

Animal Rights Knowledge Organiser

Key words

Animal experiments: Testing on animals, either for medical or cosmetic purposes to ensure that the product is safe for use by humans.

Animal Rights: The idea that animals should have rights because of respect for life.



Cloning: The scientific method by which animals or plants that have exactly the same genetic make-up as the original can be created.

Conservation: To repair and protect animals and areas of natural beauty.

Dominion: The idea that humans have the right to control all of creation.

Extinction: When all members of a species have died out and that species will never naturally exist on earth again.

Humanist: A person who thinks humans are the most important, compassion towards them should come first.

Factory farming: When animals are used for meat and dairy products, but are kept indoors in very small spaces.



Fur trade: The business of farming and hunting wild animals for their fur to be made into clothing.

Genetic modification: Plants and animals that have had their natural make up altered by scientists.

Ivory trade: The sale of ivory from elephant tusks, often illegal.



Responsibility: Duty; the idea that we are in charge of our own actions.

Sanctity of life: Life is sacred and belongs to God.

Stewardship: Duty to look after the world, and life.

Vegan: A person who will not use animal products.

Vegetarianism: The belief held by people who do not eat meat.

Uses of animals

Throughout the world humans use animals in a variety of ways; companionship, help, work, sport, food, fashion, leisure, entertainment, education about preservation, experiments and scientific developments. While many of these ways can be justified, the problem comes with how some people treat animals, even in a use we find acceptable.



Overview



UK Law

1822 – Law to protect cattle.
1911 – All animals protected from cruel treatment.
1996 – Label must state if tested on animals.
2004 – Hunting wild mammals with dogs illegal.
2007 – Animal Welfare Act: regulates the treatment of animals in research, exhibition, transport, and by dealers.

Other interesting facts about UK law on animals

Fox hunting is illegal
Rare birds cannot be kept as pets
Animal testing labs are inspected
Animal research for cosmetics is banned
You must be 16 or above to buy a pet
Dangerous dogs cannot be kept as pets



How can someone protect the rights of animals?

Celebrate International Animal Rights Day (10th December)
Hold candlelight vigils
Take part in protest marches
Write letters to MP's
Join an animal welfare group (WWF/RSPCA)
Boycott any product/industry that uses/exploits animals
Become vegetarian
Become vegan
Use violence or threatening behaviour



Animal rights believer: St Francis of Assisi

St Francis gave up all his possessions and devoted his life to helping the poor and sick. He called all things in the natural world his brothers and sisters, and wrote a song about nature. He was even said to have spoken to birds and tamed a wolf. He believed we should treat everything in the world like a brother or sister, as God the Father had created us all.



Can we use animals anyway we want?

Arguments FOR the use of animals

Humans are the most importance race so they can do what they want, sometimes using animals is best for humans; animal testing is important for example because it leads to advances in science, we have been designed to use animals e.g. humans have teeth for eating meat, so it is completely natural.



Arguments AGAINST the use of animals

Just because they can't speak doesn't mean we should do what we please, animals feel pain in the same way that humans do, as we're the most powerful, we should look after everything else.

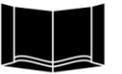
Religious views

Arguments FOR the use of animals

Christianity – The traditional Christian thought is that humans are made in God's image and have a soul, so are more important than animals. As such they can be used by humans for ways which benefit them. Animal experimentation would be allowed for example as it could save human lives.



Islam – Although highlighting the importance of respect and care for animals, the Qur'an also states that animals can be used by humans (following strict guidelines) as they were given power over the earth.



Judaism – Throughout Jewish history there have been examples of Jews using animals. Part of worshipping G-d for example has involved making sacrifices of animals in the Bible.

Arguments AGAINST the use of animals

Buddhism – We must look after animals and treat them well. Using animals in a way that causes them harm goes against the first precept to abstain from killing or hurting all living beings and also generates bad karma.

Hinduism – All living things have a soul and should be respected in line with ahimsa (no violence), especially cows as they are sacred.

Islam – It is important to follow example of Muhammed who cared for animals.

Sikhism – The natural world is a gift from God and we have to take care of it. Sikh's believe we should look after the environment (and everything in it) out of respect for life, and as worship to God. Sikh gurus have said that God is within everything, so in some ways damaging the world is like damaging God.



Religious teachings

"God breathed into Adam the breath of life". (Christianity)

"Rule over every living thing." (Christianity)

"All life is sacred." (Christianity)

"Help not harm every living thing." (Buddhism)

"Destruction of nature, results from ignorance, greed and lack of respect." (Dalia Lama, Buddhism)

"The earth is green and beautiful and Allah has appointed you as stewards over it." (Islam)

"In nature we see God." (Sikhism)

"We support the reduction of animal suffering resulting from human behaviour." (Humanism)



Sum up

Religious people believe that animals are part of God's creation. All life, including that of animals is sacred. Most religious believers think that they were given dominion over animals, so can use them. However, animals should always be treated with respect and kindness.