



## Handout: How to Approach an Animal Correctly

### Introduction

Approaching animals correctly is essential to ensure their comfort and safety, as well as your own. By adopting appropriate techniques and body language, you can build trust and create positive interactions with animals.

### Approaching Animals

#### 1. Calm and Confident Approach

- **Approach Slowly:** Avoid sudden movements or loud noises that may startle the animal.
- **Speak Gently:** Use a calm and reassuring tone of voice to help the animal feel at ease.
- **Observe the Animal:** Assess the animal's body language and behaviour before approaching further.

#### 2. Respectful Distance

- **Give Space:** Respect the animal's personal space and avoid crowding.
- **Allow Choice:** Give the animal the option to approach you if it feels comfortable.
- **Avoid Direct Eye Contact:** Especially with unfamiliar animals, direct eye contact can be perceived as threatening.

#### 3. Consider Safety Measures

- **Safety Equipment:** Use appropriate safety equipment, such as gloves or protective gear, when handling certain animals.
- **Secure Environment:** Ensure the area is secure to prevent the animal from escaping or feeling trapped.

### Adopting Appropriate Body Posture and Language

#### 1. Smooth Movements

- **Gentle Movements:** Move smoothly and slowly to avoid startling the animal.
- **Avoid Sudden Actions:** Abrupt movements can trigger fear or aggression in some animals.

#### 2. Body Language

- **Non-threatening Posture:** Keep your body relaxed with neutral posture.
- **Avoid Stiffness:** Stiff posture or tense body language can signal aggression or fear to the animal.

#### 3. Reading Animal Cues

- **Watch for Signals:** Pay attention to the animal's body language for signs of comfort or distress.
- **Adjust Approach:** If the animal shows signs of fear or aggression, slowly back away and give it space.

**Worksheet: Applying Safe Approaches to Animals****Instructions:**

1. **Scenario Analysis:** Read each scenario and determine the appropriate approach to safely interact with the animal. Explain your reasoning based on the principles discussed.
  - a. **Scenario 1:** You encounter a stray dog in the park. The dog is sitting quietly under a tree, looking around.
    - **Approach:**
    - **Explanation:**
  
2. b. **Scenario 2:** You need to handle a rabbit in a petting zoo. The rabbit is hopping around its enclosure.
  - **Approach:**
  - **Explanation:**
  
3. c. **Scenario 3:** There is a cat hiding under a car in a parking lot. The cat is hissing and has its ears flattened.
  - **Approach:**
  - **Explanation:**
  
4. **Observational Exercise:** Observe a video or a live interaction with an animal. Note down the following:
  - **Approach Taken:**
  - **Body Language and Posture:**
  - **Response of the Animal:**
  - **Reflection:**
  
5. **Reflection:** Write a brief reflection on why it is important to approach animals correctly and the impact it can have on their behaviour and well-being.