

Lower KS2

Zoos: The History of Chester Zoo



What do you already know?

Write the word **zoos** in the middle of your page. Write everything you already know about zoos around this. You might also include the names of any zoos you have visited or heard about, any animals you might see, things to do there etc. A couple of examples have been done to start you off.

Places to see
different animals

Chester Zoo

Zoos

Wonderful Words

Here are the meanings of some of the words (in bold) in the text. In your workbooks, copy the meaning and write the word it matches. You could organise the words into alphabetical order to create a glossary.

You could use the text to help you work out the meanings.

If you have a dictionary or can get online, you could check out the meaning.

Carried on	Out of the ordinary, perhaps from a distant foreign country	Caring for and protecting something	Something new which has been set up or launched
Relating to animals or the animal kingdom	A very large house	A collection or exhibition of wild animals	A person who looks after someone or something
Not able to move	different	Areas that have been separated – sometimes using a barrier	Brought in from a different country
Somebody or something old	Someone or something's attitude or nature	Big trenches, sometimes filled with water	Groups of people very interested in animals

Read the text three times and use three different colours (or three different ways of marking eg. straight line, wiggly line, circle) to show the following information. An example has been started but not finished.

- People mentioned
- Any animals mentioned
- Any information about George Mottershead

The History of Chester Zoo

June Mottershead is an **elderly** lady now, but has often talked about how her father **founded** Chester zoo in 1931. Her father, **George Mottershead**, was not only famous for starting Chester Zoo but also for his beliefs in how zoos should look after their animals.

George was a soldier in the First World War where he was badly wounded. He was **paralysed** and spent a long time in a wheelchair. However, he taught himself to walk again. Then he started his new business selling vegetables grown by his father and **exotic** birds which he had bred. They also collected lizards and insects which had arrived with the plants he had **imported** for his business.

When June was **only four**, her father bought a small **mansion** which was going cheap. He wanted to turn his father's collection of animals into a zoo. Some of the neighbours were not happy about this.

When George was a boy of eight, he had visited a zoo in Manchester. He had been very upset to see the animals kept in small cages so he wanted his zoo to be different. He wanted his zoo to be without bars. Instead of bars, George used **moats and ditches** to keep the animals in their **enclosures**.

With a lot of help from his family, he turned it into Chester **zoological** gardens. At that time, most zoos were started by **zoological societies** or grew out of rich men's private **menageries**. Chester is an **exception**.

In the early days of the zoo, there were not many visitors and George did not have enough money to pay anyone to help run it. The family ran the zoo. His wife Lizzie ran the café and June's older sister, Muriel, became a **keeper** looking after the animals. Their grandma was in charge of taking entry money from visitors and their grandfather looked after the gardens and grew the food for the café. He was 78 by then. Even though June was only four years old,

she helped too. Her mother made her overalls out of old sacks which she wore to paint the wire of the bears' **enclosure**.

The family did not have much money so George had to work hard to get the money to feed and look after the animals. June remembers that the animals always had to come first and be well looked after. In an interview with The Guardian newspaper, she said, "Animals had to be fed, cleaned out, kept warm and dry. You'd go round them every day and look at them, like a farmer inspecting his flock of sheep."

June grew up with a whole range of animals as her childhood friends. Her special friend was Mary, the chimpanzee. As a small child, June chatted to Mary, their first chimpanzee, and watched her play and use tools. This was long before scientists realised that chimps were able to handle tools. In the interview, June says, "Mary was a friend. She had a beautiful **temperament** and was very, very intelligent. I was lucky enough to grow up with her." June's sister Muriel had taught Mary how to write letters and June remembers Mary writing with a pen and paper before she could.

George got animals for the zoo from all over. During World War 2, their lion, Judy, came from the Butlins holiday camp. Once, June travelled with her dad in their small car all the way to Dorset. They came back with their car full of African grey parrots, crowned cranes, a box of reptiles and a vervet monkey.

In 1945, someone left the zoo a lot of money. This meant that, for the first time, George did not have to worry about how he would feed the animals through the winter. In 1949, June married her husband, Fred Williams. He was a keeper at the zoo. After living in Australia for three years, they returned to Chester zoo and lived in a bungalow inside the grounds.

June says her father would be very proud of Chester Zoo today. His motto was "always building" and that is what has continued to this day. Chester Zoo is a charity and is known for its breeding and **conservation** work.

The story of her childhood was used in a BBC drama called 'Our Zoo'.

Sources: <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2014/nov/29/my-wild-life-at-chester-zoo>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chester_Zoo
<https://www.cheshirelife.co.uk/out-about/wildlife/the-story-behind-bbc-one-s-chester-zoo-drama-our-zoo-1-3766336>

Illustrations and Captions

Imagine you are going to read this text to a younger child. It needs some pictures and captions. Think of four places where you think it would help to have a picture or photograph. Draw the picture and write a caption to go with it.



Question Time!

These questions can be done in any order. The green questions are easier to get your brain warmed up. The yellow questions are a bit harder and the purple questions are the challenge. See how many you can do.

Who founded Chester Zoo?

What jobs did the family do around the zoo?

Why do you think the neighbours were not happy with George starting a zoo?

Why do you think June compared her father to a farmer?

How old was June when Chester Zoo was founded?

Why do you think George would be proud of Chester Zoo today?

What animals did June and her father collect in their small car?

How do you know that caring properly for animals was important to George?

What was the name of the chimpanzee who was June's friend?

Write down three facts that you found the most interesting in the text.

Why do you think the BBC made a drama about the story of June's life?

Character Investigation – Make a Fact File

Use the information in the text to make a fact file about George Mottershead.

You could include information on the following:

Biographical Details
including family
details

His achievements

His characteristics
and how you know

Other interesting
information

Going to the Zoo

Daddy's taking us to the zoo tomorrow,
Zoo tomorrow, zoo tomorrow
Daddy's taking us to the zoo tomorrow
And we can stay all day

We're going to the zoo, zoo, zoo
How about you, you, you?
You can come too, too, too
We're going to the zoo, zoo, zoo

See the elephant with the long trunk swinging
Great big ears and a long trunk swinging
Snuffing up peanuts with a long trunk swinging
And we can stay all day

We're going to the zoo, zoo, zoo
How about you, you, you
You can come too, too, too
We're going to the zoo, zoo, zoo

See all the monkeys they're scritch-scratch scratching
Jumping around and scritch-scratch scratching
Hanging by the long-tail scritch-scratch scratching
And we can stay all day

We're going to the zoo, zoo, zoo
How about you, you, you
You can come too, too, too
We're going to the zoo, zoo, zoo

There's a big black bear he's a huff-puff-a-puffing
His coat's too heavy he's a huff-puff-a-puffing
Don't get too near the huff-puff-a-puffing
Or you won't stay all day

We're going to the zoo, zoo, zoo
How about you, you, you
You can come too, too, too
We're going to the zoo, zoo, zoo

Well the seals in the pool all honk-honk-honking
Catching the fish and honk-honk-honking
Little tiny seals all honk-honk-honking
And we can stay all day

We're going to the zoo, zoo, zoo
How about you, you, you

You can come too, too, too
We're going to the zoo, zoo, zoo

Well we stayed all day and I'm getting sleepy
Sittin' in the car getting sleep sleep sleepy
Home already getting sleep sleep sleepy
'Cause we have stayed all day

We been to the zoo zoo zoo
So have you you you
You came too too too
We been to the zoo zoo zoo

Mummy's taking us To The Zoo Tomorrow
Zoo tomorrow, zoo tomorrow!
Mummy's taking us to the zoo tomorrow
And we can stay all day

We're going to the zoo, zoo, zoo
How about you, you, you
You can come too, too, too
We're going to the zoo, zoo, zoo

We're going to the zoo, zoo, zoo
How about you, you, you
You can come too, too, too
We're going to the zoo, zoo, zoo

Source: [LyricFind](#)

Songwriters: Tom Paxton

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