



WILD CLASSROOM

# Conservation in the Classroom

Supplemental Material Packet



## *THE ASIAN ELEPHANT: AN ENDANGERED ICON*

Nilanga Jayasinghe

Asian Species Conservation Manager

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1:00 pm ET/10:00 am PT

Recording available on the [Wild Classroom YouTube Channel](#)

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Warm-up for students, with brainstorming questions to get them ready to watch



Wrap-up for students, with quiz questions to assess their understanding after watching



Teacher guide containing optional discussion questions, helpful resources, and answer keys

## THE ASIAN ELEPHANT: AN ENDANGERED ICON

### Student Warm-Up

Get ready to watch the Conservation in the Classroom event by reading and brainstorming about the topic with the questions below.

#### Read

(Adapted from the web story, [Protecting, restoring, and coexisting with Asia's magnificent elephants](#))

*According to estimates from the International Union for Conservation of Nature, there are likely less than 50,000 individual elephants estimated in the wild, inhabiting a mere 5% of their original range in 13 countries. In just decades, huge swaths of forest have been lost to make way for endless fields of crops, human settlements, and rapidly expanding infrastructure (roads, bridges, utilities, and other human-made structures). With their habitats shrinking, elephants encounter people more frequently, leading to conflicts that often impact both elephants and communities. Changes in climate, such as the increasing periods of drought, can also have impacts on elephants.*

Name three causes of elephant habitat loss.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Compare

What are two differences between African elephants and Asian elephants (aside from where they live)?

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#### Brainstorm

Conflict with humans is one of the most significant threats to the survival of Asian elephants. Why do you think these encounters with humans tend to result in harm, injury, or death?

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#### Connect

Elephants are the largest herbivores on Earth. Asian elephants eat for around 18 hours a day, consuming hundreds of pounds of grasses, tree bark, roots, leaves, and small stems. How does the diet of these megaherbivores affect the structure of their forest and grassland ecosystems?

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## THE ASIAN ELEPHANT: AN ENDANGERED ICON

### Student Wrap-Up

After watching the Conservation in the Classroom event, answer/respond to the following questions and prompts to show what you've learned.

Match the vocabulary term associated with habitat loss with its correct definition.

_____ 1. Fragmentation	A. the decline of a natural environment that makes it less suitable for the plants and animals that live there, often occurring as a result of human activities such as pollution or misuse of resources
_____ 2. Deforestation	B. breaking down into smaller parts, such as when a large area of habitat is divided into smaller, isolated habitats
_____ 3. Degradation	C. the conversion of forest to another land use or the long-term reduction of the tree canopy cover; this includes the conversion of natural forest to tree plantations, agriculture, pastures, water reservoirs, and urban areas

4) How does habitat loss lead to an increase in human-elephant conflict?

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5) Why do we call elephants "ecosystem engineers"?

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6) How is WWF working to protect elephants from habitat loss, poaching, or human-elephant conflict in Southeast Asia and China?

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7) How can you help protect Asian elephants?

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## THE ASIAN ELEPHANT: AN ENDANGERED ICON

### Teacher Guide

Use the discussion questions to further enhance student comprehension following the event viewing. For additional information on Asian elephants, please refer to the list of articles, videos, and teaching materials in the additional resources section. Also included is the answer key to the student wrap-up on the preceding page.

### Discussion Questions

- What are some of the biggest threats to the survival of Asian elephants?
- How do the daily activities and lifestyles of elephants influence the areas they inhabit?
- Why do you think people participate in the illegal wildlife trade? What can we do to stop it?
- What human activities cause habitat loss, fragmentation, and degradation?
- Why is it important to protect and conserve Asian elephants and their habitats?

### Additional Resources

- Webpage: [Asian Elephant](#)
- Webpage: [Illegal Wildlife Trade](#)
- Article: [The Status of Asian Elephants](#)
- Article: [Get to Know Elephants—and the Threats They Face](#)
- Article: [What is human-wildlife conflict and why is it more than just a conservation concern?](#)
- Article: [Tackling critical threats facing Asian elephants](#)
- Educational toolkit: [Teaching Tools About Elephants](#) (resource guide, slideshow, and lesson plans)
- Video: [The Asian Elephant: An Endangered Icon](#)
- Videos: [Elephant Toolkit Playlist](#)
- Kahoot!: [All About Elephants](#)

### Student Wrap-Up Answer Key

<u>B</u> 1. Fragmentation
<u>C</u> 2. Deforestation
<u>A</u> 3. Degradation

4. As elephants lose more habitat, they resort to seeking needs such as food and water elsewhere. This can cause them to wander onto human settlements and encounter people, which can lead to a tense situation if the elephants eat people's crops, damage their property, or cause injuries.

5. Elephants physically change their habitats. They make pathways in densely forested habitats that allow passage for other animals. An elephant footprint can also create a micro-ecosystem that, when filled with water, can provide a home for tadpoles and other organisms.

6. WWF is protecting and restoring habitats, working to reduce human-elephant conflict through the use of various measures, advocating for and enforcing anti-poaching measures, tracking the illegal wildlife trade, and monitoring elephant populations and movement.

7. Answers will vary.