

ANIMAL RIGHTS

Teacher's Guide Critical Thinking Activity Grade 6

PURPOSE

To explore, examine and understand the students' positions on various animal rights issues and how those positions impact animals. To encourage healthy discussions about how society treats animals and what steps can be taken to produce positive and effective change.

MATERIALS

Copy of animal cruelty statutes, reference books, pictures of animals used for consumption, pictures of animals used in entertainment, animal rights literature, accompanying sheets: "Research Report" and "Where Do You Stand?"

DIRECTIONS

- 1) Discuss the students feelings about the killing of dogs, deer, rats, fish, spiders, etc. Start the discussion with the understanding that all viewpoints will be heard without judgment.
- 2) Briefly discuss with the students how animals are killed (hunting, trapping - steel jaw traps, laboratories, etc.). Discuss the reasons why animals are killed (consumption, fur products, research, etc.).
- 3) Have students, individually or in groups, research the following issues: experimentation on animals, bullfights, factory farming, fishing, making fur coats, horseracing, hunting, companion animal overpopulation, slaughterhouses, rodeos, hunting, trapping (steel jaw traps), wild animals as companion animals and in zoos.
- 4) The students will report back to the class, using the accompany sheet: "Research Report."
- 5) After each research project is reviewed by the entire class and discussion has been completed, have the students complete the "Where Do You Stand?" sheet. Tally the results and relay them to the students.
- 6) Have the students discuss how their viewpoints may have changed based on the presentation of the material. Discuss why some viewpoints remained the same. Have a discussion about how we as a society treats animals as a whole.

SUMMARY

This project helps define our responsibility as educators in focusing students' attention on the role of animals within our web of life on earth and more specifically on the interaction and relationship of people and animals. Helping students learn to think about other sentient life leads to a better understanding, appreciation and compassion toward everyone living on earth.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES:

- 1) Invite guest speakers representing organizations with opposing viewpoints.
- 2) Host a debate.

SPECIAL EDUCATION:

This activity will fit Special Education needs. Use the material at teacher's discretion.

Humane And Responsible Teachers — All One Community

A project of Animal Protection League of NJ, PO Box 174, Englishtown, NJ 07726 732-446-6808

Made possible by a grant from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

Where Do You Stand?

Name: _____

This is not a test with right or wrong answers, but a questionnaire designed to help you think about various animal-related issues and decide where you stand on each one. Check all applicable boxes.

1) Which of the following animals do you think should be kept as companion animals?

Wolf Lion Raccoon Skunk Turtle Snake Cat Dog

2) Would you buy a coat made from:

- the pelts of wild animals? (leopard, bobcat)
- the pelts of confinement raised animals? (mink, fox)
- the leather or pelts of animals raised or hunted and killed for human consumption? (cow, deer, chicken, turkey)

3) Do you/would you:

- Kill animals for sport? Want to study animals or insects without harming them?
- Collect and kill insects for study or fun? Fish?
- Visit natural areas to study animals and insects? Use CD-ROMs & other books to study animals or insects?

4) Should any of the following animals be trained to perform for human entertainment?

- Wild animals such as lions, tigers, chimpanzees, elephants and others
- Domesticated animals such as dogs, cats, horses and others

5) Do you consume:

- Beef, pork, lamb, poultry? Soy products like tofu, soymilk, veggie burgers?
- Fish? Eggs and dairy products?

6) Would you eat meat if you had to kill the animals you ate? Yes No

7) Would you boycott:

- Products imported from a country that kills whales?
- Products from companies who perform experiments on animals?

8) The following animals are often exterminated and/or eliminated in areas where people live: mountain lions, bears, wolves, poisonous and nonpoisonous snakes, coyotes, skunks, weasels, mice, rats, gophers, spiders, scorpions, nonpoisonous insects, etc. Can we co-exist with them? If so, check off ways we can do this:

- Don't feed wild animals Respect wild animals and keep your distance
- Use animal-proof garbage cans Keep bird feeders out of the way
- Don't leave garbage and food around Put garbage to be picked up out in the morning

9) Animals should be kept in zoos:

- To preserve them from extinction, when their native habitat has been/is being destroyed.
- For scientific study; for education.
- For our entertainment and enjoyment.
- Never. We do not learn about animals or their habitat when they are held in captivity.

10) If you owned an acre of land that was part of the limited habitat (i.e., the animal could not survive elsewhere) of an animal in one of the groups below, would you relinquish the use of your land for use as a sanctuary for that animal?

- If the animal were a mammal (deer, fox, rabbit, mouse)
- If s/he were a bird (eagle, robin, blackbird, hummingbird)
- If s/he were a reptile or amphibian (snake, toad, turtle, lizard)
- If s/he were an insect or crustacean (beetle, butterfly, crab, spider)



