Zoo

ABOUT THE STORY
From before opening to after closing, readers are brought through an entire day at a zoo. A behind the scenes look at how a zoo is run offers insight into how the animals are cared for, as well as a glimpse into the roles of other zoo workers.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR
Gail Gibbons studied graphic design at the University of Illinois. She then moved to New York City and started doing artwork for television shows. While doing work for a children's show, she was reminded how much she enjoyed writing. Her first book, *Willy and his Wheel Wagon* was published shortly afterwards, and since then Ms. Gibbons has written and illustrated over 135 books. She and her husband divide their time between houses in Vermont and off the coast of Maine.

INTRODUCING THE STORY
Ask children if any of them have ever been to a zoo. Share some of their experiences. Explain that in this book, the author tells us about what goes on behind the scenes at a zoo.

READING ACTIVITIES
Comprehension/Thinking Skills
a. What is the first thing zookeepers do each day? (check the animals)
b. How do zookeepers clean the cages of dangerous animals? (confine the animal to separate part of the cage)
c. Where do the zookeepers prepare the animals' meals? (zoo kitchens)
d. What was the exciting event happening in the big-cat house? (baby cheetah being born)
e. Which animal's feeding time draws a crowd to watch? (sea lions)
f. What is the Children's Zoo like? (kids pretend to be animals)
g. Why have some animals become endangered? (hunting and loss of habitat)
h. What is a wildlife preserve? (safe place for animals right in their natural habitat)

Vocabulary
There are many words in this book that may be unfamiliar. Write these words on the chalkboard and review their meanings. Then ask volunteers to use the words in sentences.

walkways	extinct	veterinarian	habitats	llama
environment	souvenir	endangered	gopher	wildlife

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
Language Arts: Keeping Company With Compounds
Review the definition of a compound word. Write the following two sets of words on the board and ask volunteers to draw lines connecting words that create new, compound words.

Set 1		Set 2	
Walk	Corn	Spider	Yard
Pop	Time	Barn	Ache
Meal	Fall	Tooth	Life
Them	Ways	Wild	Web
Water	Selves		

Science/Research Skills: Zoo News part 1
Have children research various real zoos (such as the Bronx Zoo or the San Diego Zoo). Where do the zoos get the animals? What humane measures are taken to keep the animals happy and healthy? How do they take care of baby animals that are born at the zoo?

For Discussion/Critical Thinking: Zoo News part 2
Based on what they learn at the end of the book and in the activity above, discuss whether keeping wild animals in zoos is a good thing to do.

Research Skills/Home and Career Skills: Zippy Zookeepers
Ask students to share their career goals with the rest of the class. Is anyone interested in working with animals? Pair students up and have them further research zookeepers. Each pair should pick an animal they'd like to care for, and present a short report in character, explaining how they care for their particular zoo animal. (Note that Internet research could also be utilized for this activity.)

INTERNET ACTIVITY
Before you send children to do research using any of the keywords listed below, you may wish to try them yourself to be sure the sites are suitable.

Gail Gibbons
Have students visit the author's website to learn more about her and the books she has written. Write brief author notes and share facts with the rest of the class. Gather several of her books for an author study.

Zoos
This could be done in combination with the two "zoo news" activities above. Research specific zoos. Give students guidelines to follow. You may wish to have them pretend they are going to visit the zoo and have them create an itinerary for their visit (arrival time, map of exhibits, other activities to do there, etc.).