

Do all species matter?

This puzzle comes from a book called, 'Just Think', by Philip West.

Each puzzle in the book starts with an argument between twins, Philip and Phoebe. They rarely agree on anything and always believe themselves to be correct.

From learning about the 4Cs, we know to be caring when our opinions differ. Read or listen to their argument, think about their disagreement, and make up your own mind.

Phoebe is concerned about species on the edge of extinction, like the Malayan Tiger and the Mountain Gorilla. The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) lists 19 of these, with many more also under threat.

'Look, Philip.' She shows him some of the latest figures for the decline of species worldwide. 'Isn't it terrible that we are killing off so many other forms of life? Surely, they have as much right to live on the planet as we do.'

But Philip is not convinced. 'Huh. I notice all the ones on the list are attractive and cuddly. You wouldn't get upset if slugs or scorpions were about to be wiped out, would you? And what about the Covid 19 virus? No one is up in arms because we are trying to eradicate that.'

'It isn't only because animals look nice, Philip,' Phoebe responds. 'All species have roles to play in their ecosystems. If we kill some off, who knows what damage we may do to ourselves in the long run.'

- **Should we be worried about species becoming extinct?**
- **Should we try and stop species becoming extinct?**
- **If there are several similar species in the world, does it matter if just one of them dies out?**
- **Is it ever right to cause human suffering to protect other species?**