

# Human Population Growth

<b>Background</b>	To talk about population size without discussing human population numbers is to ignore “the elephant in the living room.” In addition, human population resembles the “800-pound gorilla” since its massiveness impacts all other environmental problems.
<b>Goal</b>	The aim of this lesson is to give students the opportunity to visualize the impact of human population growth.
<b>Before Your Visit</b>	<p>Obtain a copy of the video, “Human Population Growth,” by Zero Population Growth. You can get this video and other population-related resources by visiting <a href="http://www.populationeducation.org/index.jsp">www.populationeducation.org/index.jsp</a></p> <p>Show the video “Human Population Growth.” This video shows growth of the human population from the year 1 A.D. projected to the year 2020. It is shown by adding white dots to a map of the world, with each dot representing one million humans. It is stunning and thought-provoking and will stimulate discussion.</p> <p>Lead a class discussion afterward. Possible questions: What did the sound represent? What was surprising about the video? Did you notice dots disappearing in the plague years? Where? Which areas did not fill up? Why?</p> <p><b>Assignment #1:</b> Have students imagine living in Santa Rosa in the future when the population is double its current size. What kind of house might they have? What resources might be in short supply? How would shortages be handled? What would transportation be like? Ask them to write a journal entry, a news interview, a short story or a letter to a friend set in that future time. Imaginative, humane solutions to problems are welcome!</p> <p><b>Assignment #2:</b> Have students choose a species that is present in Safari West and create a list of questions to ask the naturalist. For example: If a gazelle population at Safari West doubles in number, how will that impact the other animals in the park? How would it impact the plants? Has the human population size in that gazelle’s native habitat had an impact on it?</p>
<b>Materials to Bring</b>	Students should bring their questions, a clipboard and paper (or a binder) and a pencil.
<b>At Safari West</b>	Students talk with the naturalist and make observations on ways their chosen animal can impact the environment. Students take notes on their chosen animal species, including relevant observations and comments from the naturalist.
<b>Back in the Classroom</b>	Ask students to discuss what the topic of human population has to do with the world’s wildlife? This would be a good time to refer to the limiting factors curve shown in Lesson 6-8.5 – Keeping Track of Numbers. Have students devise ways to mitigate some of the negative impacts on wildlife and present their ideas through writing, artwork or a skit.



