# Build a Zoo!

This activity will be an introduction to aid students with the concepts of scarcity and choice.

**Prior to class:**

Print a handout for each student.

Depending on the size of the class, set up groups of 3 to 5.

**In class**

* Tell students that they will build a zoo.
* Explain that the grid sheet is set up with squares that represent ½ acre each.
* Each group is told they have 20 acres to use.
* Each exhibit takes up a certain number of acres as noted on the handout.
* Each group will decide what animals and areas will be used to set up their zoo.

**Debriefing**

* Students will share their choices and explain how the choices were made
* Ask why they did not choose every type of exhibit (scarcity)?
* Ask why they did not just have a zoo full of predators or primates (diminishing marginal utility)?
* Ask why they chose one exhibit over another (cost vs. benefit)?
* Ask what was the last exhibit to make the cut (marginal analysis)?[1](#_bookmark0)

1 If the students have not already had microeconomics, you can quickly explain the concepts of diminishing marginal utility and weighing the marginal benefit against the marginal cost.

# Activity 1.1: Build a Zoo!

**HANDOUT**

Date \_ Group Members

Each exhibit requires the following units of land (20 acres included in total). Choose from the following and fill in the grid provided.

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| Elephants – 3 acres | Howler monkeys – ½ acre |
| Lions – 1 acre | Grizzly bears - 1 ½ acres |
| Polar bears –1 ½ acres | Reptile house – 1 acre |
| Tigers – 1 acre | Orangutans – 1 acre |
| Giraffes – 2 acre | Hippos - ½ acre |
| Ostriches – ½ acre | Playground – ¼ acre |
| Zebras – 1 acre | Gorillas – 2 acres |
| Llamas – 1 acre | White rhinos – 1 acre |
| Kangaroos – ½ acre | Lake with waterfowl and flamingos –3 acres |
| Petting zoo – ½ acre | Picnic area – 1 acre |
| Gift shop – ¼ acre | Wolves – 2 acres |
| Jaguar – ½ acre | Restaurant– ½ acre |
| Insect exhibit – ¼ acre | Climbing wall – ½ acre |

(Each square = ½ acre)

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