

e-lesson

Week starting: 31st May 2010

1. Unnecessary cruelty?

This week's lesson is about animal testing, which is a controversial subject in some countries.

Level

Pre-intermediate and above (equivalent to CEF level A2-B1 and above)

How to use the lesson

1. You could begin the lesson by asking the students what they understand by human rights, and why they think such rights exist. Then ask your students if they think animals also have rights, and ask them to justify their answers. Are there any ways in which the students think animals are treated badly, either in their country or elsewhere? If it hasn't already been mentioned, introduce the subject of animal testing, and ask why it takes place. Do students think animal testing can be justified, and if so, under what circumstances?
2. Give your students five to ten minutes to read through Worksheet A, encouraging them to look up new vocabulary. Tell them they are going to answer a series of questions on the text but that they shouldn't write anything down at this stage.
3. Divide the students into pairs and hand out Worksheet B. Ask the students to work together to complete Exercises 1 and 2, in which they have to answer two different kinds of comprehension questions. (Note that with question 7 of Exercise 2 there is no right or wrong answer: the students are being asked to imagine what one of the characters might be thinking.)
4. Check answers in open class. You could also ask the students if they particularly agreed or disagreed with any of the opinions expressed by Chris or Oliver.
5. Hand out Worksheet C and ask the students to work together to complete the crossword.
6. Check answers in open class.

Answers:

Exercise 1

1. F 2. T 3. D 4. F 5. T 6. F 7. T 8. F 9. F 10. F

Exercise 2

1. In the centre of town.
2. At the university laboratory.
3. Because he thinks that without it, people wouldn't have a lot ('half') of the medicines they have today, and therefore that diseases that are now curable would still be fatal. He also adds, later in the conversation, that animal testing is the only way scientists can find out the effects of some medicines.
4. In the way that they can feel pain and stress.
5. Because there are there are regulations about animal testing, according to which the scientists have to minimise the animals' suffering.
6. Chris's point is about the ham in Oliver's omelette. He doesn't think it makes sense for Oliver to disagree with animal testing and yet apparently not have a problem with a pig dying in order to make food for him.
7. Maybe he thinks mice feel less pain than cats, dogs or monkeys. Or maybe the fact that cats and dogs are such popular pets, and monkeys the closest animals to humans, makes him care more about their suffering than about the suffering of mice.
8. Animal experimentation.

Exercise 3

1. medicines 2. worth 3. suffering 4. computers 5. clever 6. doubt
7. justified 8. curable 9. protest

If the sentences have been completed correctly, *cosmetics* will read from top to bottom. (Explain the meaning of the word if necessary.)

2. Related Websites

Send your students to these websites, or just take a look yourself.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid_3420000/newsid_3429900/3429993.stm

Resources for a classroom debate on animal testing from *BBC Newsround* (2006), with arguments in favour and against. Accessible to pre-intermediate level.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/animals/index.shtml>

A section of the BBC website on 'animal ethics', including a sub-section on animal experimentation. Intermediate level and above.

<http://www.aboutanimaltesting.co.uk/>

The website 'About Animal Testing', which seeks to present 'all sides of the debate'. Intermediate level and above.

<http://www.speakcampaigns.org/>

The website of SPEAK, a British organization involved in protesting against animal testing at a laboratory belonging to Oxford University. Intermediate level and above.

<http://www.pro-test.org.uk/>

The website of Pro-Test, an organization set up to counter the activities of SPEAK in Oxford. Intermediate level and above.