

HOW TO CREATE TEACHABLE MOMENTS FOR KIDS

A teachable moment is an unplanned, or intentionally placed, learning opportunity. These can happen anywhere and at anytime. They provide parents, guardians, and teachers the chance to help children learn new concepts and deepen their understanding of previously acquired knowledge. This can also be very useful when considering the design process as students can be more informed as they develop future iterations.

Parents, guardians and teachers have learned to watch for these moments. They listen and pay close attention ready to pounce with questions or thoughtful discussion at any time. We can create these moments especially when kids are working on a project or doing their homework by asking open ended questions. More importantly we need to be ready to explain and discuss the 'why' behind the child's answer and encourage them to research and dig deeper. This 'why' is the key to creating the teachable moment to better decode the world they live in.

Sometimes these questions and discussions can lead to questions that adults can't answer and this is the golden opportunity to model how to learn instead of what to learn! When you don't have the answer it gives kids the chance to learn alongside you: "That's a great question! Let's look it up together!" This builds confidence because it's ok that we don't always have all the answers. More importantly, it gives kids the sense of pride to learn that we are all life-long-learners.

ETHICAL ZOOS TEACHABLE MOMENT QUESTIONS

What is the natural habitat of the animal you are designing for? Create a diorama of the habitat.

What do they do for fun in the wild? Can you find a video of this? Record your observations as they live.

Set up your zoo space: What is the area and perimeter of the space needed for the animal?

Run some sample situations like time to eat, time to rest, and time to be and to help determine the probability of success for your space.

Animals and humans have cohabitated throughout history. Research animal domestication and zoos throughout history. How have zoos changed? How have household pets changed over time?

Mental health and wellbeing affect humans as well as animals. Research how animals positively affect human's mental health.

How could you share this information with others? Create a poster or video on this topic. How can humans affect the wellbeing of animals?

Does music have the same positive effects on animals that it has on humans? How could you test this?

How are zoos different around the world? What types of animals, how they are treated and cared for, etc.

Are some zoos doing better at treating animals than others? If so, what are they doing better?

Create a one-page handout that you could share with zoo staff explaining the importance of the ethical treatment of animals and spaces that can help with their wellbeing.

Create a brochure explaining why you designed the space the way you did. Could this be used to raise awareness about the importance of animal wellbeing?

Do some research on animal well being. Has this always been a concern for zoo animals? Record and share your findings.

Create a diagram of your space in action.

Explain how the human and the animal interact, and the safety and wellness features you've included for everyone involved especially the animals.

You loved learning about ethics and animals. What are the animal protection laws in your region? What rights should animals have? How can you help promote them?

