



You Decide

Middle School Food and Agricultural Literacy Curriculum

Precepts

- D. Character
- D4. Respect Others

National Standards

- NL-ENG.K-12.5 – Communication Strategies
- NL-ENG.K-12.12– Applying Language Skills

Student Learning Objectives

- As a result of this **unit** the student will...
- Discuss animal issues.
- As a result of this **lesson** the student will...
- Develop a personal belief statement regarding **animal welfare** and production.

Content Outline

Objective 1. Develop a personal belief statement regarding **animal welfare** and production.

- I. **Read an example belief statement.**
 - A. Discuss the author's viewpoint
 - B. Share what students learned
- II. **Write a belief statement**
 - A. Brainstorm with a word web/mind map
 - B. Explain rubric
 - C. Students write statements

Interest Approach

This lesson is to be used as a culminating assignment for the **Animal Welfare/Animal Rights** section. If it is used independently, provide students with information dealing with **animal rights/welfare** in order for them to have a basis for their decisions.

Time

Instruction time for this lesson: 45 minutes.

Resources

Buetow, D. (2007). Teaching a Bad Dog New Tricks. Retrieved November 8, 2009, from This I Believe Web site: <http://thisibelieve.org/essay/19213/> — Essay Rubric, 6+1 Trait Writing Model. (2004). Retrieved November 8, 2009, from Read Write Think Web site: http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson398/rubric-essay2.pdf — National FFA Organization. (2009). LifeKnowledge Online. Retrieved July 9, 2009, from <http://agedlearning.org>

Tools, Equipment, and Supplies

Overhead projector/transparencies
Writing surface
Dictionary
Thesaurus
MS.AI.4.6.TM.A– one per student
MS.AI.4.6.TM.B – one per teacher
MS.AI.4.6.RUBRIC.A – one per student

Key Terms

The following terms are presented in this lesson and appear in **bold italics**:

Animal Rights

Animal Welfare

Begin class by discussing things we believed as a small child. Share a personal story to get their creative juices flowing. Students will capture their thoughts and be prepared to share with the class. After sharing, transition to the fact that students will be developing their own belief statement regarding animal production. Should we use animals for food/clothing? Should we have animals as pets? Is it OK to have animals in the circus or to keep animals in confined spaces?

Isn't it amazing what you can get young children to believe? Think about yourself when you were much younger. What did you believe? I remember when my older sister told me that killer bees had traveled from Africa and living in a tree in our yard, I was PETRIFIED of bees for a whole year! And we've all heard that if you swallow gum it will take seven years to digest. Take the next two minutes and think of all the things you believed when you were younger, but now you know are not true. Quietly list as many as you can on your sheet of paper.



You Decide

Monitor the room as students are writing.

Wow! I saw some pretty entertaining things as you were writing. Who will be the first to share? Keep in mind that when others are sharing, we will give them our full and undivided attention. This means pens and pencils are down and we are not talking to our neighbors.

Pause for students to answer. Allow time for several students to share. Some answers might be more common examples: Santa Claus, Tooth Fairy, Easter Bunny, monsters under the bed or in your closet etc. Some will be more specific such as family traditions or specific things about your town/area. Solicit answers from as many different students as possible.

It's funny to think of how silly some of these items were, but when we were younger we didn't question their truthfulness for a minute. Just as we formed these beliefs at a young age, today we are going to form a personal belief statement as well. Think back to our last few class periods. We've been learning all about **animal welfare** vs. **animal rights**. Today, you will have the opportunity to create your formal belief statement. Should we use animals for food or clothing or work? Is it okay for us to have animals as pets? What about circus animals – should we put them on display for everyone to see? Or how about zoos? Are we being responsible animal caretakers by keeping our animals in confined spaces to prevent them from injury or is it cruel? Well, I've got great news...today we will leave with answers to these questions!

Summary of Content and Teaching Strategies

Objective 1. Develop a personal belief statement regarding **animal welfare** and production.

To see an example belief statement, give each student a copy of **MS.AI.4.6.TM.A**. As students are reading, have them use the Crayon e-Moment® to underline or highlight the main points or beliefs of the writer.

Before we get started writing our personal belief statements, let's first take a look at an example. The page you have just received was written about a man's relationship with his dog. As you are

reading the statement, underline the main beliefs that the author has.

Allow students to read. Upon their completion, talk about the main beliefs the author has.

Hopefully this example will help get them started thinking about what they believe in regards to animal production.

After reading the blog, who will share what they learned about what the author believed in?

Allow students to share and answer any questions they have about the reading.

Like the story we just read, each of you will have the opportunity to write an "I believe" statement. Let's take a look at how we will accomplish this goal.

The first step in the writing process is to brainstorm your topics and supporting points. To do so, students will create a mind map/word web to help them organize their thoughts. In the middle circle, write the words "I believe..." Have students focus on the following four questions. Each question should be answered in a circle attached to the center circle, and then supporting details/reasons why they believe that will come off of the second level. You will want to draw an example on the writing surface.

1. Should we use animals for food, clothing, or work?
2. Should we have animals as pets?
3. Do you think we should provide animals with hormones to make them grow faster? What about antibiotics when they are sick?
4. Should animals be kept in confined spaces? What if that space is designed to prevent injury to the animal or their offspring? What about zoos or circuses? Are these places educational to society?

Display **MS.AI.4.6.TM.B**.

On your paper, write the words "I believe..." in the center and circle them. When I say GO, you will have ten minutes to create a word web brainstorming your main points for your belief statement. You will have four circles coming off of your "I believe..." circle; those four circles will answer these questions:

1. Should we use animals for food, clothing, or work?
2. Should we have animals as pets?



3. Do you think we should provide animals with hormones to make them grow faster? What about antibiotics when they are sick?
4. Should animals be kept in confined spaces? What if that space is designed to prevent injury to the animal or their offspring? What about zoos or circuses?

Then you will write reasons why you believe that way in the third level of circles. Please refer to the example on the writing surface if you have questions. How can I clarify? GO!

Monitor student progress. Some students will need help getting started. Encourage them to think about personal examples or stories that have led them to feel a certain way about how we should treat animals. Once the word webs are completed, students will use them to help organize the paragraphs in their belief statement. Briefly discuss the 6+1 Trait Writing Rubric with students to ensure they are aware of your expectations and how they will be evaluated.

Wow, that was excellent work! Now you have the hard part completed. You have established what you believe and why you feel that way. The only thing we have left to do is put this information into paragraph form. Before we start writing, let's talk briefly about the 6+1 Trait Writing Rubric. This is what will be used to evaluate our statements.

Give students the rubric and discuss the main criteria. Have dictionaries and thesauruses on hand for students to use. If you wish to have students type their statements, establish your expectations for computer use. Statements should have at least six paragraphs: an introduction, a paragraph for each of the four questions, and a conclusion paragraph. When students finish, they need to find a partner and peer edit. Have them use the rubric as a guide to editing their classmates' papers. This will most likely take longer than 45 minutes. You can either assign the statement as homework or they can continue working on it next class period.

OK, now all that is left is to write our statements. Your statement should be at least six paragraphs in length. The first is an introduction to how you feel, and then you have a paragraph for each of the four questions you answered in your word web, and finally a conclusion paragraph. If you have questions, consult the dictionary or a thesaurus. If that doesn't help, raise your hand and I will be around to help you shortly.

Review/Summary

Just like we all believed in different things when we were young, each one of us has a different belief statement about how animals should be treated. This is what makes the world and our classroom so exciting. We are all different, and it's our differences that make us intriguing to others. Thank you all for your hard work today and willingness to share your thoughts.

Application

Extended classroom activity:

Students may create a podcast of their belief statement.

FFA activity:

Visit a dairy farm to see how animals are cared for. Witness the cleanliness and climate control (fans/misters etc.) and discuss that if the cows aren't "happy," they don't produce milk.

SAE activity:

Develop a presentation about animal care to share with elementary school students.

Evaluation

Students will create a personal belief statement.

Answers to Evaluation

Use the 6+1 Trait Writing Rubric to evaluate belief statements.



Teaching a Bad Dog New Tricks

David Buetow - Chicago, Illinois

As heard on NPR's Weekend Edition, September 16, 2007

I believe in my dog.

I believe in the way he lives his life, and I try to emulate him. I strive to gain his level of happiness in the simplest of things. Like the way he approaches each meal with endless appreciation and even joy. While I struggle to decide what to eat from full cupboards and lament what I don't have, he circles the floor, excitedly anticipating the very same meal, in the very same portion, at the very same time every day.

I believe in how he lives in the present. As my day fills with stress, crowded commutes and endless deadlines, I think of Duncan home alone. His day was probably boring, but he's ready to move right past it once we're together.

I believe in his egalitarian treatment of everyone despite race, creed or appearance. He never pre-judges. Before I had him, I considered myself "street smart," avoiding eye contact with people I didn't know or didn't think I wanted to know. Running through Chicago neighborhoods with Duncan has changed all that. Now when people smile at us, I smile back, and if Duncan stops to say hello I stop and greet them, too.

I never had a dog before; I got Duncan at the urging of a friend who had probably grown as tired of my bachelor behavior as I had. My long work nights and weekends always ended with a lonely run, and a phone call to someone I didn't really listen to. All I talked about was me and what was wrong with my life. My friends stopped asking me out because I was always either at work or talking about work.

I had dates with women who would mistakenly think I was loyal to them but I never returned their calls or thanked them for the cookies they left on my doorstep. I was what some people would call "a dog" – a bad dog. Not one person depended on me, nor I upon them. One Sunday I woke up at noon, and I suddenly noticed how silent my house and my life was. I realized I couldn't expect any valued relationship until I created one first. So I got Duncan.

All of a sudden, where no one depended on me, he did. It was extreme detox from selfishness: Let me out. Feed me. Clean up after me. Watch me sleep. I found that I actually liked being relied upon. When I realized that I could meet his needs, I also realized he met mine.

I believe in the nobility of Duncan's loyalty, and his enthusiasm. Every time I come in the door, he's waiting to greet me with glee.

Now, when my girlfriend comes over, I get up and run to the door to greet her like I learned to do from my dog.

Before he met his chocolate Labrador, Duncan, trial attorney David Buetow was a lifelong bachelor. He now resides with his fiancée and Duncan on Chicago's north side, where he and Duncan run frequently, and all three spend many evenings together at home.

Independently produced for NPR by Jay Allison and Dan Gediman with John Gregory and Viki Merrick.



Four Questions for Mind Map

- 1. Should we use animals for food, clothing, or work?**
- 2. Should we have animals as pets?**
- 3. Do you think we should provide animals with hormones to make them grow faster? What about antibiotics when they are sick?**
- 4. Should animals be kept in confined spaces? What if that space is designed to prevent injury to the animal or their offspring? What about zoos or circuses?**



Essay Rubric

Category	4	3	2	1
Focus on topic (content)	There is one clear, well-focused topic. Main idea stands out and is supported by detailed information.	Main idea is clear, but the supporting information is general.	Main idea is somewhat clear, but there is a need for more supporting information.	The main idea is not clear. There is a seemingly random collection of information.
Accuracy of facts (content)	All supportive facts are reported accurately.	Almost all supportive facts are reported accurately.	Most supportive facts are reported accurately.	No facts are reported or most are inaccurately reported.
Introduction (organization)	The introduction is inviting, states the main topic, and previews the structure of the paper.	The introduction clearly states the main topic and previews the structure of the paper, but it is not particularly inviting to the reader.	The introduction states the main topic, but does not adequately preview the structure of the paper nor is it particularly inviting to the reader.	There is no clear introduction of the main topic or structure of the paper.
Sequencing (organization)	Details are placed in a logical order and the way they are presented effectively keeps the interest of the reader.	Details are placed in a logical order, but the way they are presented sometimes makes the writing less interesting.	Some details are not in a logical or expected order, and this distracts the reader.	Many details are not in a logical or expected order. There is little sense that the writing is organized.
Flow & rhythm (sentence fluency)	All sentences sound natural and are easy-on-the-ear when read aloud. Each sentence is clear and has an obvious emphasis.	Almost all sentences sound natural and are easy-on-the-ear when read aloud, but 1 or 2 are awkward or difficult to understand.	Most sentences sound natural and are easy-on-the-ear when read aloud, but several are awkward or difficult to understand.	The sentences are difficult to read aloud because they sound awkward, are distractingly repetitive, or difficult to understand.
Word choice	Writer uses vivid words and phrases that linger or draw pictures in the reader's mind, and the choice and placement of the words seems accurate, natural, and not forced.	Writer uses vivid words and phrases that linger or draw pictures in the reader's mind, but occasionally the words are used inaccurately or seem overdone.	Writer uses words that communicate clearly, but the writing lacks variety, punch, or flair.	Writer uses a limited vocabulary, which does not communicate strongly or capture the reader's interest. Jargon or clichés may be present and detract from the meaning.