

Do not use this before the drawing activity. If children hear this lesson first, their drawings show the lesson instead of their own picture of the future — and that is precisely what we are trying to learn.

Once the drawings are collected, this is the natural moment to talk about what is really happening to wild animals — and, just as importantly, what actually helps. About 30 to 40 minutes.

Start with what they drew

10 minutes · discussion

Ask the class, without singling anyone out: what sorts of things did people draw? Were there animals in the pictures? What were the people doing? Was it a hopeful future or a worrying one? Let them notice for themselves that the class did not all imagine the same thing. That disagreement is the real hook, and a better opening than any fact you could hand them.

What is happening to wild animals

10 minutes · keep it plain

Habitat loss

When forests, grasslands and wetlands are cleared for farms, roads and towns, animals lose the place they live. This is the largest single reason wildlife is disappearing worldwide.

Hunting and the wildlife trade

Some animals are killed for meat, or for horns, skins and tusks, or captured alive to be sold as pets.

A changing climate

Rains arrive at different times, and places grow hotter or drier, so plants and animals suited to a place can no longer live there.

Conflict with people

When elephants raid crops or predators take livestock, families lose food and income, and animals are sometimes killed in return. This is a genuine problem for people, not only for wildlife.

What actually helps

10 minutes · give this at least as long as the section above

Children who hear only about loss often conclude that nothing can be done, and that belief is itself part of the problem.

- Protected areas work. Where parks and reserves are properly funded and guarded, animal numbers can recover.
- Species have come back from the edge before. Mountain gorillas, humpback whales and southern white rhinos are all more numerous now than a few decades ago.
- Ways of living alongside animals — beehive fences that keep elephants off crops, guarding livestock at night, sharing tourism income with local families — reduce the conflict that gets animals killed.
- Ordinary people made these things happen: rangers, farmers, teachers, and children who grew up caring.

Finish here

5 minutes

Ask each child one question: “If you drew that picture again tomorrow, would you change anything?” You need not collect the answers — the question is for them. It lets a child notice that the future they imagined is not fixed, and that people decide how it turns out.

The art prize — a second drawing

Optional · about 30 minutes, this lesson or the next

If your class would like to enter the annual art prize, this is the moment. Invite the children to draw a **SECOND** picture, on the theme “a future where wildlife and people share the land”.

Why a second drawing? The first one has already been collected. It was made before anyone mentioned prizes, and it recorded what each child honestly expects. A child who knows a prize is at stake draws to win one — which is why the prize never touches the drawing we analyse.

First drawing — evidence

Made cold, before any discussion. Never judged, never ranked, never entered. This is the one that goes back to us.

Second drawing — celebration

Made after this lesson, knowing everything. Judged on imagination, not polish. Entering is entirely optional.

Send prize entries separately from the study drawings, and mark them clearly. Full rules are on the website. No child is identified publicly without a guardian's permission.