

# Reading Activity

## Poaching in South Africa: A Threat to Wildlife

Poaching is the illegal hunting, capturing, or killing of wild animals. In South Africa, this activity has become a major issue, especially for species like lions, rhinos, and elephants. These animals are often targeted for their valuable body parts—rhino horns, elephant tusks, and lion bones—which are sold illegally on the black market. The demand for these products is driven by myths about medicinal properties, status symbols, and the exotic pet trade.

In the film *Mia and the White Lion*, Mia forms a deep bond with a rare white lion named Charlie. As Mia grows older, she learns the devastating truth that Charlie is destined to be sold to trophy hunters. This storyline mirrors the harsh reality many wild animals face in real life. Poaching not only threatens individual animals but also disrupts ecosystems, leading to a loss of biodiversity and ecological imbalance.

Efforts to combat poaching involve stricter laws, wildlife reserves, and anti-poaching patrols. Organizations also work to raise awareness and reduce the demand for illegal wildlife products. Despite these measures, poaching remains a constant threat due to high profits for traffickers and weak law enforcement in some areas.

Protecting wildlife requires global cooperation, education, and community involvement. The film *Mia and the White Lion* serves as a powerful reminder of the urgent need to protect our planet's magnificent creatures before it is too late.

- **Comprehension Questions:**

1. What is poaching?
2. Which animals are commonly affected by poaching in South Africa?
3. Why is Charlie in danger in *Mia and the White Lion*?
4. How does poaching affect the environment and biodiversity?
5. What are some strategies used to combat poaching?
6. Why do you think poaching is still a problem despite the laws against it?

## Research Project

Choose an endangered animal in South Africa and create a short presentation (3-5 minutes) that covers:

- The animal's habitat.
- The threats it faces, including poaching.
- Conservation efforts and how people can help protect it.
- A creative element, such as a poster, drawing, or infographic to support your presentation.