CAREER BRIEF
(Grades 3-5)
ZOOKEEPER

WHAT IS A ZOOKEEPER?
- Zookeepers care for animals at the zoo

WHAT DO ZOOKEEPERS DO?
- Pay attention to how an animal is acting and their health
- Feed animals
- Give animals medicine
- Keep the animals home safe and clean
- Report if animals are acting different or strange
- Help veterinarians with the animals
- Write down facts about the animal's health and how they act
- Teach the public about animal health and safety
- Care for sick or injured animals

Fun Fact: Otters hold hands with each other and form what is called a raft. They always do this while sleeping and resting to keep families from drifting apart.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING
- A high school diploma or equivalent (GED)
- Usually holds a bachelor's degree in animal related sciences
- Take classes in college in biology, zoology, animal behavior

SKILLS
- Communication: Talk with the public, other zookeepers, and veterinarians about the animals
- Passionate/Empathetic: Enjoy caring for animals
- Pay Attention to Details: Pay close attention to and keep track of animal health and behavior
- Physical Strength: Carry and move animals, heavy sacks of food, and walk for most of the day
- Focus on Safety: Must be calm, stable and make good decisions to keep the zookeepers and animals safe

EXPLORING THIS CAREER

- https://www.stlzoo.org/animals/soyouwanttobeazookeeper
- https://nationalzoo.si.edu/education/wildlife-careers

Animals are not property or "things" but rather living organisms, subjects of a life, who are worthy of our compassion, respect, friendship, and support. -MARC BEKOFF