



# Ethology and Inquiry

Using inquiry skills, explore the study of animal behavior and why it is important.

**Location in the Zoo:** Throughout the Zoo

**Materials:** Pencil

**Activity:** Studying an animal's behavior can provide scientists with valuable information which can aid in conservation efforts. **Ethology** is the study of animal behavior, and scientists use **ethograms** to help with this research.

Choose a species at the Zoo for your ethogram and choose one individual in that exhibit to observe.

**Species:** \_\_\_\_\_

Record a few initial observations about the animal's appearance and behavior.

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Are there behaviors that you predict are more or less common than others?

**More** \_\_\_\_\_ **Less** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*The ethogram and observation data sheet is located on the back. After you are done completing your data, answer the following conclusion questions.\*** 

What behavior occurred most often and least often? Is this different from what was predicted?

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What conclusions can be made about the animal's behaviors from your observations?

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How do you think this information can be used to aid in conservation efforts?

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# Ethogram and Observation Data Sheet

Choose one animal to observe for a total of 5 minutes. Every 15 seconds, record the behavior of your animal in the data sheet below. Have one person be a time keeper and the other record the observation.

\_\_\_\_\_ (species)

**Feeding**

The animal is eating food or drinking water. This includes chewing food.

**Social**

The animal is engaging in an interaction with another animal.

**Self-Groom**

The animal is engaging in grooming or other self-care activities.

**Active**

This is a behavior that the animal does on its own, such as running, playing, flying, walking or climbing.

**Inactive**

This is when the animal is sleeping, relaxing, or just sitting still not doing any other behavior.

**Not Visible**

The animal is off exhibit or you cannot see the animal you were observing.

**Other**

You see a behavior other than the ones described above.

Time	Feeding	Social	Self-Groom	Active	Inactive	Not Visible	Other
0:15							
0:30							
0:45							
1:00							
1:15							
1:30							
1:45							
2:00							
2:15							
2:30							
2:45							
3:00							
3:15							
3:30							
3:45							
4:00							
4:15							
4:30							
4:45							
5:00							
Total							