

## Attorney for the Defense of an Endangered Animal

1. **Content Area:** Science
2. **Grade Band:** 5-7
3. **State Standard:** Life Science - Students know and understand the characteristics and structure of living things, the processes of life, and how living things interact with each other and their environment.
4. **Learning Objective:** Students will produce an argument about how an animal is protected by the ESA and how that protection needs to continue.
5. **Description of Activity:** Students will defend an animal's inclusion on the Endangered Species Act to a jury of their peers (classmates). Students may call witnesses during their defense (team members).
6. **Duration:** 60-120 minutes
7. **Location:** Classroom (follow up to Refuge field trip)
8. **Activity Preparation:** Read and discuss the Endangered Species Act. There are many websites for kids online that explain the endangered species act and the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service for older students, such as <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/endangered-species-act> or <https://www.fws.gov/species>
9. **Materials Needed:** Access to computers or library
10. **Step-by-Step Instructions:**
  - A. Show a courtroom scene from a TV show like *Law and Order* and have students define what a defense attorney does.
  - B. Preview the following vocabulary terms prior to students beginning their work:
    - Endangered
    - Species
    - Threatened
    - Habitat
    - Conservation
  - C. Divide students into groups, or allow students to work individually. Each group will pick an animal that is endangered and research why the animal is threatened.
  - D. After the presentations, the class can discuss if the laws are actually working to protect animals and their habitats.