

Chimpanzee Behavior – Nature vs. Nurture (Answers)



Consider the difference between an instinctive and learned behavior. Think about things that are taught and what you do naturally without instruction. The table lists both chimpanzee and human traits (we share a lot!). For each items on the table put a check mark in the “instinctive” or “learned” columns.

Behavior – the way an animal acts

Instinctive behavior – inherited behavior that a species doesn't have to learn to do

Learned behavior – a behavior learned by experience

Behavior	Instinctive	Learned
Crying	●	
Sleeping	●	
Climbing Trees		●
Yawning	●	
Using Tools		●
Communicating		●
Reading		●
Grooming		●
Breathing		●
Eating	●	



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Chimpanzee Behavior – Discussion Questions (Answers)



1. What is the difference between instinctual and learned behaviors? How are chimpanzees different than some other species?

Instinctual vs. Learned Behavior

- Instinctive behavior is inherited behavior that a species doesn't have to learn to do
- Learned behavior is behavior learned by experience

Chimpanzees vs. Other Species

- Larger and smarter than some species
- They use tools
- They can't swim

2. How do you think the behaviors in Flora's group would differ depending on the weather, the group make up, and the time of day?

- Examples may include that they may seek shelter depending on weather, they would act different if the alpha was different, they may be sleepy or less active depending on the time and temperature, etc.

3. Why is it important to study the behavior of chimpanzees?

- Can teach us more about human origins
- Learn how to protect the endangered species
- Learn about the species' significance to the population
- Learn more about them in relation to other primates and mammals
- Learn how to improve their quality of life at Chimp Haven

4. How can you use observational methodology in your day to day life?

- Encourage creativity!
- Examples may include modifying behavior based on observations, learning more about other humans and animals around you, recognizing patterns, etc.



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