

Animal rights, animal wrongs! – Teacher’s notes

Level: Upper Intermediate

Aim: Students read a short newspaper article on animal rights and then take part in a roleplay debate based on the story and issues raised in the article.

Language focus: Language used in debates such as giving reasons and expressing opinions.

Preparation: Make one copy of the newspaper article for each student and one copy of the role card sheet for every five students and cut these up.

Procedure:

- 1 Tell the students they are going to do a roleplay on the topic of animal rights.
- 2 Hand out the newspaper article and ask them to read through it.
- 3 Ask a couple of general comprehension questions to check the students have understood the article.
- 4 Now, divide the class into six groups A, B, C, D, E and F (Note: if you are going to run the debate with the whole class you could decide to take the government role on yourself and get the students to try and convince you about what should happen).
- 5 Give all the students in each group the same role card i.e. in Group A all the students get the role card for the scientist.
- 6 On the board write up who the six characters are and explain that the government representative (Role F) will decide whether or not the laboratory should be closed.
- 7 Explain that each group has one of these characters and they have ten minutes to work together and think of their point of view, things they would like to say and also what they think the other characters might say.
- 8 Next, run the discussion either as a whole class activity or, if you would prefer, in groups. (If you go for the group option simply put students in groups of five / six with one person from each of the character groups A–F).
- 9 Monitor the discussions / debates.
- 10 Finally, see what the overall consensus is. Encourage the students to give their opinion ‘in character’ and not their own personal opinion (you could find this out after the roleplay).

Optional follow-up activity

Ask the students to write an opinion essay based on the issues in the article and the ones they raised during the roleplay.

You could also run a debate. Rather than using an invented situation you could take one from current news. You will often find newspaper articles on a variety of animal rights issues such as hunting, fishing, etc. Make copies of the various stories and design up role cards to fit the different people / positions in the story.