

## **Do animals have emotions?**

The question of 'do animals have emotions?' is an important subject as emotions define who we are and what we do in a certain situations. It is clear that these days, in humans, that emotions play a vital role in rational decision-making, perception, learning and a variety of other cognitive emotions. So if this is the case for humans, why not for animals? [1] Emotions can be defined as a conscious mental reaction subjectively experienced as a strong feeling; usually directed toward an object and typically alongside physiological and behavioral changes in the body. I will be exploring if different animals have different emotions, also how they express their feeling towards each other and how they learn from this.

Do non-human animals such as cats, dogs, and chimpanzees have emotions like sadness, happiness, anger and fear? What kind of reasoning is required to justify the judgement that animals have emotions? We all know that if you have a pet dog or cat that stroking them and giving them attention makes them excitable and happy,[1] but is that just a natural instinct or an emotional act? It is generally agreed by scientists that animals have emotional responses such as increased heart rate or release of hormones in the blood however, the issue of whether animals actually feel emotions remains controversial. This is because it is actually impossible to get into another animals minds, as it is to get inside another persons head. A range of emotions have been investigated in a number of animals including dogs, sheep, cows and whales.

### **Studies and research**

[2]Researchers studying young bonobos in an African sanctuary have found distinct similarities between the emotional development of the bonobos and that of children, this denotes that these great apes have similar thought systems as human beings. This is very important to human evolutionary history as it shows the socio-emotional framework commonly done to children works equally well for apes. Using this, researchers can test predictions of great ape behaviour and, as in the case of this study, confirm humans and apes share many areas of emotional functions, such a empathy and happiness.

Many people think that empathy is a special emotion only expressed by human beings, but many animals show empathy for each other. There are stories of elephants finding people who were lost. In one case, an old women who couldn't see well was found the next day with elephants surrounding her. They had encased her in a cage made up of branches to protect her from hyenas. This

shows that animals do show empathy for each other as well as other animals such as humans to help to protect them from predators.

[4] Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feeling of another. There is an emotional channel which involves body language. There is also a cognitive channel which involves self-other distinction. Most animals have these and understand and feel empathy for each other. If animals have empathy then why not all the other emotions that allow them to feel for each other for example happiness and sadness.

### **For**

[4] On the other hand, if an animal has an emotion such as anger, how does it express this without speaking and telling us what's wrong. Well when, for example, your dog has had a feeling of pain when you have accidentally stepped on its tail it yelps and puts its tail between its legs. This is arguably a way a dog communicates with you about how they are feeling as they immediately do an action to suggest to us that they have that feeling of hurt. Also when you are sad or upset about a certain situation, your dog tends to come up to you and nestle their nose into your lap to attempt to make you feel better and happier again.

[Source from a website] On the subject of pain, there was a story a few decades ago, July 1932, about a rhesus monkey who 'committed suicide' by hanging. He was seen gnawing at a piece of rope, tying one end to a tree branch and the other end he made a noose. There is a large debate whether this was on purpose or by accident. If it was intended to happen then was this monkey depressed? And if so was it depressed about being kept in captivity. Yet no one had any idea of his state of mind at the time. This is another example of many different occasions when animals have felt captivated and uncomfortable in their environment.

### **Against**

[3] Some might say that animals don't have emotions as they can't communicate them clearly with us. For example insects, arachnids and crustaceans don't feel any type of emotion. They don't show any signs of fear or pain. This is just down to the fact that their brain is too simple to hold this information. I believe that these animals have emotions to an extent but not to the same level as us i.e. they have basic emotions such as anger, and happiness but they don't have the more complex emotions such as grief, regret and jealousy. This is because they don't

need to have these emotions in their lifestyle. Insects such as ants don't need to have these as they can't communicate it verbally to one another, also their main concerns is survival and breeding.

Furthermore, reptiles share the same amount on emotions as insects, arachnids and crustaceans, but with some more complex emotions. I believe that this species also don't have the same amount of complex emotions that humans have though. They do have one up from insects etc, as some believe that reptiles such as lizards have the emotion of love. This is because they can recognise their owner, if they are in captivity, when they are giving them food or treats, this often leads to a bond and gives the reptiles pleasure. On the contrary, snakes often hiss when they feel threatened or if their 'personal space' has been invaded. This shows they also have emotions as they get angry and defensive. Moreover, reptiles when they are with their young in the nest, they make grunts to each other to communicate, some could argue that this shows affection or concern for the offspring.

In conclusion, I believe that animals such as mammals do have emotions as they can communicate some of them without using verbal communication, but in other various ways such as a wag of a tail or a simple act of kindness like protecting a different species from predators. On the other hand, animals such as reptiles and insects don't have emotions as such but have a key goal in life such a survival and don't need to withhold information such as emotions in their mind as they are not as intricate and developed of that of humans and mammals.

### Bibliography

[1]"Do Animals Have Emotions? A Debate." Psychology Today. Sussex Publishers. Web. 19 Jan. 2019.

[2]"Young Apes Manage Emotions like Humans Do." ScienceDaily. ScienceDaily, 14 Oct. 2013. Web. 02 Feb. 2019.

[3] Goldman, Jason G. "I'll Bee There for You: Do Insects Feel Emotions?" Scientific American. 30 Sept. 2016. Web. 04 May 2019

[4] "Yes, Animals Think And Feel. Here's How We Know." National Geographic. National Geographic Society, 15 July 2015. Web. 02 Mar. 2019

## STUDENT RECORD AND MARKING GRID

Grade 7 – 9	An impressively managed project, showing commitment and dedication throughout, with a clearly focused aim and careful thought about the choice of question. Sources are analysed carefully (not simply summarized) in connection with the chosen question. Sources are carefully and fully referenced and the bibliography is complete. The student shows care in their choice of sources and uses a good range (10 – 12; not simply easy to access websites but sources with good academic content). They explain the background to the question and summarize arguments for and against in a clear, logical manner. They state a clear conclusion which can be defended using the evidence provided.
Grades 4 – 6	Project management is reasonable, with some degree of commitment shown. There is a reasonably clear aim and some thought goes into the choice of question. There is some analysis of source material and it is largely relevant to their chosen question. There is a reasonable range of sources (7 – 9) and some of these have some reasonable academic content. The project includes some background and presentation of arguments for and against. There is a reasonably clear conclusion
Grades 1 – 3	There is some evidence of project management and a limited degree of commitment is shown. An aim for the project is discernible and a question is chosen. Most of the source material is collated rather than analysed and some of it is not useful or relevant to the chosen question. The source range is modest (3 – 6 sources) and the sources tend to be easy to access website with only limited academic content. There is some presentation of arguments and a conclusion is given.

<b>TOTAL MARK AWARDED</b>	7
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**Supporting evidence (Drawn from written evidence submitted, creative work and judgements based on oral presentations.)**

Source range a little limited but well referenced  
 Nice analysis  
 Work done with commitment and dedication  
 Good - though brief - bibliography  
 Arguments for and against and clear conclusion.  
 Interesting topic.