xbox is a gaming platform that allows owners to play a wide variety of games. It also includes a private party chat in which players can talk to friends and family over the microphone. Many games include a game chat which is the same as the Xbox party chat but you can hear other players in the game. I'm going to tell you that the Xbox enhances a child's social skill, personality and education.

So why do children think that the Xbox is good? The Xbox is another way to connect with friends and family. It is a fun way to play video games, instead of playing by themselves they can play with others. Now I know that a lot of parents say that the Xbox is antisocial, well is that really true? In my opinion it isn't. In a time like this when children cannot go to school on a daily basis and cannot see or interact with their friends and classmates, the Xbox is an alternative to that. The Xbox provides a way for your child to be with friends.

The Xbox includes games that help your child develop personally. There are games such as Minecraft where it is all about construction. There are also progressive games that increase your child's interests and widen their knowledge. These games include activities like farming, cooking, building; searching and designing.

There are some recommendations for parents that don't want their children to be on the Xbox twenty-four-seven. If your child is younger, they should have less time to play and you should set a time schedule for them so you can see how long they've played for each day. Whereas if your child is older, say twelve or thirteen, they should be allowed to have longer periods of time and should be able to take responsibility of when they can and can't play. Another suggestion is to let your child choose which times they can play, then they feel like they will have more freedom and won't complain as much when you ask them to come off.

The Xbox also has free educational games. Games which teach: spelling, maths, reading and writing. They are a fun way to learn and enjoy education. In lockdown, it is essential that all children have some form of education. The Xbox can provide that; there is a section of the Xbox game pass and Microsoft shop that is labeled 'Education.' This is where you can find a wide variety of games that teach all kinds of subjects including the core subjects.

Finally, I would like to end with saying that I think the Xbox is a great way to connect, enjoy, learn and create. There are so many possibilities that the Xbox can offer. It is up to you to agree or disagree with me but in the end it is your choice not mine. Please let us know what you think by emailing us at Xbox@gmail.com or Xbox@icloud.com.

The Consequences of Covid-19 - Luca

The time has now come for us to consider the many ways Covid-19 will impact our future of which the path is unclear. The impact is on everybody old and young alike, but it will form in different ways. Such as, the elderly will be in lockdown longer; they are less able to care for themselves and they are also shut off from their families. For the young it is about education, socialising and interacting with friends, playing and watching sport. Some parents will have to care for their children whilst trying to work from home, whilst others will be worrying about the lack of work and lower income. All parents, however, will be concerned about the health of their children and their parents. This puts immense pressure on parents as they are having to juggle many balls.

Mental health is something that impacts us all. Mental health refers to cognitive, behavioural, and emotional well-being. It is all about how people think, feel, and behave. Covid-19 has particularly effected many people. The statistics show that more children than ever have called ChildLine due to many circumstances for example: being scared of getting seriously ill or catching the Coronavirus. Childline received 300 counselling sessions from young people about their concerns; 145 calls were made in the last week of March which was when the pandemic was declared; 125 calls came from 12-15 year old's, 86 calls from 16 - 18 year old's. There's growing concern of more cases of depression due to feeling isolated and of being alone and away from loved ones. Some people have declared depression as a pandemic as there are more cases everyday due to lockdown. Many people are struggling with lockdown. You are not alone.

I can say with great confidence that I have been missing sport a tremendous amount. From watching and participating in sporting activities for fun and competitively. I'm sure this is the same for many of you too. Every day I try to achieve my daily exercise, for example I will use the treadmill or spend time outside practicing my rugby techniques. This is especially important for a healthy mindset and for those around you too. The government has now advised unlimited daily exercise which is extremely important to get out of your house and have a change of scenery. do you not agree?

Let us look at education. Education has been hit hard by the coronavirus and all exams in the UK, which have been cancelled for this year. All schools have shut down for pupils except for the vulnerable or whose parents are keyworkers or frontline staff. Although school must accommodate social distancing when the lockdown rules start to ease. They are hoping that reception, years one, six, ten and twelve will go back first, but they will stagger the starting times, break times and limit sizes of classes to fifteen.

I am sure like me, many of you have enjoyed traveling to many beautiful places and miss seeing the waves skipping and the sand squealing beneath your feet, all memories I'm sure we will never forget. Travel has been impacted by the strict coronavirus lockdown rules and many travel companies are likely to going out of business. When lockdown is over, we should support our local travel companies by holidaying in the UK. This will enable our tourist industries to a speedier economic recovery. However, we have benefited from an environmental standpoint, which some may say is bittersweet as emissions and the carbon footprint has significantly been reduced. The improvement in air quality over the past months of the coronavirus lockdown has led to 11,000 fewer deaths from pollution in the UK and elsewhere in Europe, 6,000 fewer children developing asthma and 1,900 people avoided emergency room visits. This is a bonus!

In a few months we will truly see the aftermath of the coronavirus, but the key is to stay strong, support the elderly and our country. Drop off food to whoever is in need, spend time with family and just enjoy the quieter life with your loved ones, as when this is over there will be many things to catch up on. Do you want to miss this family time? Just remember we will pull through this and build our nation back up to be a strong, safe, and secure place for all citizens. **We will pull through this; we will overcome the coronavirus; we will create a coronavirus-controlled country.**

So now, let's pick ourselves up, join together and reflect on the positives we can reap from these unprecedented times- a time we will never forget.

Remember, good mental health helps you relax more, achieve more, and enjoy our lives more, so **stay connected, talk about our worries, support, and help each other; look after your body, stay on top of difficult feelings and get plenty of sleep. Together we can get through this!**

Ban guns, Reduce violent deaths, Save Lives! By Ewan

The Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, a multinational organisation based in Switzerland revealed that 9 out of 10 violent deaths occur outside of conflict zones across the world. . On average, more than 740,000 men, women, and children die each year as a result of armed violence. The majority of these deaths—490,000—occur in countries that are not affected by armed conflicts.

600,000 people died violently in 2018 and over 38% of these deaths were committed by a firearm.

I say-ban guns, reduce violent deaths, save lives!

North America is the region that has the highest proportion of fire-arms related deaths at 62%. If we look at the gun homicide rate in England and Wales, it is about one for every 1 million people. In a population of 60 million, that adds up to about 50 to 60 gun killings annually. In the USA, by contrast, there are about 160 times as many gun homicides in a country that is roughly six times larger in population. There were 15,292 gun homicides in 2019, according to the latest FBI figures.

Which country do you think has the stricter gun control laws?

Gun ownership in the U.K. is far lower than in the U.S. On average, Britain has 6.5 guns per 100 people, compared to America, which has 101 guns per 100 people, according to the Small Arms Survey.

The Second Amendment guarantees American citizens the right of the people to keep and bear arms." There are a number of laws and regulations, but the Constitution still grants that right. In the UK, gun ownership isn't a right, it's a privilege, and a very limited one.

Only a dozen of the US's 50 states require purchase permits for handguns. Of those states, only three — California, Connecticut and Hawaii — require permits for the purchase of rifles and shotguns. The purchase of semi-automatic weapons is legal in most states, as are automatic weapons made before 1986.

Ban guns, reduce violent deaths, save lives!

In 2017, Las Vegas witnessed the deadliest mass shooting by an individual in the history of the USA. 58 people were killed and over 400 wounded. The shooter fired more than 1,000 bullets and was

found with 22 assault rifles containing 100-round magazines. The guns and ammunition was all purchased legally. I am not sure this is what the founding fathers of the US constitution had in mind.

Does anybody really need an assault rifle or hand gun that can fire multiple rounds for self-defense or game shooting?

PLEASE, let us ban guns, reduce violent deaths and save lives!

Put a stop to Racism

By Yousef

Today I will educate you on the seriousness of racism and how it affects people psychologically and even physically and how we, yes we, can stop it as best as possible.

I would like to ask you all a question- what is racism? Everybody has heard the word “racism” whether it’s from watching the news or whether it’s from listening to the radio ,we have all heard the word “racism” but what does it really mean? Some people think it means being discriminated against for your skin tone or your beliefs or your race. However do you know what racism actually means? Well in the English dictionary it states that racism is: prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one's own race is superior. In other words, it means that some people believe that their race is superior to other races and that those other races should have a limit on what they can, for example –do in work or how much they can earn, just because of their race. This is preposterous! How can someone even think that they are of superior to somebody else just because of their skin colour? How would you feel if you were discriminated against just because of your skin colour or because of your beliefs?

Continuing with jobs did you know that in the US, black individuals are twice as likely to be unemployed than white individuals. Did you also know that once employed, Black individuals earn nearly 25% less than their white counterparts. One US study even found that job applications with traditionally white-sounding names received 50% more call backs than those with traditionally black names. In the US, black workers are the less likely than white workers to be employed in a job that is consistent with their level of education. **This must stop now!** How would you, yes you feel if you were put against these statistics? How would you feel if the likelihood of you getting a well-paid job is lower than the guy next to you, just because of your skin colour? You might be better than him or her in every aspect, but since your skin-tone is black, you’re at a disadvantage.

Racism also affects people psychologically and physically. Many forms of racism include verbal racism. Verbal racism can affect a person psychologically. This psychological effect can turn into Depression which could lead to eating disorders, destroying their health or even worse, drug use. All of this could happen just from some racist comments. **Consequently we must think before we speak, I say it again; think before we speak because a small comment can cause catastrophe.**

In conclusion, you have heard the facts, you have heard the problems now what are you going to do to stop this ongoing racism? It doesn’t have to be big, all you need to do is **think before you speak!** I say it again **think before you speak** because racism isn’t a joke, it is still present and it is unfair!

