Baby rhino born at Chester Zoo

LEVEL A2/B1


Photo: Robbie Cheadle / Unsplash

I. WARM-UP

1. What baby animal video do you love to watch?
2. Would you like to visit a big zoo or a wildlife park? Why?
3. What animals from India or Nepal do you know?

II. KEY VOCABULARY

- **calf**
  A baby cow or rhino.
- **enclosure**
  A safe area with fences or walls where zoo animals live.
- **conservation**
  Actions that protect nature, animals and their homes.
- **species**
  A group of animals or plants that are the same kind.
- **vulnerable**
  At risk of harm or in danger of disappearing.
- **habitat**
  The natural place where an animal or plant lives.
- **breeding**
  Helping animals have babies to grow a population.
- **protect**
  To keep someone or something safe from ha

III. READING

A rare greater one-horned rhinoceros calf was born at Chester Zoo in Cheshire. Keepers shared a video of the newborn taking its first steps beside its 19-year-old mother, Asha, in their enclosure. Staff said both rhinos are healthy after a pregnancy of 15 months.

The birth is part of a Europe-wide conservation breeding programme at the zoo. Tom Garland from the rhino team said a new calf is always exciting. The zoo said each birth helps keep the species healthy and diverse.

Around 4,000 greater one-horned rhinos live in the wild, mostly in the wetlands, forests and grasslands of India and Nepal. The species was pushed close to extinction in the early 1900s by habitat loss and hunting. It is still vulnerable today. These rhinos still need people to protect them.

Reading text adapted from reporting by **BBC News:** *"Rare baby rhino takes first steps". Original article linked at* theenglishwire.com.

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Where was the baby rhino born?
2. What is the mother's name and age?
3. How long was the mother pregnant?
4. About how many greater one-horned rhinos live in the wild?
5. Why is the Europe-wide breeding programme important?

V. DISCUSSION

1. Would you like to see a rhino in real life? Why?
2. Which zoo or nature park animal interests you most?
3. What are two simple ways teens can help protect wildlife?
4. Should zoos focus more on conservation or on shows? Why?



VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Subject & object questions

Subject questions ask about the doer: no do/does/did; Who/What + verb. Object questions ask about the receiver: use do/does/did + subject + verb.

*"**Who took** the video of the calf?"*

*"Who **did the keepers help** during the birth?"*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Circle the correct option in each sentence.

1. Who (looks / does look) after Asha and her calf? _____
2. What (the video showed / did the video show)? _____
3. What (put / did put) the species in danger? _____
4. Who (did give / gave) birth to the calf? _____
5. Who (staff did support / did staff support) at the zoo? _____

Teacher's Notes

TEACHERS ONLY

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.



Photo: Robbie Cheadle / Unsplash

I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8 minutes warm-up, 8–10 minutes vocabulary, 10–12 minutes reading, 8 minutes comprehension, 10 minutes discussion. Fold grammar into reading/comprehension if needed.
- Pre-teach or check: rhino, calf, enclosure, species, conservation, vulnerable. Use two quick images (Asha, a habitat map) to anchor meaning and drill pronunciation.
- Run the reading for gist first (Who? Where? What happened?), then scan for numbers, names and places. The story mentions hunting and protection; keep discussion on conservation choices and let students answer about the news rather than personal experiences if they prefer.
- Differentiation: stronger students write a 2–3 sentence news update; others highlight key facts (name, place, numbers) and share in pairs. Finish with a quick class vote: Which fact was most surprising?

II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Take a quick show of hands, then ask two students with different views to give a reason each.
2. Have students choose an animal, share one fact and one question in pairs before open class.
3. Board verbs like recycle, plant, donate, share online. Push for two concrete actions per pair.
4. Split the room: conservation vs shows. After 2 minutes, swap sides and argue the other view.

III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Writing: In pairs, write a 60-word social post from the zoo announcing the calf and why it matters.

Research: In small groups, find three facts about the greater one-horned rhino's habitat and share in 1 minute.

IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

Comprehension questions: short factual answers from the text.

Grammar exercise: Subject & object questions

Discussion: open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

Answer Key

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IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Where was the baby rhino born?
   At Chester Zoo in Cheshire.
2. What is the mother's name and age?
   Her name is Asha and she is 19 years old.
3. How long was the mother pregnant?
   For 15 months.
4. About how many greater one-horned rhinos live in the wild?
   Around 4,000.
5. Why is the Europe-wide breeding programme important?
   Each birth helps keep the species healthy and diverse.

V. DISCUSSION

Open answers. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Circle the correct option in each sentence.

1. Who (looks / does look) after Asha and her calf? **looks**
2. What (the video showed / did the video show)? **did the video show**
3. What (put / did put) the species in danger? **put**
4. Who (did give / gave) birth to the calf? **gave**
5. Who (staff did support / did staff support) at the zoo? **did staff support**

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Key point: Subject questions ask about the doer: no do/does/did; Who/What + verb. Object questions ask about the receiver: use do/does/did + subject + verb. (Examples constructed.)

*"**Who took** the video of the calf?"*

*"Who **did the keepers help** during the birth?"*