



Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Define the word “sanctuary.”
- Identify different ways people are trying to protect wildlife.
- Examine the differences between wild and companion animals.

Time Needed

20–45 minutes

Materials

- “Nikita’s New Home” worksheet
- Pictures of tigers in their natural habitat and in enclosures (optional)

Insider Tips

- When discussing animals and their reliance on their natural habitat, show photographs of wild animals in captivity versus in the wild.
- Before reading the story, show pictures of Nikita or another tiger. For older students, show pictures of the types of confinement faced by wild animals in roadside zoos.

Classroom Teachers

- Following the activity, arrange a field trip to an animal sanctuary where students can see how people who respect animals’ natural way of life treat the animals.

Outside Humane Educators

- Bring a list of local animal sanctuaries that students can visit with their schools or families.
- When students are comparing wild animals and companion animals, create a two-column chart with headings “Wild Animals” and “Companion Animals,” then add students’ answers in the appropriate columns.

Overview: Students will examine the interactions human beings have with wild animals and the consequences of such interactions. Through a nonfiction passage, students will learn about sanctuaries and the life of a tiger who was saved from a roadside zoo.

Procedure:

Introduction

Ask the students what the difference is between companion animals [*pets*] and wild animals. Then ask the students to list as many wild animals as they can.

- Highlight to the students that they will be learning about tigers.
- Emphasize that wild animals have many needs that are taken care of by their habitat, or home. This is different from companion animals who rely on people for their needs.

Nikita’s New Home

1. Read “Nikita’s New Home” story. Determine if reading the story individually, in pairs, in small groups, or together as an entire class will work best with your group of students.

Note: Nikita’s New Home is a true story.

2. As a group, answer the five “True/False” questions about the reading.

Sanctuaries

1. After answering all the questions, refocus the students’ attention to the word *sanctuary*. Ask the students if they think a *sanctuary* would be a nice place to live if they were animals.
2. Recall Nikita’s story and how she found a home at a sanctuary. Ask the students if they can think of other types of sanctuaries for animals. (Possible answers: chimpanzee sanctuaries; wolf sanctuaries; elephant sanctuaries; farm animal sanctuaries.)

Wrap Up:

1. Ask students what they think is the best place for a wild animal to live. (The wild)
2. Then ask the students if an animal is not living in the wild, what is the next best thing. (Sanctuary)



Name: _____

Date: _____

Nikita's New Home



Read.

Nikita did not grow up like a lot of tigers. She has never lived in a forest. She has never roamed free. For seven years she was owned by a man. This man used Nikita to make money. He let people take pictures with her. To keep Nikita still, he put chains on her. Nikita was very mistreated. Happily, Nikita was rescued by a group of people who care about animals.

Today Nikita has a new home. She lives in a place just for big cats. It is called a wildcat sanctuary. Nikita is safe there. She has room to roam. She is well cared for. Nikita will live there for the rest of her life.



IFAW and its members raised money to move Nikita to the The Wildcat Sanctuary in Minnesota. IFAW also moved another big cat, Tasha, who is a cougar.

Circle **true** or **false**.

1. Nikita grew up in the wild. true false
2. The wild is the best home for a tiger. true false
3. People who care about animals helped Nikita. true false
4. It is better to put chains on an animal than to let him or her roam free. true false
5. A wildcat sanctuary is a place for big cats to live. true false