

Bringing **Animal Issues** Into the Classroom

Activities and Essays for Elementary and Middle School Students



- If you could be any animal, what kind of animal would you be and why?
- Describe a time when you rescued an animal.
- Did you ever have to give up an animal companion? Why? How did you feel? How do you think the animal felt?
- Write about something nice that you did with or for an animal.
- Describe a trip to the veterinarian's office.
- Explain why it's important to train your dog in a kind way.
- Explain why it's important to spay or neuter cats and dogs.
- Describe ways that you give attention to your animal companion.
- Do something kind for an animal in the next week, then describe the experience in an essay.
- Write a story about an experience (such as going to the veterinarian's office, getting lost, etc.) from the perspective of your animal companion. Describe how things might have looked from where your animal companion was standing. How might things such as chairs and stairs have looked to him or her (compared to the way they look to humans)? What might he or she have been thinking? How did your animal companion communicate his or her needs to you or to other humans?
- Try writing the same story from your own point of view. What were you thinking? Did you pay attention when your animal companion tried to communicate with you? How did you communicate with him or her?
- Read *Charlotte's Web*. Then make a Venn diagram to describe the differences between the lives of animals we see in books, cartoons, and comics and the lives of real animals (e.g., Wilbur in *Charlotte's Web* vs. real pigs). Put information unique to the fictional animals in one circle, information unique to the lives of real animals in the other circle, and information that is common to both fictional and real animals in the area where the two circles overlap.
- Interview a veterinarian to discover ways that humans can reduce illness and injury in their animal companions. Report your findings in a poster.
- Identify famous vegans and vegetarians throughout history. What reasons did they give for their decision to go vegan or vegetarian? Was the decision based on compassion for animals? What other reasons might there be for choosing a vegan or vegetarian lifestyle?

Note to Teachers

Using PETA literature, introduce students to animal rights issues. Encourage discussion in class, comparing older, widely held beliefs with a more modern understanding of our relationships with our fellow animals. Assign these ideas as essay or research topics or use them as guidelines for class discussions.



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