

Animal Matters



IN THE NEWS...

Marcus the sheep

In September, Marcus the Sheep hit the headlines. After being hand-reared by schoolchildren at Lydd Primary School in Kent, he was sent for slaughter by headmistress Andrea Charman. Marcus's meat was to be sold as a raffle prize to raise money to buy more animals for the school farm. Many children and parents protested and the controversy sparked online campaigns and a fierce debate in the media.

The headmistress defended the decision to kill, arguing that the aim was to educate children about the food cycle. But how accurate was the picture painted by this exercise? While pupils might have learnt the valuable lesson that farm animals are feeling creatures, like their pets at home, they might mistakenly believe that all animals are reared with similar concern for their welfare. And while some were upset at the prospect of Marcus's death, they were not aware of what abattoirs are really like.



Animal slaughter is unpleasant – so unpleasant that Animal Aid does not condone the showing of harrowing slaughter footage to school students of any age. The true horror has been revealed by our recent undercover investigation in

which we filmed secretly at three randomly selected slaughterhouses. This has provided indisputable evidence of routine cruelty, brutal treatment and ineffective stunning methods.

RESOURCES: For a free *Eat This!* resource for KS4, contact our education department.

National anti-shooting week

Every year, Animal Aid organises a week of action at the end of September before the start of the pheasant shooting season on 1 October. The aim is to highlight the plight of 'game' birds. In the UK, more than 45 million pheasants and partridges are reared in battery cages, sheds and pens before being released to serve as feathered targets for shooters.



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A fair debate on the law concerning hunting and other bloodsports is a useful and interesting way of fulfilling the requirements of the citizenship curriculum. In May 2009, the Countryside Alliance called for 'field sports' to be made part of the curriculum in all schools, and while Animal Aid is vehemently opposed to the activities that organisation promotes, we are confident that any honest examination of the facts will lead the majority of students to oppose hunting and shooting.

RESOURCES: To order or download a copy of our Pheasant Shooting or Hunting factsheets, visit the resources section of our website, or contact our education department. See overleaf for lesson idea.



Meat-Free Monday

Animal farming is now recognised as a significant contributor to global warming.

Designating one day a week as 'meat-free' is a simple but effective way for every individual to reduce his or her contribution to climate change.

The Meat-Free campaign was initiated by Ghent City Council in Belgium and promoted in the UK by Paul McCartney. It now has support worldwide, including some local UK councils.

Why not suggest that your school adopts Meat-Free Monday to help reduce the community's carbon footprint, improve pupils' health and fight world hunger?

RESOURCES: For more information, see our website. (Google Animal Aid Meat-Free Monday) and see resources overleaf.

RESOURCES ►

► English resource offer

Animal Aid is offering up to four sets of *Animal Writes*, our English resource, FREE to teachers.

Produced by **Teachit**, this 64-page resource booklet contains nine balanced units with lesson plans and student worksheets suitable for photocopying.

"Animal Writes, while not disguising the uncompromising commitment of the campaigns that lie behind it, offers many opportunities within nine well-planned units for ensuring that the debate is eloquent and well informed."

"The resources are brilliant – extremely effective in the classroom."
C. Waterman, English teacher
(Huxlow Science College)



TO ORDER: For up to four FREE copies of the *Animal Writes* pack, contact our education department.

► New DVD on zoos



***No Place Like Home* is a new DVD from the Captive Animals' Protection Society (CAPS).**

It exposes conditions in UK zoos and challenges the argument that they are essential for conservation and education. Filmed over the past two years in zoos, safari parks and aquaria, this DVD updates their 2000 production *Sad Eyes and Empty Lives*, which has been used by many schools.

TO ORDER: For a FREE copy of this new DVD, go to www.captiveanimals.org or phone 0845 330 3911. To order or download a copy of *Animal Aid's* factsheets on Zoos or Aquaria, visit the resources section of our website, or contact our education department.

► School speakers

Animal Aid's network of trained speakers continues to go from strength to strength.

New initiatives have included free cookery demonstrations in food technology lessons and a programme of talks and activities for primary-age children.



TO ARRANGE A TALK: Please call Carole on 01732 364546 ext 234 or email carole@animalaid.co.uk

► Meat-Free Monday packs

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (Peta) has produced two new cross-curricular resource packs for primary and secondary schools.

Each FREE pack contains 10 units including photocopy-friendly worksheets and lesson plans, plus an A2-sized colour poster.

TO ORDER: For a FREE copy of the packs or to find out more go to: <http://www.petaf.org.uk>

Lesson Ideas

Citizenship/English KS4 – The politics of 'country sports'

Ask students to research the laws passed in the UK to regulate or ban cruel sports (such as cock fighting, bull baiting, badger baiting, dog fighting, or otter hunting). Invite representatives from Animal Aid and the Countryside Alliance (or the local Conservative candidate/MP) to present the arguments for and against a ban.

Ask students to debate whether or not the law to ban hunting with dogs should be repealed (as the Conservatives propose). Discuss what action individuals and pressure groups might take to retain or amend the law. Ask students to plan a campaign to lobby MPs for the retention or repeal of the hunt ban.

See our website (Education/Newsletter/Lesson Ideas) for the results of a poll of MPs showing the 'most effective ways to influence MPs and peers'. (From Third Sector publication)

English KS3 – Zoo diaries

Discuss personal experiences of zoos and develop this into a discussion of how the lives of zoo animals differ from those of animals in the wild. Watch the CAPS film *No Place Like Home* and also ask students to investigate zoo websites for arguments in favour. Set students the task of writing the diary of a day in the life of a) an animal in captivity and b) a member of the same species living in the wild.



English KS3 – Marcus debate

Lesson one: Working in small groups, ask students to read through newspaper articles on the slaughter of Marcus the Sheep (see below*). Ask half of the groups to draw up a list of arguments for and the others to list the case against Marcus the sheep being slaughtered.

Lesson two: Ask groups to present their case and to debate the issues raised. You could also discuss how the newspapers handled the story.

***See our website (Education/Newsletter/Lesson Ideas) for links to newspaper articles.**

Contact details

Animal Aid Education Department

The Old Chapel, Bradford Street, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1AW

To order resources or to book a school speaker:

- **Website:** www.animalaid.org.uk/education
- **Tel:** 01732 364546 ext 221 (orders), ext 234 (talks) or ext 230 (other enquiries).
- **Email:** education@animalaid.co.uk