

# Exotic Animals

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## 1. Question & Research Task

The word exotic means "foreign" or "not native," but when the word is used to describe pets, it refers to wild animals that are not normally considered pets. ([Exotic Pets](#))

Guinea pigs and iguanas are technically exotic animals, but it is not illegal for you to buy one at a pet store and keep it as a pet.

Monkeys, poisonous snakes, tigers, and alligators are examples of illegal exotic animals in the state of Maryland. People who own illegal exotic animals are breaking the law, can face an expensive fine, and have their animals taken away.

Owning illegal exotic animals can also be harmful to the animal's well being and hurt the environment.

**In this Slam Dunk, you will conduct brief, focused research to respond to the inquiry question:**



**Pythons are an invasive species to the Florida Everglades. Click the image to find out more about how the exotic pet trade has caused problem in the Everglades.**

Image taken from SIRS Discoverer, by subscription.

**Why are some exotic animals illegal to own as pets?**

## 2. Information Sources

Choose several of the information sources\* linked here to complete the Student Activity on Slide 3.

- [The Exotic Pet Trade](#): an article about the harmful effects of the exotic pet trade
- [Wild Pets](#): an article about whether wild animals should be kept as pets
- [Killer Pets](#): an article about whether wild animals should be kept as pets
- [This Lab is Like CSI for Wildlife](#): an article about a lab investigating crimes against wildlife
- [Wild Animals Make Terrible Pets](#): an article from National Geographic about the dangers of owning exotic animals.
- [Should Big Cats Be Kept As Pets?](#): an informational webpage by The Humane Society of the United States on Big Cats Public Safety Act.

For more resources, search the BCPS Digital Content Page on the [Apps Portal](#)

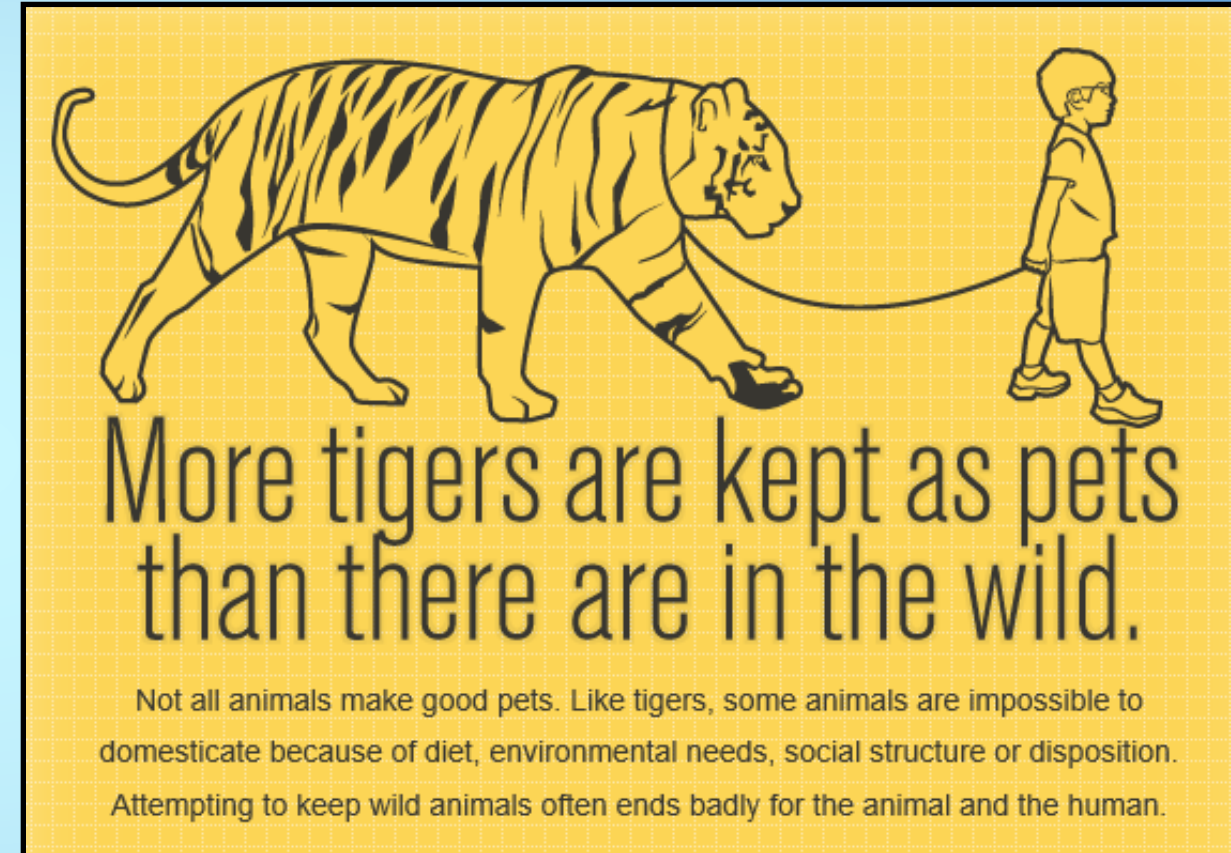


Image taken from [National Geographic](#).

\*If you are prompted to log in to access a database or digital content links, your teacher/librarian can provide login information.



### 3. Student Activity

Use the information sources on Slide 2 to gather notes about why owning some exotic animals is illegal.

Find information to answer these questions:

- 1) How could owning an illegal exotic animal be dangerous to both the owner and the animal?
- 2) Why have many states prohibited owning certain kinds of animals?
- 3) How do illegal exotic animals enter the United States?
- 4) Does owning illegal exotic animals have any environmental repercussions?
- 5) Are there any statistics that may show evidence as to why owning illegal exotic animals is harmful?

Download this Cornell Notes Sheet to gather and organize your research findings: [Cornell Notes Sheet](#)

**\*Ask your teacher if you prefer a paper Cornell Notes Sheet**



Select the image to read the article from National Geographic “Why You Should Never Release Exotic Pets into the Wild”, by Annie Roth.

Image Source: "[Fort Walton Beach Exotic Pet Amnesty Day](#)" by [MyFWC Florida Fish and Wildlife](#) is licensed under [CC BY-ND 2.0](#)

## 4. Assessment Activity

Use the information you have gathered on your Cornell Notes Sheet to educate your school community about why owning some exotic animals is illegal.

**Your PSA should state:**

- 1) Why owning some exotic animals is illegal.
  - 2) How owning an illegal exotic animal be dangerous to both the owner and the animal.
  - 3) What can be done, who can be contacted, if you discover illegal exotic animals in your community.
- Cite your information sources using a citation tool like [Noodletools](#) (found in the [Apps Portal](#)) and include a Works Cited list in your product.

**You could use these production tools to make your PSA:**

- Google Slides
- [Board Builder](#)
- [Voice Thread](#)
- Make a poster using paper and drawing materials

This rubric will be used to score your PSA: [PSA Rubric](#)



Select the image above to view a digital brochure from The Wild Cat Sanctuary about why owning wild animals as pets is harmful.

Image taken from [The Wild Cat Sanctuary](#).



## 5. Enrichment Activities



Select the image above to learn about the Caiman, a large reptile, closely related to the alligator that lives in Central and South America. Caimans are illegal exotic animals in the state of Maryland.

Image and content from [Worldbook](#).

Choose ONE animal that would be considered an illegal exotic animal in the state of Maryland. Consult the list of prohibited animals on the [Maryland Exotic Pet Laws](#) page to help choose your animal.

Create a [Discovery Education Board](#) about that animal. Include facts about the animal's appearance, diet, and natural habitat.

Also include information about how this exotic animal might enter the United States from its native country, and why it would be harmful for this animal to be taken out of its native environment and be kept as a pet.

Use the informational sources from [Discovery Education](#) and the BCPS Digital Content page found in the [Apps Portal](#) to help gather your information.

Use Cornell Notes Sheet to help gather your information.

# 6. Teacher Resources

## Learning Standards Alignment

### Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy

**Reading: 1.** Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

**Writing: 7.** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

**AASL Standards Framework for Learners** Inquire: Build new knowledge by inquiring, thinking critically, identifying problems, and developing strategies for solving problems.

Think: Learners display curiosity and initiative by:

I.A.2 Recalling prior and background knowledge as context for new meaning.

Create: Learners engage with new knowledge by following a process that includes:

I.B.1 Using evidence to investigate questions. I.B.3 Generating products that illustrate learning.

Share: Learners adapt, communicate, and exchange learning products with others in a cycle that includes:

I.C.1 Interacting with content presented by others.

Grow: Learners participate in an ongoing inquiry-based process by:

I.D.2 Engaging in sustained inquiry.

### P21 Framework: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Student Outcomes

**3. Information, Media & Technology Skills: Information Literacy:** Access information efficiently and effectively; Use information accurately and creatively for the issue or problem at hand.

**ICT Literacy:** Use technology as a tool to research, organize, evaluate and communicate information.

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## Grade 6, Language Arts – Unit 1

**Time Frame:** 1-2 class periods

### **Differentiation strategies for this lesson:**

- Have students use learning supports provided in BCPS Digital Content found in the [Apps Portal](#). Refer to [Digital Content Snapshot/Support pages](#) as needed.

### **Notes to the teacher:**

- Collaborate with your school library media specialist to plan and implement this lesson.
- Provide students with login information as needed to authenticate BCPS Digital Content. Login information is available on the **BCPS Digital Content** page found via the [Apps Portal](#)
- Review the [Maryland exotic pet laws](#). Discuss which animals are prohibited in the state of Maryland, which are allowed, why and why not.

Last updated: July 2022 Use this form to [Report Broken Links](#).

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