



## African Elephant Overpopulation Problem

### **Goal**

Students will understand the problems with elephant overpopulation through creative drama.

### **Objectives**

Upon completion of these lessons, students will be able to:

1. Identify at least five components of a watering hole environment in Addo Elephant National Park.
2. Act out an assigned role in the Addo environment.
3. Describe the problems caused by too many elephants.

### **Subject Areas**

Environmental Education

### **WI Standards**

Environmental Ed: A.4.3, A.4.4, B.4.4, B.4.6, C.4.1, C.4.2, C.4.3, C.4.4, C.4.5

### **Materials Needed**

Pictures of Addo Elephant National Park, large outdoor area, watering hole representation, paper, pencils

### **Introduction**

Students will have already seen pictures of South Africa, but this will be their first investigation into an environmental problem there.

## **Lesson Procedure**

1. Review with students some of the animals that could be seen at Addo. Also discuss the type of environment found there and the basic needs of the animals.
2. Give selected students the following roles:
  - a. Elephants – 2
  - b. Spekboom bush/tree – 4
  - c. Burchell’s Zebra – 2
  - d. Goshawks – 2
3. Ask students to mill about their habitat (the designated open area) while trying to supply their basic needs of food, water and space.
4. Stop students and celebrate the birth of a new elephant. Then continue the activity. Keep repeating the addition of more elephants, and occasionally the other animals, and ask students to discuss how successful they are at getting what they need to survive.
5. When all other students have become a part of the activity, some noticeable effects should take place: crowding at the watering hole, destruction of the trees and overall lack of space.
6. Discuss the cause of their problems and connect elephant overpopulation to the problem of white-tailed deer population in Wisconsin.
7. Have students begin thinking of different ways to control the population of elephants.

## **Assessment Ideas**

- 🌐 Journal entry about their reactions to having too many elephants, from the point of view of their character in the drama

## **Adaptations**

- 🌐 Recreate the drama and change the numbers – fewer elephants, more trees, etc
- 🌐 Have students wear tags to identify what their role is in the drama