



UNTAMED S2E4: Lead Poisoning

Discussion Questions

These discussion questions are designed to be used as a resource that inspires conversation, critical thinking, and promotes a “big picture” understanding of topics covered in each episode. Questions may be answered individually, or out loud in a group setting. Key terms and vocabulary that will help educators and students engage in discussion include:

[Lead, toxic, poisoning, food chain, niche, consequences, primary/secondary injuries]

The following questions are best used when paired with a complete viewing of the full episode, and may be more suitable for advanced levels:

1. We know that lead is a toxic substance to living organisms -- so toxic that the manufacture of lead-based paint was banned in the United States in 1978. Why do you think lead is still being used for fishing tackle and hunting ammunition?
2. Lead poisoning can affect birds that occupy many different niches within an ecosystem. What makes lead poisoning such a widespread issue compared to other toxic substances?
3. In your opinion, which of the following is the best method to reduce lead poisoning in wildlife, and why?
 - a. Educate hunters on how lead-based ammunition can harm wildlife, and let them make their own decision on whether to use non-lead alternatives or not.
 - b. Make the use of lead-based ammunition while hunting illegal, and punish those who do.
4. How is treating a wild animal for lead toxicity different compared to a more obvious physical injury, like a broken bone? How does this influence the number of wildlife veterinarians and rehabilitators that are able to treat lead toxicity?
5. How have technological advancements (tools, medical equipment, etc.) made it easier to treat lead toxicity in wildlife? Can you think of anything that would make it even easier in the future?

The following questions are best used when paired with a viewing of “Lead: In (About) Two Minutes”, a synopsis of the major themes and key topics covered in the full episode, that may be more suitable for younger audiences:

1. What are some different ways that lead can accidentally enter a wild animal’s body?
2. What makes lead more dangerous to living organisms compared to other poisonous things?
3. Why is lead poisoning so hard to treat?