This app builds on children’s innate fascination with animals (Melson, 2001). According to the biophilia hypothesis (Kellert, 2005; Wilson, 1984), humans have evolved with other life forms resulting in human attentiveness to living beings, especially animals. Research suggests that some of the earliest words that a very young child learns are the names for animals. A researcher, Gene Myers, spent a year in a preschool classroom closely observing young children as they encountered a variety of “visiting” and “resident” animals. He found many examples of this biophilia, documenting how children were drawn to these animals and in their fascination, were learning about the characteristics and needs of other species (Myers, 2007).

The concept of biophilia, as well as research documenting children’s fascination with animals, suggest that children will find an app about wild animals appealing and fun, regardless of the other benefits the app might provide. Most apps show cartoon animals and not real wild animals. Most media, such as children’s books, videos, and websites, focus on pets and domesticated or farm animals. Wild animals, defined as those animals who are not pets or domesticated farm animals, may live in the wild, in their natural habitat, or be found in zoos, nature parks, or aquariums. The vividness, accuracy, and immediacy of these striking images bring wild animals closer to the child. Since educational research shows (DeCorte, 2011) that children learn best when they are motivated and intrinsically interested in a subject, learning through engagement with animals is a natural.

In addition, the type of learning matters. When children can be self-directed and interactive, they learn more. For young children particularly, learning occurs through play and through engaging in a non-directive, non-didactic way. This has been called variously “discovery learning,” “experiential learning,” (Palmberg, & Kuru, 2000) and “free-choice learning” (Falk, & Dierking, 2002). Whatever the terms, they all mean that when children engage and experience, they learn. According to guidelines for “best practises” in early childhood education (www.naeyc.org), learning should be interactive, active, constructive and play-based. In an extensive review of educational studies, DeCorte (2011) showed that competence in many areas, including reading and math, is best achieved when chil-
4) In early childhood, the development of empathy and perspective-taking is key to good social relationships with other children and adults, as well as school-related learning. Empathy refers to the ability to experience the feelings of another, while perspective-taking is broader, including the ability to perceive the world from the vantage point of another. Engaging with animals, wild and domestic, can be a tool to develop empathy and perspective-taking, since an animal’s needs are clearly different from that of the child. Research shows that children as young as three years of age have a solid grasp of what animals need (Myers, Saunders, & Garrett, 2004). In this app, interactive games specifically target the development of perspective-taking and empathy.

5) Our children are the future stewards of our planet. They will be in charge of protecting wild animals and their habitats. Research (Berenguer, 2010) shows that when empathy toward wild animals is encouraged, people develop a heightened sense of the need for environmental protection. Although this research tested adults, not children, it suggests that starting to build empathy toward wild animals early, may pay off throughout adulthood.

References:


VIRRY app may be enriched by including other activities and materials as part of the child’s experience. Here are some helpful resources:

### Websites:

- [www.allianceforchildhood.org](http://www.allianceforchildhood.org) (for resources related to play with young children);
- [www.rootsandshoots.org](http://www.rootsandshoots.org) (Jane Goodall’s program for environmental education);
- [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org) (The National Association for the Education of Young Children, the major professional association for early childhood educators).

### Books for parents and teachers:


### Children’s books and educational DVDs:

- **MEERKATS** National Geographic Readers: *Meerkats*, by Laura Marsh.
- **GIRAFFES** *A Giraffe Book for Kids* by Maura Kempa.
- **LIONS** Lions Picture Book for Kids: Fun Facts and Pictures about Lions by Torben Hansen.
- **RHINOS** *Rhino: Amazing Photos and Fun Facts Book about Rhinos for Kids* by Caroline Novsk.

### National Geographic Kids Animal Jam. An educational video game that teaches facts about animals.

### Activities for children:

Adaptable for small groups of children (classroom) or for an adult with one or two children (parent and child), including but not limited to: arts projects, pretend play (dress up like a tiger), building projects (blocks, legos), outdoor play activities (treasure hunt for [pretend] tiger food); animal figures (see Learning Resources: Jumbo Jungle Animals); live animals, such as lizards, hedgehogs, rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters, birds—often kept in homes as pets, but also as resident or “visiting” pets in preschool classrooms.

These activities promote multiple skills important in early childhood education. For example, setting up a pretend jungle, with children dressing up as animals, can build empathy, promote creativity, enhance curiosity, and further connect children to wild animals and their habitats.
Get Virry VR, Simulation game for PS4 console from the official PlayStation website. Explore Virry VR game detail, demo, images, videos, reviews. Virry VR is the ultimate virtual safari. Head to the African savannah to play with wild animals in their natural habitats. Filmed on location in 4K VR, Virry takes you so close to real animals, you can practically feel their breath on your neck. Play 3 ways: Live-Action Interactive Experiences. International Undergraduate Scholarships, Master Scholarships, PhD Scholarships for Developing Countries. Home. About. 15+ Tuition Fee Scholarships offered by Universities for International Students. Last updated: 08 Apr 2019. ©iStock.com/alexsl. While there are tuition free universities, there are also universities that offer tuition fee scholarships for excellent international students. Scholarships in the form of full or partial tuition fee waivers are the most common international scholarships offered by Universities.