

Week 08



(De)Extinction

Doc A: "Vertebrates on the brink of biological annihilation" PNAS, 2020

Doc B: *The song of the Dodo: Island Biogeography in an Age of Extinction*
1996

> Individually, you are in charge of one document. Identify and rephrase **the main message** and **the tools** used to convey it (facts and numbers, images, examples, rhetorical tools...)

05:00

Doc A: "Vertebrates on the brink of biological annihilation" *PNAS*, 2020

Doc B: *The song of the Dodo: Island Biogeography in an Age of Extinction*
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In pairs:

- > **Share** your findings with your classmate and take notes about their document.
- > **Compare** and contrast both documents (message, tone, style, impact ...)
- > **React** and say which is more impactful according to you? Why?

05:00

Doc A: "Vertebrates on the brink of biological annihilation" *PNAS*, 2020

Doc B: *The Song of the Dodo: Island Biogeography in an Age of Extinction*, 1996

- *Common topic: the massive extinction of species due to human activity*
 - *Common focus on birds // biodiversity under threat*

- > using figures and facts to make their point + use of research and studies
- > alarming tone
- > Scientific vocabulary // perspective on the subject
- > appeal to rationality

- > hypothetical story of the last dodo and how she would have lived
- > humanizes the dodo // uses a personification and makes us identify with her
- > appeal to emotions

- > Document B is more impactful because it allows us to understand what the dodo went through + it paints a clear picture for us to imagine
- > Document A is more impactful in the sense that it clearly identifies humans as the culprits and explicitly encourages us to act in order to stop this mass extinction of species

Document: "The science behind de-extinction",
By the American Museum of Natural History, 2013



LET'S CHECK!

> Take notes about
the two main forms
of de-extinction:

- Principle
- Benefits and
Downsides
- Uses and Risks

	<p style="text-align: center;">Back-breeding</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Bringing back extinct / primitive species by breeding existing species – selecting traits in modern species</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Cloning</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Collecting genetic material (DNA) of an extinct species – implanting it in an egg cell and choose a surrogate to give birth to genetically identical individual</p>
<p>Principle:</p>		
<p>Benefits & Downsides</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not certain of the accuracy of the process > no way of knowing if the resulting specimen actually is identical - A lengthy process // takes a long time - Viable and low-tech method = easy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Genetically identical individual > certain of the accuracy of the result - Costly = expensive + difficult process - Could take even longer if you must analyse the entire genome
<p>Uses & Risks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create species that would be more resistant to certain conditions - Ethical question of what will happen to the newly resurrected species - Could disturb the ecosystems in which they are (re)introduced <p style="text-align: center;"><i>IN PAIRS, USE YOUR NOTES TO COMPLETE THE CHART</i></p>	

Should we bring back extinct species?

YES

- Create species that would be more resistant to certain conditions
- Fighting against the mass extinction of species
- help increase the biodiversity of the Siberian and Canadian tundra: In the case of the woolly mammoth
- “Mesmerizing beasts” > source of wonder
- Subject of research > opportunity for paleontologists and scientists to see these species in their natural habitat – find out how they behave

NO

- Ethical question of what will happen to the newly resurrected species
- Could disturb the ecosystems in which they are (re)introduced
- We could lose control of our creation > bringing back an apex predator could be dangerous for existing species

Document: "Should we bring extinct creatures back to life?"
By Mike Benton, *The Guardian*, August 2023

- 1 – Identify the **arguments in favor** of bringing extinct species back to life
- 2 – Try to **guess the title** of Michael Crichton's novel – Complete the previous chart if you think of **more arguments against** bringing back extinct species.
- 3 – Identify the most **efficient rhetorical tools** .