

# "Green Immersion"

## Magdeburg's Bilingual Zoo-Kindergarten



ZOOLOGISCHER GARTEN  
MAGDEBURG

Suzanne Akerman  
Shannon Thomas

# The preschool



- Zoo Kindergarten Children's House e.V. Magdeburg
  - August 2008



- Vogelgesang Park



# The team



**Director: Jaklin Isensee**

**German speaking educators:**

- Kathleen Schladitz
  - immersion teaching in France
- Viola Krebs
  - intercultural experience



**English speaking educators:**

- Diana Lawrence
  - immersion teaching in China
- Suzanne Akerman
  - zoo education experience



**ELIAS Project participants:**

- Lydia Gerlich (no photo)
  - student research assistant
- Shannon Thomas
  - immersion teaching in South Korea



# The zoo



## Zoologischer Garten Magdeburg:



# Our mission

“To experience the zoo with children means to learn with the mind, heart and hand. Animals can wake up emotions and improve cognitive and communicative abilities of the children – who as a consequence – are stimulated to communicate their ideas and feelings with open-hearted enthusiasm.”

**Jaklin Isensee**



“Let’s be honest you, me, our generation, we are a hopeless case that can’t be helped any more. But with today’s children, we can still achieve something. Here the preservers of our environment are born!”

**Dr. Kai Perret**



# Our goals

- Fostering environmental awareness in young children
- Setting the foundation for bilingual abilities
- Increasing young children's intercultural awareness



# Our goals in action



## A lesson from conception to completion

➤ Teaching in the classroom

### Morning Circle

- song time
- new English vocabulary
- new environmental concept
- in-class reinforcement through either crafts or games

➤ Reinforcing the morning circle lesson in the zoo



“Behavioral enrichments”

# Our goals in action

## ➤ Materials we use for greater understanding



crafts



weekly zoo visits



real photos



flash cards



video clips



# Our goals in action

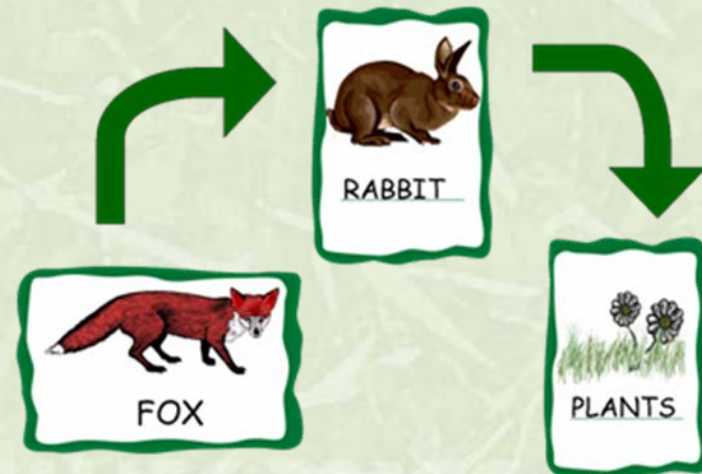
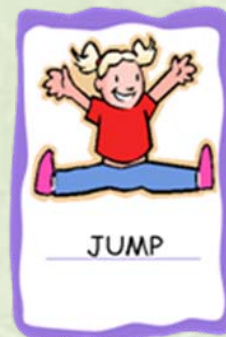


## ➤ Facilitating children's comprehension

Teaching environmental concepts in the first language

VS

Teaching environmental concepts in the second language



Our planning motto:

Teach the basics first, then the concept

# Our goals in action



- Another difference between what we do at the zoo kindergarten and zoo education in general is that our target audience falls within a very specific age range.
- Many environmental topics are very complex, requiring mental scaffolding.
- Our age group requires the basic building blocks to become the foundation for environmental learning.
- To construct this foundation we base our lessons on the cognitive development and abilities of children ages 5 and below.
- Our older children are already capable of linguistic taxonomy in their first language.
- Whereas the younger children have yet to develop that ability..
- To maximize the learning potential of each group we create 2 sequences of lessons based on the same environmental theme.

# The end



Tail  
end



Go ahead



Give us a hand



# [www.elias.bilikita.org](http://www.elias.bilikita.org)



**The ELIAS project has been funded with support from the European Commission.**

**Disclaimer:** This product reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

© Early Language and Intercultural Acquisition Studies 