

## Orangutans With iPads

From VOA Learning English, this is the Technology Report in Special English.

Recently we reported on a program called Apps for Apes. It was started by the New York-based nonprofit organization Orangutan Outreach. The program which introduces Apple's iPad to orangutans in zoos sparked an interest among our listeners. We decided to answer some of the questions they sent in.

But first, we had our own question: how to pronounce the name of the ape. Many people wrongly say "orangutang," with a G at the end. Maybe, because orangutans are orange, people relate the name to the color. But there is no connection. Orangutan Outreach's Richard Zimmerman explains where the name came from.

"People in Malaysia and Indonesia would say orang hu tan and it's -- actually, it doesn't mean orange. Orang is the Malay or Indonesian word for man or human, and utan comes from hutan with an H, which means forest. So essentially, orangutan means person of the forest."

One of our listeners asked how orangutans would react to seeing another orangutan using the iPad when they themselves are not using it. Mr. Zimmerman explains that the orangutans all want to use the tablet when they see it. This desire could come from wanting the same attention that the caretaker gives the ape using the device.

Mr. Zimmerman told us what happens in a situation where the mother of a baby orangutan uses the iPad with an animal caretaker. The baby orangutan will see the iPad and will jump over wanting to become involved. In this case, he advises having two iPads and two caretakers to work with the mother and the baby.

Another example comes from an animal sanctuary in Florida.

"At the Center for Great Apes in Florida, when we do the enrichment sessions with Mari, a female orangutan, Pongo, with whom she lives, who is a big male, he gets jealous and wants the attention. So he comes running over and wants to use the iPad."

Another listener asked us if orangutans react to seeing iPads being used by visitors to a zoo. Mr. Zimmerman says this behavior has not necessarily been documented. But he says orangutans are used to having their pictures taken with other devices.

“The orangutans are used to people taking photos of them, so either pointing at them with a camera or a phone, so more of the smaller devices, rather than an iPad.”

Mr. Zimmerman adds that the orangutans do recognize the iPad, but to know what they are thinking is a bit more difficult.

Any mind readers out there who can tell us what a great ape is thinking? Or has someone developed an app for that, too?