



EduTrend Contents

P4C · RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES · MIDDLE SCHOOL

Do Animals Have Rights?

Can animals have rights if they cannot have responsibilities?

Ages 12–14

Level: Intermediate

50 minutes

Circle and small groups
· up to 30

Activity 04

Inside: activity at a glance · step-by-step session plan · facilitator notes · 3 student worksheets · assessment checklist

ACTIVITY 04 · AT A GLANCE

Do Animals Have Rights?

Students look at pictures of a pet dog, a farm animal, a zoo animal and a wild bird. They list what each animal needs and what humans do to or for it. Then they create questions and enquire into whether animals can have rights, whether rights depend on being able to have duties, and what responsibilities humans have towards animals.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session students can:

- apply the idea of rights to animals;
- test whether rights depend on duties;
- distinguish kinds of animals and uses;
- reason with care about a sensitive topic.

KEY WORDS

animal · rights · welfare · duty ·
sentience · care

CURRICULUM LINKS

Science: animal needs. Citizenship:
animal welfare law. Geography:
farming.

1**STIMULUS**

Share something to
think about

2**THINK**

Quiet thinking time

3**QUESTION**

Create and choose
a question

4**ENQUIRE**

Reason together

5**BUILD**

Agree, disagree,
add

6**REFLECT**

Last words

Materials (per class)

- Animal picture cards
- Question and thinking-move cards
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

Before the session

- Read the stimulus and note possible concepts.
- Prepare question and thinking-move cards.
- Set out a circle so everyone can see each other.
- Print the worksheets.

SAFETY

Respect that families hold different views on eating meat and keeping animals. Everyone may pass.

ACTIVITY 04 · SESSION PLAN

Step by step

Stay neutral: ask for reasons, examples and counter-examples rather than giving your own view.

Time	What happens	Say or ask
0–8 min Stimulus	Show the four animal pictures.	<i>"What did you notice?"</i>
8–20 min Questions	Students create questions in pairs and vote on one.	<i>"Which question is most interesting to talk about?"</i>
20–44 min Enquiry	Enquire into the chosen question, building on each other's ideas.	<i>"Can animals have rights if they cannot have responsibilities?"</i>
44–50 min Last words	Each person says one last thought or passes.	<i>"Has your thinking changed?"</i>

CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Decide whether animals have rights and explain what follows for how we treat them.

ACTIVITY 04 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The philosophy in brief

Some philosophers argue that animals matter because they can feel pain and pleasure.

Others argue that rights belong to beings who can also have duties, but that we still have duties towards animals.

Common ideas to listen for

- “All animals are the same.” Situations differ.
- “If it has no rights, anything goes.” We may still have duties.
- “Caring for animals is only about pets.” It includes farm and wild animals.

Adapting the activity

Support

Focus on one animal.

Stretch

Compare with the rights of babies, who also cannot have duties.

WORKSHEET 1

Animal needs

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

For each animal.

Animal needs

Animal	Needs	What we owe it
Pet dog		
Farm animal		
Zoo animal		
Wild bird		

WORKSHEET 2

Thinking moves

Use these in the enquiry.

Thinking moves

Thinking move	My example
I agree with... because...	
I disagree with... because...	
An example is...	
A counter-example is...	
Building on what... said...	

WORKSHEET 3

Last words

Before and after.

What do humans owe animals? Before the enquiry I thought... Now I think... because...

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

Use during the session. One sheet covers up to eight students; copy as needed.

Student	Asks a philosophical question	Gives reasons and examples	Listens and builds on others

Suggested codes: W = working towards · E = expected · G = greater depth

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Do Animals Have Rights? is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents P4C Rights and Responsibilities programme (middle school, level: intermediate). Every activity in the programme follows the same format: a practical challenge, a clear session plan, facilitator notes and ready-to-print worksheets, so that teachers, club leaders and parents can run it without extra preparation.

Full 15-, 20- and 32-week programmes are available from EduStore at edutrend.org.

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