



HOUSTON ZOO, INC.

1513 CAMBRIDGE ST.

HOUSTON, TX 77030

713.533.6500

www.houstonzoo.org

Rope Bridges

Background Information:

Deforestation is an issue for many animals around the world, including orangutans in Asia. Palm oil plantations are created in orangutan habitats by tearing down large areas of rainforests. Orangutans used the canopies of these trees to cross rivers to join orangutan populations. Since many trees have been logged, researchers decided to create artificial bridges to allow these fragmented populations to meet.

Help orangutans by creating your own rope bridge!

Supplies:

- Slackline
- Rope for trees
- Yarn, rope, twine, pipe cleaners for activity
- Tape, glue, other adhesive
- Orangutan figures
- Trees
- Blue construction paper
- Cardboard

Procedure:

1. Set up the slackline, rope, and materials for activity. Place the trees into four pieces of cardboard. Separate two pieces of cardboard with a piece of blue construction paper in between them.
2. Orangutans utilize rope bridges in the wild in order to cross bodies of water. If forest areas have been removed on one side of a river, it makes it difficult for orangutans to get across since they do not swim. Conservation organizations have put rope bridges over these rivers to ensure that orangutans have safe passage to the other areas of the forest.
3. Demonstrate how orangutans use a rope bridge on the slackline.
4. Have participants use any of the materials to create a rope bridge for the orangutan figures. The rope bridge should be able to hold the weight of the orangutan figures.

For more information on palm oil and orangutans, visit:

<https://www.houstonzoo.org/saving-wildlife/global-conservation/orangutans/>

<https://news.mongabay.com/2010/04/hope-for-survival-as-isolated-orangutans-joined-by-rope-bridge/>