

Unit 5 How the law protects animals – a local-to-global study

About the unit

This unit uses issues surrounding the law on animal welfare to introduce pupils to the role and function of the law at a local, national and global level. It encourages the development of knowledge and understanding in citizenship through skills and participation. Pupils approach the subject with some prior knowledge and understanding, and this enables them to engage in discussion, consider the views of different interest groups and think about what the law should say on the topic.

The issues drawn on here represent just one possible example, and could be replaced in accordance with the interests of the teacher and the class and the availability of suitable resource material. Any topic chosen should be used to exemplify political issues and procedures, in order to develop pupils' understanding of the importance of parliamentary decisions and the relevance to their own lives.

Where the unit fits in

This unit addresses the following aspects of the key stage 3 citizenship programme of study:

Knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens

Pupils should be taught about:

- 1a the legal and human rights and responsibilities underpinning society, basic aspects of the criminal justice system, and how both relate to young people
- 1d the key characteristics of parliamentary and other forms of government
- 1f the work of community-based, national and international voluntary groups

Developing skills of enquiry and communication

Pupils should be taught to:

- 2a think about topical political, spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues, problems and events by analysing information and its sources, including ICT-based sources
- 2b justify orally and in writing a personal opinion about such issues, problems or events
- 2c contribute to group and exploratory class discussions, and take part in debates

Developing skills of participation and responsible action

Pupils should be taught to:

- 3a use their imagination to consider other people's experiences and be able to think about, express and explain views that are not their own
- 3b negotiate, decide and take part responsibly in both school and community-based activities
- 3c reflect on the process of participating

This unit links with unit 6 'Government, elections and voting'.

Expectations

At the end of this unit

most pupils: have a broad understanding of the importance and level of impact of different types of legislation, including local by-laws, national and international laws. They understand the role of Parliament in reviewing legislation, and the parliamentary processes by which laws are passed in the UK. They identify and describe ways in which individuals and groups outside Parliament can influence legislation. They appreciate the role of the media and public opinion in affecting the legislative process, and how the law is relevant to everyday life. They research and discuss the issues raised, present their ideas and reflect on their opinions and those of others.

some pupils have not made so much progress and: are aware that laws are made at a local, national and global level. They discuss the issues raised and give some examples of how the law is important in protecting the welfare of animals. They know that laws in the UK are made and reviewed by Parliament. They understand that different people have different views on the issue of animal welfare.

some pupils have progressed further and: understand the role of different levels of government, from local to global, and describe how they interrelate. They have a sound understanding of the process by which laws are introduced, and of the function of Parliament in reviewing and amending laws. They understand how public opinion and the media, as well as lobby and voluntary organisations and groups, can influence decision-making. They are aware of the different bases on which international agreements operate, and have some idea of how international treaties are enforced. They research and discuss the issues raised, present their ideas and reflect on their opinions and those of others.

Resources

Resources include:

- *Your rights and responsibilities* (Book 1, 2001) and *Understanding citizenship* (Book 2, 2001), published by the Citizenship Foundation

Many groups and organisations produce online resources that are relevant to citizenship. QCA has not printed these website addresses as it recognises that they can and do change, often at short notice. So that we can monitor and maintain a reliable and useful resource, the website addresses of the following organisations can be accessed through the key stage 3 citizenship scheme of work site at www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes

- UK Parliament (*including information on bills passing through Parliament, and further support for schools*)
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (*information on animal health and welfare*)
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
- Countryside Alliance (*information on rural issues*)
- Compassion in World Farming
- WWF

In addition, local councils all have websites providing useful information on the services they offer

NB: care should be taken when encouraging pupils to access websites

Literacy and language

References to the Key Stage 3 National Strategy *Framework for teaching English, Years 7, 8 and 9* (NSE) are given in brackets and are indicated in appropriate sections of this unit.

Through the activities in this unit pupils will be able to understand, use and spell correctly words relating to:

- law, eg *legislation, democracy, parliament, pressure group, influence, power, lobby, charity, public opinion, international organisation, treaty, agreement*

Speaking and listening – through the activities pupils learn to:

- make a formal presentation in Standard English (year 7 S&L3, year 8 S&L3, year 9 S&L2)

Reading – through the activities pupils learn to:

- identify bias and objectivity in texts (year 7 R9, year 8 R6, year 9 R6)

Links with other subjects

RE: this unit links with the study of Creation and environmental issues in RE local agreed syllabuses

Pupils should learn:

Pupils:

How does the law protect our pets?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to consider the general need for regulation in respect of private behaviour • to raise some issues for critical examination, consider the different roles of the law, and evaluate different approaches to dealing with particular issues • that certain areas of public life are regulated by local authorities, under powers devolved from central government | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask pupils which pets they keep at home. Why do people keep pets? What problems are associated with keeping them? Ask pupils whether they think the law is or should be involved in the issue of pet ownership. If so, why? • Consider how the law deals with particular aspects of pet welfare, eg <i>the age at which people can own a pet (pet owners must be at least 12 years old); the question of endangered animals (buying and selling endangered species is forbidden); what happens when animals are considered dangerous (the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 sets out restrictions on keeping certain breeds of dog as pets); what happens when there is thought to be a threat to public health</i>. What do pupils think about these regulations? Are they justified? • Explain to pupils that some of these regulations are enforced by local authorities through by-laws, eg <i>councils have the right to levy fines on owners whose dogs foul pavements</i>, and that local authorities have powers to decide certain issues granted to them by central government, particularly where local knowledge is necessary. Ask pupils what other local authority powers or duties they are aware of. Pupils could carry out a search on the local authority's website, or make direct contact to discover more. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • think critically while discussing reasons why laws should regulate aspects of everyday life • understand that there are different levels of government, eg <i>local, central</i>, and identify some matters that are the responsibility of the local authority • critically analyse a range of issues, problems or events from different points of view | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This section illustrates how government policy affects us at local, national and international level, and helps to show how the different levels of government interrelate. • Teachers could use another topic, eg <i>children's rights, health, a consumer issue</i>. • More detailed material on how the law relates to animal welfare issues can be obtained from the Citizenship Foundation, and is found in their publications <i>Your rights and responsibilities</i>, Book 1 and <i>Understanding citizenship</i>, Book 2. See also specially written citizenship material from the RSPCA, Friends of the Earth, the WWF and Greenpeace. • Link with thinking skills: reasoning. |
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Learning objectives

Pupils should learn:

Possible teaching activities**Learning outcomes**

Pupils:

Points to note**How does the law protect animal welfare?**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to reflect on an issue of public concern and consider how the law relates to it • to consider some of the social, moral and political dimensions of an issue such as animal welfare • to consider different ways of trying to achieve changes in the law • to consider the part people play in creating social pressure, both individually and by joining together • about the main stages through which a bill passes before it becomes law • about the role of public opinion in politics and in influencing government agendas • to identify bias and objectivity in texts (NSE) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the pupils to think about an issue such as animal welfare. They could list examples of cruelty to animals, and discuss their views on topics like factory farming and the use of animals in scientific research. With the pupils, identify and collate the range of views on any issues discussed. • Give the pupils a list of possible influences on the way animals are treated, <i>eg local councils (which enforce regulations), national government (which develops policies and laws), the media, public opinion, the opinion of particular individuals</i>. Ask them to discuss which of these carries the most weight. (Note that the same list would apply to most of the issues teachers might select.) • Ask pupils, in groups, to discuss and investigate the role of voluntary organisations and pressure groups. They could look at key groups, considering the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>What do you know about the groups and any similar organisations you have heard of?</i> – <i>Who do the groups try to put pressure on?</i> – <i>What methods do the groups use?</i> – <i>Are all the methods used by pressure groups equally acceptable, eg targeting individuals?</i> – <i>What information do the groups publish, and what are their current campaigns?</i> • Pupils analyse the literature produced by pressure groups to discover what kinds of arguments are used, and whether it provides balanced views or seems biased. • With the pupils, consider how laws are made. Focus on a law that links with the chosen issue, <i>eg the Animal Scientific Procedures Act 1986</i>, and examine how it came to be passed and how it was affected by public opinion. Ask pupils to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>What happens when the Government announces that it will bring in a new law?</i> – <i>What consultations does it carry out?</i> – <i>How do people try to influence what the law says?</i> – <i>Can individuals make a difference to the law-making process? If so, how?</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offer reasons why an issue such as animal welfare is of public concern • understand what voluntary organisations are and how they operate, and describe their relationship to government in terms of making and changing the law • understand the term ‘pressure group’ • describe different methods of protesting against legislation and discuss in outline some of the legal and moral issues these raise • identify reasons both for and against an issue, <i>eg animal testing</i>, and express a personal opinion on the issue orally and in writing • research an issue using literature from pressure groups, and identify reasons for treating such information with caution • describe in simple terms how a bill passes through Parliament and becomes law | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind pupils of the ground rules for discussion that were established at the start of year 7 (see introductory unit 1 ‘Citizenship – what’s it all about?’) • Useful contacts for researching different views on these issues include the RSPCA and Countryside Alliance websites (see www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes). • The Citizenship Foundation publishes material showing how the Animal Scientific Procedures Act 1986 went through the parliamentary process before becoming law. It also offers a number of case studies illustrating the different legal and illegal campaigning tactics used by animal rights groups. • Link with NSE: year 7 R9, year 8 R6, year 9 R6. |
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Learning objectives

Pupils should learn:

Possible teaching activities**Learning outcomes**

Pupils:

Points to note**How does Parliament debate an issue?**

- to debate an issue that has already been debated in Parliament
 - about how issues are debated in Parliament, and how legislation is developed
 - to make a formal presentation in Standard English (NSE)
- With the pupils, consider a topical issue related to the law and animal welfare, *eg the use of animals in scientific research, fox-hunting, factory farming*. Examine the arguments surrounding the issue and then, rather than hold a generalised 'for and against' debate, hold a debate in the style of Parliament. This involves:
 - setting out an initial motion with a proposal to make or change a law
 - allowing pupils to introduce amendments of their own and propose new clauses
 - taking a vote, first on the changes and then on the overall motion.
- discuss an issue from a social, moral and political standpoint, and express and justify their own opinion orally and in writing
 - outline the parliamentary process
 - understand how governments can be influenced by public opinion and lobby groups
 - understand the function of opinion polls in public life, and relate this to the importance of being informed citizens who take an interest in public affairs
- A debate in this format reflects the way in which Parliament debates new laws. It provides opportunities for changes and amendments to be made to an original proposal, sometimes in response to the views of particular organisations, *eg pressure groups*, and sometimes as a result of public and media opinion. Further guidance about organising debates is available at www.dfes.gov.uk/citizenship
 - Link with NSE: year 7 S&L3, year 8 S&L3, year 9 S&L2.
 - Information can be obtained from the RSPCA and Compassion in World Farming websites (see www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes).
 - Material from the Countryside Alliance, which is against a ban on hunting, can be found on their website (see www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes).
 - Newspapers are a good source of material on current issues, and many have a wide selection of daily features on their websites.

How is animal welfare of concern internationally?

- about the need for international cooperation in order to address matters of global concern
 - to describe the methods by which international agreements can be implemented in the absence of an international court
- Ask pupils to investigate an animal welfare issue that is of concern internationally, *eg the threat to the whale*. Why is the whale threatened? How serious is the threat? Why is a global problem like this particularly difficult to resolve? What has been agreed internationally on the issue, and by whom? What action can be taken to enforce these sorts of international agreements? How is this process different from enforcing national and European laws (these are enforced through courts of law)?
 - Pupils could also consider what the threats to the whale are from people/countries who break the international codes of conduct. What kinds of pressures can be brought to bear on them to improve the situation? What is the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) here, and of the individuals who support their work? What international efforts are being made to protect the whale?
- identify reasons why some issues need to be addressed through international cooperation
 - distinguish between laws operating at a local and national level and international agreements, which do not have the weight of law
 - know about and describe the role of voluntary organisations and pressure groups that operate internationally
- Teachers may find it helpful to focus this section on an endangered species, *eg the whale, the tiger, the orang-utan, the ladybird*.