

My Life with the Chimpanzees Study Guide

My Life with the Chimpanzees by Jane Goodall

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Plot Summary

My Life with the Chimpanzees is a book for young adults that tells the story of Jane Goodall's rise to become one of the world's great ethologists and the world's expert on chimpanzee behavior in the wild. Goodall is still known across the world as the first scientist who studied chimpanzees in their natural habitat and has won many awards for her work. She has also produced a large number of books and a larger number of documentaries that have been seen all over the world. The pages of *My Life with The Chimpanzees* make the legend of Jane Goodall a more concrete reality. One of the points of the book is to make Goodall's work accessible to children and young adults that have similar interests in the animal world.

My Life with the Chimpanzees has nine short chapters. Chapter 1 introduces Goodall to the reader but focuses mostly on the study of ethology, explaining to her reader what her field is all about and how it was founded and developed. Goodall explains that animal behavior may be studied and that ethologists are those who study that behavior. She also describes her occupation. She spends about a third of the year in Gombe National Park in Tanzania, Africa and has been doing so since 1960 with her field staff.

The next seven chapters describe how Goodall rose to this position. Early on, Goodall was fascinated by animals, though she was not as focused on chimpanzees until later in life. Goodall was born in England just before World War II and grew up in the post-war period. When she was an adolescent she decided that she would study animals in Africa and after college she was able to visit Africa for three weeks with a friend. While she was in Africa, she had the opportunity to meet the great paleontologist Louis Leakey, who became her adviser and teacher. He would later secure funding for her early research. Goodall explains that it was initially physically and socially difficult to live in Africa at first but her first few weeks gave her enough excitement observing chimpanzees to keep going.

As the book progresses, the reader is introduced to a number of chimpanzees, including the first chimp Goodall met, David Greybeard, and the female-alpha she observed for years, Old Flo. Flo's children, among them Figan, Fifi and Flint, are all discussed in the book as well. Goodall focuses on their unique personalities and explains the social structure of the chimpanzee troop that they were members of. Goodall sometimes discusses her personal life, such as her first marriage to a documentary filmmaker, Hugo van Lawick and the birth and youth of their son, Hugo Eric Louis or "Grub." After Hugo and Goodall divorced, Goodall married again this time to Derek Bryceson, the director of Tanzania National Park, who was partially paralyzed and died soon afterwards.

Despite some tragedies in her life, Goodall judges herself to be happy. She encourages the reader to pursue the study of animals, if he is so inclined. Even if he is not interested, Goodall suggests ways in which the reader can help protect animals in his local community.

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary and Analysis

For as long as she could remember, Jane Goodall was interested in animals and wanted to learn more about them. When she grew up she became an ethologist, someone who studies animal behavior; she followed the creator of the field, an Austrian named Konrad Lorenz, who started his work in 1935 and was still living when the book was written. He studied geese and parented them and ran humane tests on them. Sometimes ducks would lose their parents and would start to follow him. Ethologists like Lorenz constantly ask questions about animals. A German ethologist, Karl von Frisch, studied honey bees. Niko Tinbergen ran experiments to find out where animals live, sea gulls specifically. Goodall explains how ethologists run experiments in animals' homes.

Goodall started studying chimpanzees in 1960, living in Tanzania. It took a long time before she could get close to the chimps. They were shy at first. The rest of the book explains how she got close to them and studied them over the years.



Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary and Analysis

Goodall was born in London on April 3rd, 1934. When she was five, her family moved to France but after a few months Hitler invaded so they went back to stay in a manor house in the English countryside next to a big farm with scary ruins. Her father's mother lived with them, who Goodall called Danny Nutt. She loved geese. Goodall often saw horses and cattle nearby her home. When Goodall's father went to fight in World War II, Goodall, her mother and her young sister Judy, went to live with her grandmother in the Birchers. That is where she grew up. While they lived in a nice area, there was little food in England during the war. Everything went to defense. Though all in all, Goodall was not much affected by the war.

Goodall spent most of her days in school and did not much care for it. She preferred the outdoors and liked to read on her own, especially Doctor Doolittle, the doctor who could talk to the animals. After learning about Doctor Doolittle, she read all she could about animals and decided she would go to Africa one day. There were no zoos near Goodall's home so she could only imagine the animals she dreamed about. However, she did play with animals in the area and collected lots of shells and flowers. As she grew up, she went to museums, organized nature outings, drew insect anatomy and made nature records. She loved riding horses and eventually got a job at a stable during the holidays and got free riding as a result. During that time she went on a fox hunting trip but forgot to think about the fox before she did. When she saw it running from the dogs, she got sick and never hunted again. Goodall also had a dog named Rusty, who lived in a hotel around the corner. He learned everything Goodall tried to teach him and, surprisingly, loved being dressed up. Rusty taught Goodall a lot about animal behavior. Goodall thinks Rusty could reason and that he even had a sense of right and wrong.

Goodall performed well in school but she found math and languages difficult. She started to focus on biology, English, and history towards the end of school and did even better.



Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Summary and Analysis

When she graduated, Goodall's mother encouraged her to go to Germany to learn German and to learn that not all Germans were bad people, despite Hitler. However, Goodall's host family in Germany wanted to learn English and rarely spoke German to her, so she didn't learn the language. Instead, she spent her time with animals and in fields. When she returned to London, she went to secretarial school and got her diploma. Just after that she worked as a secretary at a medical clinic where she encountered lots of sick people and learned many things. She still feels close to the sick and handicapped. After six months, Goodall got a job at Oxford and spent time with students there. She learned to canoe and punt. She started to socialize with people in the area, going to May balls at Oxford. Goodall lived in her father's flat at the time, as their parents had divorced.

Goodall never forgot about her dream of going to Africa. She spent hours in the Natural History Museum and kept reading. One day, out of the blue, Goodall's old friend Clo invited her to visit her in Kenya so Goodall got a job as a waitress to earn money. She had to master many new skills and saved carefully until she had enough money for a round-trip fare.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Summary and Analysis

Goodall's first trip to Africa occurred when she was twenty-three. She travelled on a passenger liner. She loved the trip but when she stopped in South Africa, she found apartheid appalling. Goodall took a train to Nairobi and met with Clo. They spent three wonderful weeks together. Goodall loved it so much that she got a temporary job in Nairobi. As she started her new job, she met Louis Leakey, an anthropologist interested in animals and Early Man. He offered her a job immediately because Goodall knew a lot about African animals. Leakey taught her about local animals and the Kikuyu tribe that he grew up with in the area.

Leakey took Goodall on an expedition in 1957. When they arrived at Olduvai Gorge, she described herself as the happiest she had ever been, despite the hard work of digging fossils. They found a few fossils but two years later Leakey and his wife found the skull of an Australopithecus male, later called the Nutcracker Man. Olduvai then became well-known; Goodall was glad to have experienced when it was still remote.

When they returned to Nairobi, Goodall worked all day in Louis's office and learned about African mammals, birds, reptiles and insects. Goodall began to collect orphaned animals, like bush babies. She named one bush baby Levi. She also found a vervet monkey they called Kobi and a dwarf mongoose they called Kip. Goodall knows now that it is rarely good to keep wild animals as pets as they do not adapt well to domestic life. During that same time, Leakey, Goodall and others captured endangered species and released them in national parks. Goodall also saved up enough money to pay for her mother to visit her; she loved Africa and Goodall's many animal and human friends.

After they'd returned from Olduvai, Leakey often spoke of some chimpanzees in Tanzania that might be difficult to study, but they might teach us something about how primitive humans lived. At the time, Goodall had no training, no degree and no experience. Nonetheless, she told Leakey she wanted to try and Leakey was happy. When Goodall's three months in Kenya ended, she had to leave, but she was lucky to continue her work with Leakey. This was what she had waited for, so she went back to England to learn what she could about chimpanzees while Leakey raised the money.



Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Summary and Analysis

It would be a year before Goodall could see the chimps in Tanzania. She went back to England and got a job in the television film library at the London Zoo. She spent most of her time learning about chimps though she found almost all of the information was learned in labs; almost no one had observed them. Eventually Leakey secured the money and the governmental position to come back to Africa. Due to Tanzanian and British regulations, Goodall required a companion so she chose her mother to stay with her for several months. However, just as they arrived some skirmishes broke out near the chimpanzees and they had to delay their trip; Leakey sent Goodall and her mother to Lolue Island to observe vervet monkeys until the skirmishes died down. Goodall enjoyed herself and got to know the monkeys, though she did have to work to avoid poachers from a poaching camp nearby.

After four weeks, Goodall had learned a lot but finally got permission to go to Gombe, Tanzania. When she and her mother reached Kigoma, the closest town to the chimpanzees, they were delayed again due to a nearby African rebellion. In fact, there were a number of Congolese refugees in Kigoma who were trying to avoid the fighting. After a few days, they were finally off.



Chapter 6

Chapter 6 Summary and Analysis

July 16th, 1960, was a happy day for Goodall. At twenty-six years of age, she finally entered Gombe National Park. She went exploring on the very first day, after she and her mother set up camp and ran into a troop of baboons and a forest antelope. The next day Goodall went searching for chimpanzees, hiking only with Adolf, her guide. The first day they saw two chimps but saw none for a week after that. Goodall saw several chimps a few days afterward, but Adolf was very lazy and it was hard to track them. As a result, Goodall started to track chimpanzees with another man named Rashidi who was much better.

After several months, the chimps still ran from them; Goodall wanted to move into the forest and got permission from the game ranger. After a few days, she discovered that she could see an entire troop of fifty chimpanzees from several high locations. Over months of slow learning, Goodall found that the chimps got used to her. She made observations about them and also learned about other animals they interact with. Some of these animals were dangerous and Goodall had to avoid them. However, she was often left undisturbed on the Peak, where she camped and observed animals from a high altitude. Chimps sleep at night, just as humans do and even make pillows out of leafy twigs. In the meanwhile, Goodall's mother set up a medical clinic for local Africans to help them; often patients would walk for miles to see her. The local people started to help in return, especially when Goodall's mother had to go home.

When Goodall's mother left, Goodall returned to her guide, Dominic, who told her that a chimp had entered her camp, which was fantastic news. The next day Goodall waited for him, and he came to camp. Goodall recognized him, having already named him David Greybeard. A month later, David visited again and became friendly with Goodall. By watching him, Goodall discovered that chimps could use tools, pieces of grass to lure termites out of their mounds to eat them. Goodall was thrilled; many scientists thought until that time that only humans could make tools. In October, Goodall was surrounded by chimps during a downpour but stayed still until they ran off. Goodall took notes on such events; in fact, she took notes on nearly everything that happened. As the weeks went by, Goodall got to know more chimps, including Goliath, William and old Flo. She also started to recognize their personalities and meet their babies, such as Old Flo's daughter Fifi and son Figan. Flo showed Goodall that female chimps are not confined to one mate.

Goodall eventually left Gombe to study at Cambridge to get her Ph.D. In the meanwhile a filmmaker named Hugo van Lawick made a documentary about the chimps for the National Geographic Society. Goodall and Hugh met soon thereafter and got married in England a year later. When Goodall got her degree, they returned to Gombe together. Over that year, the chimps continued to grow up. Flo had a new little boy named Flint as well. Goodall observed Flint's entire maturation process. She also learned about the



chimp hierarchy. Goliath was the original alpha-male but in 1964, Mike took over. Goodall learned so much she started using a tape recorder while she was making observations and later transcribed it. Eventually she needed an assistant. In 1967, Goodall had a baby of her own.



Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary and Analysis

One day Goodall and Hugo were frightened to discover a lion between them and their Land Rover. It eventually ripped open the cook's tent and they to stop their tent from being ripped open as well. After preparing, they discovered three young male lions in the camp and were able to chase them away.

Goodall's son, Hugo Eric Louis, came to be known as Grub to his family and friends, though there is no real reason why. When he was a little baby, Goodall and Hugo, his father, were studying hyenas in Ngorongoro Crater. They are quite interesting creatures, as they are not merely scavengers and wander around in closely knit social groups. They are territorial as well. Goodall sometimes watched them play games.

When Grub was small, Goodall had to be careful around the chimpanzees, as they are sometimes violent and occasionally on the hunt. When Grub began to walk, he was in more danger so Goodall made a large, caged-in area for him to play in. Before that, Goodall had to take a break from studying the chimps but she still had twelve students and assistants.

When Grub was seven, Hugh and Goodall divorced as they were apart too often. It was sad for Grub and Goodall wishes she could have done things differently. They both married again. Goodall to an Englishman named Derek Bryceson, the director of Tanzania National Park. He was a fighter pilot during World War II and had been shot down, which nearly paralyzed him from the waist down. One day during a flight to a park, Derek, Goodall, Grub and the pilot were in a minor airplane wreck. They were shaken but unhurt.

All in all, Goodall, her family and her students spent a lot of happy times in Tanzania's beautiful parks, however and Goodall continued to her scientific work. However, one night in 1975, some African rebels from Zaire captured four of Goodall's students at Gombe. It was very frightening. After negotiations, the rebels got a large ransom and the prisoners were released. Derek opened many doors for Goodall, as he was a nationalized Tanzanian and knew Swahili. Many Tanzanians knew him and respected him. He helped her create a new research center. The next year Grub turned nine and went to live with Goodall's mother in England. However, he and Goodall were together nearly every holiday.



Chapter 8

Chapter 8 Summary and Analysis

Since Goodall started working in Gombe, twenty-eight years prior to the book's publication, she has become acquainted with many chimps and gotten to know others quite well, such as old Flo. Flo was once top-ranking female so she could not be bossed around and protected her children aggressively. However, Flint rebelled when she started to wean him and she eventually relented, letting him continue to live with her and remain dependent on her. When Flo died in 1972, Goodall was very sad and Flint never quite recovered. He eventually became sick. But other apes had more positive lives, such as Fifi's children, Freud and Frodo.

Goodall was lucky that these chimps would spend so much time with her, as this was such a rare occurrence for any human being. Goodall was also blessed by the fact that her Tanzanian field staff was so helpful. She wonders whether Freud will eventually become alpha. She had watched a chimp become alpha before, Mike, but he was then overthrown by Humphrey until Figan became alpha. Figan used intelligence and alliances to maintain his rule, particularly the protection of Faben. Figan remained alpha until he died, ten years later. Goodall intends to write more books about her experiences with this family and others.

At the time of writing, Goodall spent four months each year in Gombe watching chimps, four months writing in Dar es Salaam and the rest of the year fundraising. She lived in Derek's house in Dar but not with him as he died of cancer after only a few years of marriage. Goodall also gives many talks all over the world. She often travels to the United States on hectic lecture tours and then returns to England to spend time with her mother, who was still alive. And she still loves staying in the forest, often by herself.

Goodall wrote the book in her house on the beach at Gombe. She had just followed the oldest male chimp, Evered, who was thirty-five years old. Sometimes bad things happen in her life, such as when trusted friends and colleagues let her down. Most of her life has gone well but many bad things have happened, such as when Derek died and her students were kidnapped. She also blamed herself for getting divorced and hurting others. However, her best experiences were having a great family and being a mother, having a good body and mind and being able to move to Kenya with her friend so that she could meet Leakey. She also enjoyed succeeding in getting to Africa and achieving the rare experience of getting to know her chimps. She believes she has contributed to the world by raising a wonderful son, helping many gifted students and helping the world to learn about the greatness of chimpanzees. She has also started a new project called ChimpanZoo, where students, keepers and volunteers study chimps in zoo groups as she does in Gombe. And they do this all over the world. Through studying chimps, we know more about humans than ever before, including about human speech.



Goodall's future plans include continuing at Gombe for as long as she can and seeing how Fanni and Flossie will function as mothers and whether Frodo will become alpha. She also wanted to help chimps and other animals be treated better in medical research.

Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Summary and Analysis

Goodall spent her childhood without a clear idea of what she would do when she grew up. All she knew is that she would go to Africa. But she asks the reader, probably a young adult, if she knows. Grub was studying anthropology at the time she wrote the book but he still isn't sure about what he wants to do. But if the reader wants to work with animals, Goodall is encouraging. She suggests starting to watch animals and take notes on what they see. The reader can ask why, how and what for the animals act as they do. He can also seek out a teacher, along with going on nature walks. Watching a caterpillar turn into a butterfly can be rewarding, along with watching birds make a nest and raising babies. Even the reader's dog can help, as can the dogs of friends. Goodall emphasizes that the reader need not be an ethologist to study and work with animals. They are many options. Goodall tells the reader that if she really wants to work with animals, she will find a way through hard work and determination.

Even if you only like animals and do not want to work with them, you can still help animals by trying to save wild places where they live. In Goodall's view, animals have just as much a right to live as humans. We must also avoid destroying habitats for our own sake, such as destroying animals that could cure diseases and destabilizing ecosystems. Humans also often mistreat animals through medical testing and factory farming.

Goodall realizes that it seems intuitive to try to help humans who are suffering before animals who are suffering. But it is best to try and right wrongs closest to home where one can often help suffering animals. If you know a dog is being beaten, you should tell your local ASPCA. We should speak our minds when we see something wrong. Goodall herself is terribly concerned about chimps and how they are mistreated. They suffer from deforestation and they are often being shot for food and captured for medical research. Goodall tries to raise money to save them. Chimps can also get human diseases. It is also important to try to help animals who are being used for tests to live better lives. Goodall ends with a story of an old chimp named Old Man who did not much care for humans until he was befriended by a young man named Marc. One day when Marc fell near an infant, three females attacked him and started biting his neck. However, Old Man fought them off. Goodall notes that if a chimpanzee can help a human, then we can certainly help them and other animals. Goodall says that this is what she is trying to do and she invites her reader to help her.



Characters

Jane Goodall

Jane Goodall ranks among history's great primatologists. As of the composition of this guide, Goodall has studied chimpanzees for forty-five years, along with acquiring cutting-edge expertise on the social structure of chimpanzee clans. Born in 1934 in London, Goodall loved animals from an early age and came to love chimpanzees in particular. In her early twenties, during a trip to Africa, she was able to meet the ethologist Louis Leakey who would become her teacher, friend and advocate for the early part of her professional career. Her enthusiasm impressed him and he hired her as his research assistant. When Goodall aided Leakey on an archaeological expedition in Africa, he decided to ask her to study chimpanzees for several months in Gombe National Park in Tanzania. Goodall was ecstatic and eagerly agreed. In her first few days at Gombe, Goodall spotted chimpanzees and while she did not see any chimpanzees for the next several weeks, over months and years she tracked them down and got to know them, starting with David Greybeard.

As her study progressed, Goodall got her Ph.D. in ethology from Darwin College at Cambridge, graduating in 1964. Around this time, she also married Baron Hugh van Lawick, a documentary filmmaker she worked with. They had a son during their research, Hugo Eric Lewis, who came to be called Grub. However, Lawick and Goodall later separated and Goodall then married Derek Bryceson, the director of Tanzania National Park, though he later died.

Goodall constantly demonstrates a deep fascination and love for the chimpanzee. In fact, she is an animal lover par excellence, constantly caring for hurt and mistreated animals and working to preserve their communities and habitats while studying them scientifically. Throughout the book, she introduces the reader to her chimpanzee clans and notes their impressive accomplishments.

Hugo van Lawick

Hugo was a Dutch documentary filmmaker who shared Jane Goodall's passion for animals. While working for the National Geographic Society to film a documentary on Goodall, he developed a similar fascination with chimpanzees. He had also earlier met Louis Leakey, which is how they had met in 1962. While not discussed directly in the book, Hugo's documentaries were responsible for popularizing Goodall's scientific work and her advocacy on behalf of protected chimpanzees. While they worked together, Lawick and Goodall fell in love and were married in 1964 in London. They lived together soon thereafter in Tanzania working in the Gombe Chimpanzee reserve. In 1967, they had a son, Hugo Lewis, who they later called Grub. In the late 1970s, Goodall and Lawick were divorced but they remained on friendly terms. While both remarried, they shared common interests and their child.



Few characters play a prominent role in *My Life with The Chimpanzees* other than Goodall but Hugo is perhaps the major figure in Goodall's life during most of her early research. Goodall does not describe Hugo's personality in detail, rather merely recording their interactions about chimpanzees and their son, but Hugo is always in the background, supporting Goodall and her work. It is notable that Goodall describes few of her personal connections in any detail despite the fact that *My Life with The Chimpanzees* is ostensibly an autobiography but again, of all the characters she describes, Lawick is arguably the most important.

Louis Leakey

Louis Leakey was a famous archaeologist and naturalist who spent most of his career in Kenya and discovered much about human evolution in Africa. Goodall was one of his most important students within primatology. Leakey first hired Goodall as his research assistant and later worked to fund her education and research.

Hugo

This is Goodall and Lawick's son who is clearly dear to Goodall and spent a lot of his childhood with Goodall in Tanzania.

Mum

This is Goodall's mother who is a constant source of support and encouragement throughout Goodall's life. She also accompanies Goodall to Africa on several occasions.

Derek Bryceson

This is the director of Tanzanian National Park and Goodall's second husband who died several years after they were married. He was a fighter pilot in World War II. Due to injuries, he was largely paralyzed from the waist down.

Goodall's Students

One of the most stressful times in Goodall's career occurred when Kenyan rebels captured several of her graduate students and held them for ransom.

David Greybeard

This is the first of the Gombe chimpanzees that Goodall came in contact with.



Old Flo

This is the alpha-female in Goodall's troop who had a number of children that Goodall also studied.

Figan, Fifi, and Flint

These are Old Flo's second, third, and fourth children.

Local Africans

Goodall hired a number of local Africans to help her with her research.



Objects/Places

Nairobi, Kenya

This is the closest major city to Gombe National Park and where the nearest airport was as well.

Kigoma, Tanzania

This is the closest town to Gombe National Park.

The Peak

This is the mountain area from which Goodall first spotted her chimpanzees and that she often returned to in order to find them.

Gombe National Park

This is the Tanzanian park area where Goodall's chimpanzees live.

Camp

Goodall set up a near permanent camp beside in close proximity to the chimpanzee habitat.

Cambridge

This is the famous English college where Goodall received her Ph.D.

The Chimpanzee

This is Goodall's favorite animal and the object of her life's work.

The Termite Hunt

This is the practice by which chimpanzees would use blades of grass to scoop up termites in order to eat them.



Tool-Making

Goodall was the first primatologist to discover that chimpanzees made and used tools.

Chimpanzee Hunting

Goodall often "hunted" chimpanzees by tracking them down. Early on in her encounters with the Gombe chimpanzees, this was quite difficult.

Themes

Opening New Doors for Children

My Life with the Chimpanzees is a book written for a young adult audience. Goodall tells the story of her life and work in simple prose aimed at unpacking the life of an ethologist and the work of a primatologist for younger adults. She begins the book by recounting her first experience observing an animal when she was five years old. She was fascinated by her observations from the beginning and this initial interest led her into ethology as an adult. She writes directly to children and explains very briefly the development of her profession to them, including brief mentions of Konrad Lorenz who studied ducks and Niko Tinbergen, who studied animal habitats. Goodall also explains the experimental process. In Chapter 2, Goodall explains how she became so interested in animals at such a young age and much of the next several chapters explain how she continued to develop her interest over time.

In the final chapter, Goodall encourages children who share her interest in animals to pursue their dreams and argues that if they work hard enough, they will find a way. She also points out that children who do not want to be ethologists or study chimps directly can still do a lot to help animals by advocating for their protection, say against factory farming and cruel medical experimentation.

Arguably then the primary theme of *My Life with The Chimpanzees* is to show children that the world of science and the love of animals can be combined into a career and that Goodall is a pioneering example of what someone who loves animals can achieve.

The Excitement of Science

My Life with The Chimpanzees is not merely the story of Goodall's life and love of animals but her love of science as well. While Goodall's love of chimpanzees may have inspired her love of science, Goodall's work was always intended on making new, original discoveries about chimpanzee behavior and to draw conclusions about the nature of chimpanzees from Goodall's observations. Goodall's first moments of discovery remain among her great joys in part because they were scientific discoveries. For instance, Goodall was perhaps the first ethologist to discover that chimpanzees made and used tools. At the time, most scientists thought that only humans could make tools. But Goodall shows that chimps used blades of grass to scoop up termites to eat. Goodall also discovered that chimpanzees ate meat regularly, not only when they ran out of plants.

Regardless of the emotional connections she developed with the Gombe chimpanzees, Goodall's scientific work was always at the top of the list of her priorities. While she enjoyed getting to know, say, Old Flo's children, she also interacted with them as objects of study. Goodall is also particularly intent on communicating her love of science

to her audience, such as when she describes the genesis of her field and how it works and how the community will welcome interest in further research. Thus, the excitement and love of science is a persistent theme throughout the book.

The Love of Animals

Goodall is quite obviously a great lover of animals. From age five she observed animal behavior and from high school on she read and learned all she could about animals. As a young girl, Goodall decided that she wanted to go to Africa to see the animals there and never gave up on her dream. Instead, she saved money to visit Africa and was able to meet Louis Leakey, who was impressed enough by Goodall's knowledge and competence to offer her a position as his research assistant. Goodall was overjoyed. Goodall also came to find the chimpanzee among the most fascinating of animals and when Leakey offered her the opportunity to observe chimpanzees in the wild, Goodall jumped at the chance. Goodall's excitement lead her to spend weeks upon weeks tracking chimpanzees and months and years of her life living in the jungle on and off in order to study and get to know them.

However, Goodall's life story is not the only evidence of her love of animals. In the last chapter, Goodall reaches out to her audience to share her ethical views about animals. She claims that animals have a much higher moral value than most believe them to have and that they have just as much a right to share the world as we do, a controversial claim. She argues that factory farming and excessively painful medical research performed on animals is inhumane. Further, she encourages her readers who do not want to become ethologists to do the best that they can to make life better for the animals around them. While Goodall acknowledges that humans should help each other first, she notes that acting locally to save animals is still a worthy goal.

Style

Perspective

Jane Goodall is one of the world's great primatologists and has done more than perhaps anyone else to raise global awareness about the high value and great ability of higher primates, especially chimpanzees. She has spent much of her life in the jungle, separated from much of civilization, and immersed in the social world of chimpanzees. Her experiences and the motives that led her to pursue her present career shaped her perspective in the book in a number of ways. Goodall is, first and foremost, a scientist and ethologist in particular. She believes that animal and human behavior can be understood scientifically and that through observation and experiment we can unravel the mysteries of animal life. She finds the search exciting and invites her readers into her search. She also writes as an animal lover, someone who enjoys caring for animals and who is pained by their suffering. Goodall got to know many chimpanzees very well during her decades in the jungle and clearly cares for them deeply.

Goodall is also an ethicist of sorts. She is a passionate critic of many of Western practices with respect to animals. For instance, she believes that factory farming should be eliminated and that all steps must be taken to reduce unnecessary animal suffering during medical experimentation and that only research that absolutely requires animal pain should be performed. She believes that those who engage in animal cruelty should be reported to the ASPCA and that everyone should take part in their communities to prevent animals from coming to harm. Some readers will undoubtedly find her views on animals unusual and even extreme.

Tone

The tone of *My Life with The Chimpanzees* is most appropriate for a pre-teen audience and that of a simplified autobiography. Its tone is mostly positive and attempts to inspire the reader to love animal life and protect it. While *My Life with The Chimpanzees* is primarily an autobiography, it also advances substantive views about how to treat animals but it maintains its softer tone throughout. The tone is only sad when things do not go well for Goodall, such as when she is divorced from Hugh or when her graduate students were captured. But these events are few and far between. Consequently, the book's tone is largely positive peppered only with bits of sorrow. Instead, the tone is meant to excite the reader into passionate study and advocacy for chimpanzees and uses the example of Goodall's life to inspire children to believe that they can succeed in their aims.

Goodall is at her most passionate when she is discussing animal ethics, particularly through the elimination of factory farming, poaching, and cruel medical research. In other parts of the book, she is more relaxed, such as when she is talking about the love she has for her son and his experiences in the jungle with her. Only at times does the

tone become dry when Goodall is describing the scientific details of her work. In fact, most of her discussions of her scientific work are excited and endearing, such as when she struggles for months to get to know her chimpanzee troop and when she describes the social structure of the Gombe chimps.

Structure

My Life with The Chimpanzees has nine simple chapters. Chapters two through eight cover the course of Goodall's life and study up until the publication of the book. Chapter one introduces the subject matter, explains a bit about the history of ethology, particularly through the work of its founders and tries to interest the reader in the story of Goodall's life and her research, whereas the final chapter encourages her pre-teen and teenage readers to pursue their dreams if they are interested in animal research. She also defends her ethical views about the value of animals.

Chapter two begins with an explanation of the historical situation into which Goodall was born, specifically Britain during the period just before, during and after World War II. Goodall describes how she grew up in the countryside around London as a result of evacuating from town and encountered many different animals, among them one of her favorite dogs. She started to observe animals from an early age. Chapter three explains Goodall's ambivalence in school but continued interest in animals, among other things. Chapter four describes Goodall's first trip to Africa and how she fell in love with animal life there, along with meeting the great paleontologist Louis Leakey. It also explains how Goodall first learned of the Gombe chimp reserve.

Chapter five explains how Goodall prepared to return to Africa to study chimpanzees, not only saving money but researching. It also describes her return. In Chapter six, Goodall finally reaches the jungle and has her first experiences with the chimpanzees, including her first meeting with David Greybeard. She also discusses some of her first scientific discoveries about them. Chapter seven discusses Goodall's son Grub and her continuing research. Chapter eight covers the course of Goodall's research and what she has learned.



Quotes

"Ethologists are interested in how animals live their lives and why they behave the way they do. They are always asking questions" (Chapter 1, pg. 5.)

"I think that was when I first decided I must go to Africa someday" (Chapter 2, pg. 15.)

"To me it seemed like a message from God, telling us that however bad things may seem, in the end, goodness will win" (Chapter 3, pg. 26.)

"My first journey to Africa was by sea on a passenger liner, the Kenya Castle. I was twenty-three years old. I shall remember that wonderful voyage as long as I live" (Chapter 4, pg. 33.)

"I had never been so happy. There I was, far, far from any human dwellings, out in the wilds of Africa, with animals all around me in the night. Wild, free animals. That was what I had dreamed of all my life" (Chapter 4, pg. 37.)

"This was what I had been so long waiting for, the kind of thing I had come to Africa hoping to do" (Chapter 4, pg. 48.)

"Finally we were on the last stage of the long journey from England, via Lake Victoria, to Chimpanzee Land!" (Chapter 5, pg. 56.)

"July 16th, 1960, was a day I shall remember all my life. It was when I first set foot on the shingle and sand beach of Chimpanzee Land—that is, Gombe National Park. I was twenty-six years old" (Chapter 6, pg. 57.)

"This was fantastic news. For months the chimps had been running off when they saw me - now one had actually visited my camp! Perhaps he would come again" (Chapter 6, pg. 66.)

"He had actually made a tool" (Chapter 6, pg. 68.)

"Hugo and I both married again. I married an Englishman, Derek Bryceson. He was the director of Tanzania National Park" (Chapter 7, pg. 85.)

"I have been very lucky in my life. I have known the excitement of watching wild, free animals. Thousands of people can never know that joy. But at least I can tell them about it" (Chapter 8, pg. 104.)

"I have raised a wonderful son...I have made it possible for many gifted students to work at Gombe...I...have helped people to understand what truly wonderful animals chimpanzees are" (Chapter 8, pg. 108-9.)

"In some ways, perhaps, the most important part of my life is still ahead of me" (Chapter 8, pg. 110.)



"Remember one thing. If you are really and truly determined to work with animals, somehow, either now or later, you will one day find a way to do it" (Chapter 9, pg. 116.)

"It is really important for animals that we speak our minds when we see something wrong" (Chapter 9, pg. 119.)

"If a chimpanzee can reach out to help a human, then we humans can reach out and try to help the chimpanzees and all the other creatures we live with in the world today. That is what I am trying to do. I hope you will help me" (Chapter 9, pg. 123.)



Topics for Discussion

Where was Goodall born? What was her youth like? How was it connected to animals? Where did Goodall's interests in animals come from?

What is the purpose of *My Life with The Chimpanzees*? Who is its audience? How is its purpose related to its audience?

Why do you think Goodall spends so much time talking about herself and her life? How does sharing these life details aid her general aim in the book?

Briefly explain how Goodall mixed work and family life. Give three examples. Explain the benefits and costs of this approach to her life.

Explain how Goodall came to get to know the chimpanzee troop that she studied for so many years. How did she start to get to know the personalities of the chimps? Discuss some things she learned.

What are the important similarities that Goodall draws between chimpanzees and humans? Do you find her comparisons compelling?

Goodall argues that chimpanzees deserve better treatment because they are like humans. What do you think of her argument?