



# THINK ABOUT IT

African poaching and its problems



## GRADES 5-7

### KEY WORDS

- poaching
- ivory

### STANDARDS

- SCI.6.3.1
- SCI.6.3.2
- SCI.6.3.3
- SS.7.1.17
- SS.7.3.10
- SS.7.3.14

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about how African poaching affects the environment.
- Students will work to solve many of the problems African poaching creates.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Many African animals are endangered, some almost to the point of extinction.
- The animals are endangered for many reasons. Elephants are killed for their ivory tusks, which are often carved and made into jewelry.
- This illegal killing is called *poaching*.
- In recent years, poaching has declined, but it still remains a threat to elephants.

### PROCEDURE

- Solving problems like poaching is a complex task. Ask your students to read or role play the situations on the student handout.
- Have students answer the questions at the bottom of the page individually or in small groups.

### RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT

- Students can present their plan for solving African poaching, along with some criticisms they have for improvement of their plan.

### EXTENSIONS

- Students will write a scenario for another actor in this situation, such as the poacher “middleman” or an American institution that wants to promote elephant conservation like a zoo.





# THINK ABOUT IT

African Poaching



Name \_\_\_\_\_

## AFRICAN FARMER

My family is poor. I can barely raise enough crops to feed my wife and children. Money is hard to come by. Sometimes I can sell extra eggs from my chickens or get a little work in town, but even then I only earn \$300-\$400 a year. We use this money for seed and clothing. When my children are sick, it's nice to have extra money for medicine. Recently, a man told me that he would pay me \$500 for a set of elephant tusks! Imagine, more than I can earn in one year would be paid to me if I can kill an elephant. Just think how happy my children would be. We could buy milk and meat to keep them healthy! Maybe even a toy for them to play with!

## AFRICAN WILDLIFE OFFICIAL

We must stop illegal hunting at all costs. If we allow just one elephant to be killed, that is too many. I am asking the government to enact stronger laws to protect the elephants and other game animals. The poacher may make a few hundred dollars, but it is the ivory dealer who can make thousands of dollars selling this ivory illegally. The elephant is a powerful symbol of the African savannah. They are unique and beautiful. We must protect them at all costs.

## AMERICAN TOURIST

My dream is to take a trip to Africa and see all the beautiful wildlife of the savannah. I know that a trip like this costs a lot of money, but I am willing to spend it to see these awesome animals in the wild. But I want to go soon, before all the animals become extinct. Elephants are my favorite. If there were no more elephants, I don't think I would bother going to Africa.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Would you be willing to go without toys, food, or medicine to save an endangered species?
- Who should get the money spent by tourists in Africa's national parks?
- Who should receive the greater punishment—the poacher or the dealer (middleman)?
- Based on the information you just heard, how would you solve the problem of elephant poaching?
- Who benefits the most from your proposal? Do you think it is fair to everyone?
- What other solutions can you suggest?
- Can you give examples of other situations that have occurred near your home that were similar to this one? What were the results?

