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2-1975

KTT February 1975

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**Recommended Citation**

"KTT February 1975" (1975). *KIND Teaching Tips*. 3.  
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# KIND Teaching Tips

## Down With the Myth of Sameness!

by Charles F. Herrmann III

"They all look alike. I can't tell one from the others."

How often have you heard someone make a statement similar to the one above? Of course, nothing could be farther from the truth! Every living organism on our planet is different. There are no two living things that are exactly alike.

This natural diversity of living things often becomes clouded in the educational experience because we have so much to teach and so little time to do it in. We tend to group and pigeonhole things and make generalities so that we can build comfortable conceptual frameworks. Thus, the concept of diversity, and with it a genuine appreciation of the unique contributions of all living things to the environment and the quality of life becomes lost.

The study of diversity does not neatly fit into one of the curriculum areas that you must teach. Your best choice may be science and/or ecology. And the best years are the early years. The vehicle that we recommend you use to teach the concept of diversity is the animal world (including human beings).

In any inquiry into the diversity of the living world you should start with the pupils themselves.

• Hold a diversity census in your class. Duplicate a form for each child to complete. Include the following data:

1. Age
2. Sex
3. Color of hair
4. Color of skin
5. Hairstyle
6. Height
7. Weight
8. Handedness
9. Athletic prowess (measure several skills)
10. Favorite leisure time activity
11. Favorite food
12. Family size
13. Clubs or organizations

Once the children have completed their census you could develop a frequency chart on the

data. The diversity within your class will become obvious to all.

• Now take a look at the rest of the animal world. Get two pictures of an animal such as a sea gull or a bear. Hold the pictures up at a distance of 15 to 20 feet from the students. Ask the students to look for differences. Slowly move closer and keep asking for differences. The students should see more differences as the pictures get closer.

Review the many different kinds of skin coverings found in the animal world. Obtain two photos of zebras or some other animal that has very slight differences in skin coloration. Have the children examine the photos for differences.

• Make a visit to a zoo or other place where animals may be observed. Have the children look for differences in animals of the same species. Have the children look at behavior as well as coloration and size.

• Using a stethoscope, listen to the heartbeat of pet dogs and cats. Try recording the heartbeats and playing them back to the entire class. Compare with human heartbeats.

• Ask each child to bring a blade of grass to school. View the grass blades with magnifying glasses.

• Make a study of the ways animals travel from one place to another. Then name the animals that travel in the ways listed. Have the children try to observe at least two animals in each of the categories.

• Take a look at the wide variety of animals' homes. Have some students bring in old bird nests. Note the different materials and techniques used.

• If possible, visit a chicken farm. Measure the sizes of several eggs. Note the wide variety of coloration that one can find within a group of chickens.

These activities should help your students get a good grasp on the diversity that exists in the living world and perhaps help them gain an appreciation for the importance of this diversity.

BE A FRIEND TO NATURE...



... LEAVE HER BABIES ALONE

# KIND

## KINDNESS CLUB

### Bear Gets New Home, Page 1

**SKILLS:** List the following new words on the chalkboard before reading the story: **prison, debt, auction, bidder, court, habitat.** Discuss the concepts related to each word as well as the spelling and pronunciation. Add these words to your regular spelling list.

Have the children find Sarasota, Florida and Largo, Maryland on a map of the Eastern United States. Stretch a length of string between the two points. Determine the distance between the two points "as the crow flies." Try to elicit a meaning for the expression from the children. Compare the straight line distance with the road miles between the two points.

**ATTITUDES:** Ask: Why do you think Randy Grobe was afraid of the "highest bidder?" (A second-rate circus might have bought the bear.) Why do you suppose the bank agreed to give the bear to a refuge without collecting their debt? (Obviously Randy convinced them that this was the humane thing to do. It is not humane to buy and sell living creatures as though they were non-living property in order to settle debts.) Why did your editor decide to help? (His profession is humane work and he felt that this was an extension of his professional duties.)

**FOLLOW-UP:** The story notes that the cage that Royshka was in was much too small for a bear. Use this point as a stimulus for a creative writing session. Have the children imagine that they are the bear. Have them describe how they felt living in the tiny cage and how they feel living in the new "free" environment. Perhaps they could write thank you notes to Randy. Some may wish to prepare illustrations to accompany their stories.

# teaching

## DEFENDERS

### Heifer Project Gives Living Gifts to Poor, Pages 1 & 2

**SKILLS:** Ask: Why do you suppose Heifer Project simply calls itself Heifer Project? They do give away many other living creatures besides cows. (Cows were the first animals the group gave away.) Ask: Wouldn't it be simpler for the Heifer Project people just to give the poor people money? After all Heifer Project buys many of the animals it gives away. What would you do if you had the choice to make? Would you give money or animals? (The unique concept that the receiver of a Heifer Project gift must give away the first offspring is one part of the answer to those questions. Other answers would probably suggest that the living gifts will remain to help the poor people. Money might be spent on other less useful things.) How is project Heifer similar to KIND? (Both groups are charities. Both groups are trying to help those in need. Both groups are concerned with animal welfare. Both groups attempt to teach and educate.)

**ATTITUDES:** Why do you think the Heifer Project people teach the recipients of their living gifts how to care for the animals? If someone gave you a hive of bees or a herd of goats, would you know how to care for them properly? This is a good opportunity to introduce information on proper care of farm animals. Point out how these animals benefit man and why good health and proper nutrition is so important for production.

**FOLLOW-UP:** If your students wish to contact Heifer Project International, their address is:

P.O. Box 808  
Worthen Building  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203

# tips

## ECOLOKIND

### Space-Age Blood Letting Must End!, Pages 1 & 2

**ATTITUDES:** This lead story differs from some of the other more factual pieces that KIND has run in the past. It is more editorial in nature. Naturally, there are facts to support our opinions. But, this story is designed to make a point. However, we are not suggesting by the tone of our story that we believe man to be an aggressive violent animal that cannot be kind and humane. The recent discovery of the stone age tribe in the Philippines supports the belief that man has learned his aggressive blood letting — they are not genetic in nature. The Philippine tribe was found to be a peace-loving group of people who have never practiced murder, war or blood letting of any kind save hunting for food.

Provide your students with information on the stone age tribe in the Philippines. Hold a discussion on whether violence is a trait which is learned or inherited. If the class' conclusion is that this is an inherited trait, Ask: What promise is there for the future of mankind? Or, if the class votes in favor of violence being a learned trait, your discussion on the importance of education can go on forever. Ask: Do we learn aggressive behavior by watching violence and bloodshed on television or in movies? What value, then, is the rating system given to movies? Can an X-rating help people avoid exposure to violence, in their effort to learn compassion and concern for others? What does violence in spectator sports do to the character? Discuss the violence in rodeos and bullfights. Is this violence and blood letting really much different than less civilized people practiced in times past?

Ask: Do you think that there's ever a good excuse for blood letting? When? Why do you think that the Governor of Wisconsin received so many letters of protest

## -K-

### Give a Hoot — Don't Pollute, Page 2

**SKILLS:** Ask the children if they know what the word "hoot" means. In this case we are dealing with a multiple meaning. The call of an owl is called a hoot and the idiomatic expression "give a hoot" means to care about something. So, Woodsy is asking for the children to care about their environment.

### Fun, Page 3

**SKILLS:** Finding the small words in elephant could be lots of fun for the children as well as a worthwhile learning experience. Since we know that children of this age are interested in animals, you could devise a regular Find the Words in the Animal game. Cut out a silhouette of an alligator and have the children write the small words found in the word alligator on your silhouette. Or, you may want to duplicate the silhouette of a giraffe and have each child find the words working in isolation. Whatever the method, the technique is worthy of repetition.

### From Me, Page 4

**FOLLOW-UP:** Some of the children who read Arakhun's letter every month may not be aware that this is essentially an editorial. We have been asked why we are providing editorials for young children since some of them may not be able to distinguish fact from opinion. We felt that this was a marvelous opportunity for you to teach the children just what an editorial is and what its purpose is.

We provide the editorials because we feel that we have something to say that cannot be said within the confines of the short articles. We believe that it is good for children to be exposed to the thinking of others. We believe that there are far too many adults who are unable to sift through editorial matter in magazines and daily newspapers and know that they have been reading opinions. We believe that a life without opinions would be a dry, boring experience. And, we are trying to get the young people of America to shun the inhumane practices we see all around us and adopt a lifestyle that respects life and promotes kindness.

## -D-

### Teenagers Testify Against Trapper, Page 3

**SKILLS:** Several judicial words were used in this article and it may be a good idea to review the pronunciation as well as the concept for each word. Have the children look the words up in a dictionary. Then discuss the meanings and the pronunciation. The words are: trial, testimony, testified, convict, prosecuted, defendant, illegal, fined, penalty, and precedent. The word convict is both a verb and a noun. Be sure to distinguish between the two meanings.

**ATTITUDES:** What do you think the defendant meant when he said that the squirrel made him suffer? Do you think that the defendant might have reacted differently if an adult had asked him to release the squirrel? Why or why not? Would you have done what Steven Schlag did? Why or why not? Why do you suppose the prosecutor spoke about "anyone" accidentally setting off the trap instead of talking about the cruelty to the animal that had already been trapped and killed?

### Join the Spay and Neuter Campaign!, Page 4

**SKILLS:** You may want to discuss the concept of sterilization with your students. You may even want to point out that human beings also engage in voluntary sterilization as a method of birth control.

**ATTITUDES:** Ask: Do you think that it's OK to let your pet dog or cat roam around? Why or why not? Do you think that tax dollars and misery could be saved by more responsible pet ownership? How?

**FOLLOW-UP:** If some of your students choose to conduct a campaign for spay and neutering, have them follow up on their original calls to find out how many of the adults they talked to had pets sterilized. KIND would like reports on the campaigns.

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**Please remind your students to keep sending in puzzles, poems, and jokes. Send us a picture of your class. Tell us what you're using KIND.**

## -E-

from all over the nation after the calf kill? Why would someone have painted the "Calf Kill" sign that was shown on the front page of your newsletter? If the answer is to help people find their way to the "Calf Kill" then the reason for the kill becomes obvious. What do you think the reason was?

### Giant Snails Invade Florida, Page 3

**FOLLOW-UP:** Discuss ways that foreign animals or plants can have negative effects on an environment. Use examples such as: What would happen if elephants were introduced here? What would happen if cheetahs lived in our area? You may want to investigate some real cases where foreign animals were introduced in different parts of the U.S. Some examples are the Gypsy Moth, The English Sparrow, The Starling, The Walking Catfish, and The Monk Parrot.

### Marching Flamingos, Page 3

**FOLLOW-UP:** Have your students conduct some research into the habits and lifestyles of the flamingo. Have them seek the answer to this question: Why do you think the flamingo's bill is shaped in such an odd fashion?

### It's Your Lucky Day!, Page 4

**FOLLOW-UP:** We've presented this light view of some animal related superstitions so that the origins of these beliefs will become better known. As a follow-up to these three good and bad luck beliefs, you may want to have some of your students conduct an inquiry into other superstitions and beliefs. Why are red breasted robins sometimes viewed as both good and bad luck symbols? Why are owls thought of as being wise? Why are elephants attributed with having long memories? Why do people throw salt over their shoulders when they've spilled some salt? Your class will undoubtedly come up with more superstitions and beliefs for study.



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1 — "Wild And Free" — 18 x 24



2 — "Nothing Bugs Me" — 16 x 21



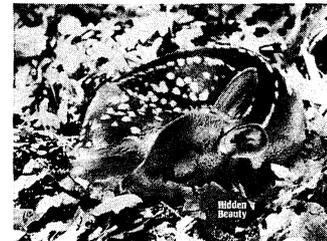
3 — "Let's Be Friends" — 18 x 24



4 — "A Friend Is Someone To Lean On" — 18 x 24



5 — "A New Day" — 16 x 20



6 — "Hidden Beauty" — 18 x 24

## -TALK IT OVER-

This poster has been issued just prior to the dawn of Spring throughout the U.S. because we would like you to post it and discuss it now. Every Spring young people find young birds, rabbits, and other wildlife that have wandered off from their nests or dens or fallen out of trees. If left alone, many of these young animals will become reunited with their parents. Some will be eaten by predatory birds, foxes, and the like. And, others will die of starvation. The young that die of starvation are few. Nature should be allowed to take its course. In addition, many of the young wild creatures that end up in our homes die for lack of proper care and food.

### BOOK REVIEW — My Puppy Is Born

As a follow-up to last month's poster showing

the birth of an antelope, this book by Joanna Cole with photos by Jerome Wexler will extend and expand your students' knowledge of the birth process.

Published by Morrow Junior Books, **My Puppy Is Born** uses photos to illustrate the birth of a dog. The story is told in a simple honest manner that even the youngest child can understand. Beginning with a pregnant dam, the book shows the sequence of birth, maternal assistance in removing the puppies from the embryo sac and cutting the umbilical cord. This is followed up with nursing and cleaning. Finally, the puppies learn to eat, walk, and play on their own. The narrator is a very young child to whom one of the puppies has been promised. It is a sensitive presentation that should appeal to all young readers and non-readers. \$4.25