



MODULE

ON

**HUMANE
EDUCATION**

FOR

**SENIOR PHASE
LEARNERS**



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LESSON 1

Animal Sentience

Question 1

Let's begin by turning the spotlight on ourselves. Are *we* sentient?

Answer

If you are aware of yourself and know what it feels like to be you – if you can experience pain and pleasure, love and hate, fear and joy, misery and emotional hurt, compassion and empathy, along with countless other feelings – then you are sentient. The word *sentience* comes from the Latin root meaning “to feel.”

The opposite of sentient is *insentient*. An insentient being is not aware of its own existence and cannot feel physical or emotional pain or pleasure. Think about kicking a rock. Only the sentient being will feel pain. The insentient entity will feel nothing.

Sentience is central to the very concept of human rights. Here's why: because emotional or physical pain feels bad, and pleasure feels good, these feelings are relevant to which actions are bad and which are good. Hence, human rights exist to safeguard our well-being. If we could not experience harm – or benefit – rights would have no meaning.



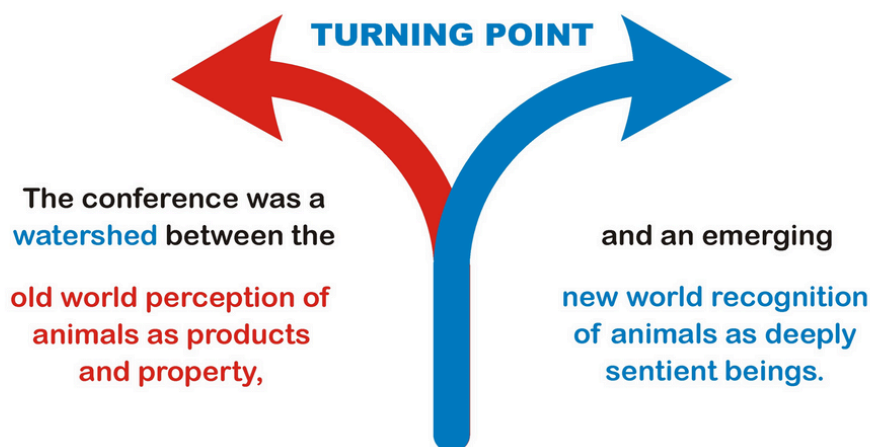
Question 2

Are animals sentient too?

Historic milestones in recognising animal sentience

Anyone who has shared life with a dog, cat, or other companion animal may find it surprising that animal sentience was only formally recognised internationally in the 21st century.

- 2005: At a conference in London hosted by *Compassion in World Farming*, scientists voted unanimously to urge the United Nations to recognise animals as sentient beings capable of suffering. The event, *From Darwin to Dawkins: The Science and Implications of Animal Sentience*, marked a turning point. [Animal Voice April 2005](#)
- 2006: Delegates from 108 countries attended a follow-up symposium hosted by the *World Society for the Protection of Animals* and a global petition to the UN called for the recognition of animals as sentient. [Animal Voice August 2006](#)



A gorilla named Koko had played a role in achieving this new understanding

The story of Penny Patterson and Koko

A gorilla named **Koko**, revolutionised our recognition of animal sentience though learning *Sign Language*.

Born in the San Francisco Zoo in 1971, Koko was hand-reared by **Penny Patterson**, a graduate student at Stanford University, who began teaching Sign Language to the young gorilla.

Koko caught on quickly. By the age of 3, she could communicate with 200 signs and, as her vocabulary developed, she made up her own signed words. For example, she called a ring, a ‘finger bracelet’; she called ice cream ‘cold-candy’; an empty cup ‘drink no’. When she saw a horse with a bit in its mouth, she signed ‘sad teeth’.



Koko had a special love for kittens. She named one of her favourites ‘All Ball’ and cuddled the kitten as if he were her child. She grieved the loss of All Ball when he died, and she made sounds similar to human crying. Her favourite bed-time story was *The Three Little Pigs*, and she even learned to play the recorder.

By the end of her life, Koko had learned to use more than 1000 signs, and understood 2000 spoken English words. Just before she passed away in 2018 at the age of 47, Koko told Penny she had a message. Using sign language, Koko said: “I am gorilla. I am flowers, animals. I am Nature. Man Koko loves. Earth Koko loves. But man stupid. Koko cry. Fix Earth. Help Earth. Nature see you. Thank you.”

Truly, Koko’s legacy is an extraordinary example of inter-species communication. *(Information from The Gorilla Foundation).*

South Africa acknowledges animal sentience

In an unanimous judgment in 2016, South Africa's Constitutional Court declared that:

- Animals are sentient beings capable of suffering and experiencing pain.
- Animals have intrinsic value as individuals.
- Protecting animals reflects constitutional values and the interests of society.
- Animal protection safeguards the moral status of humans and prevents the erosion of human values.

www.saflii.org/za/cases/ZACC/2016/46



In handing down judgment, Justice **Sisi Khampepe** stated:

“The rationale behind protecting animal welfare has shifted from merely safeguarding the moral status of humans, to placing intrinsic value on animals as individuals.”

Complexities ahead

While sentience is not dependent on the extent and complexity of cognitive ability, it is also not uniform across all species. In addition we tend to be more considerate towards animals we live with – like dogs and cats – than towards equally sentient animals like pigs or cows.

For decades, fish were dismissed as insentient. However, in 2025 *Science Alert* reported overwhelming evidence that fish suffer up to [22 minutes of intense pain](#) when taken out of water. Considering that an estimated 2.7 trillion fish are killed for human consumption each year, this represents an almost unfathomable scale of suffering.

Despite knowing that animals are sentient, we still allow them to be...

- hunted for trophies (*the word 'wildlife' makes them 'other'*)
- imprisoned in cages (*the words 'units of production' makes them 'other'*)
- experimented upon (*the word 'models' makes them 'other'*)
- imprisoned for entertainment in zoos and circuses (*we justify this in our minds as 'education'*)
- we destroy their habitats (*we need more land for humans*)
- we send them on long sea journeys to slaughter
- we send them into space for research purposes. (*See the story on Laika*)



Laika

Let's turn our minds, for the moment to Laika, a small stray dog from the streets of Moscow in Russia who, in 1957, aboard the spaceship Sputnik 2, became the first living creature to orbit the Earth. Doctors had embedded medical devices in her body to monitor her heart rate, breathing rate, blood pressure and physical movement as the rocket took her into orbit with G-forces reaching five times normal gravity levels.



Data relayed back to Earth showed that the noises and pressures of the flight terrified Laika. Her heartbeat rocketed to triple the normal rate, and her breathing rate quadrupled. She reached orbit alive, circling the Earth in about 103 minutes, but (thankfully) died soon afterwards.

More than 30 years later, Russian medical doctor and space dog trainer **Oleg Gazenko** commented: *"The more time passes, the more I'm sorry about it."*
(Story is courtesy *The Smithsonian Magazine*, 11 April 2018)

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/sad-story-laika-space-dog-and-her-one-way-trip-orbit-1-180968728/>

However, sending animals into space continues to this very day!

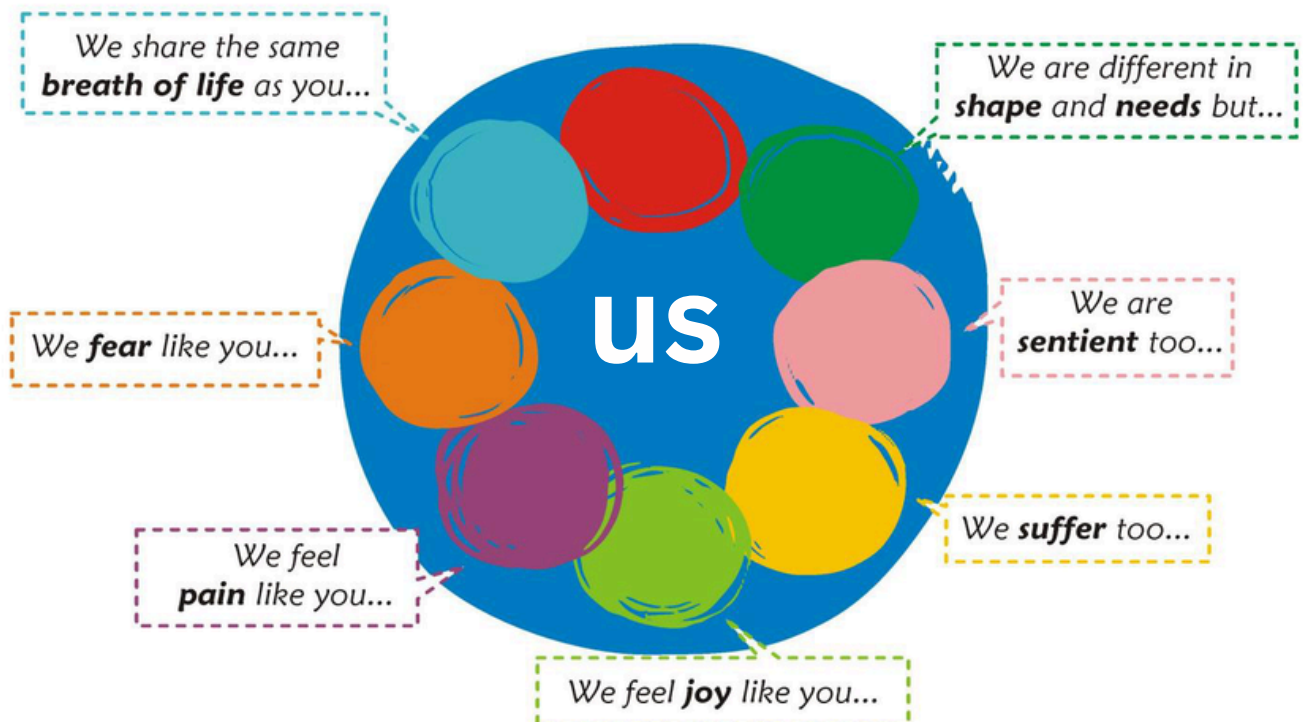
An August 2025 issue of *The Conversation* called for this to stop, and for an international acknowledgment of animal sentience.

Read [HERE](#)

'us' and 'them'



Instead of an 'us' and 'them' mentality, should we strive to include sentient beings in a universal circle of respect and compassion?



Will AI help transform our relationship with animal sentience?

Artificial Intelligence could help shift our view of animals from “property” to “co-inhabitants of Earth” with rights of their own.



Possible scenarios include AI help to accommodate animal sentience in world ethics:

- **Accelerating alternatives to our consumption of animal products:** For instance, AI is speeding up the development of cultivated meat, making it more affordable and comparable in taste to conventional meat, and therefore potentially reducing animal slaughter. It's already happening!

[SEE HERE](#)



Philip Lymbery, CEO of Compassion in World Farming, delights the crowd by eating meat after four decades of veganism at the launch of cultivated meat in Cape Town in April 2024.

To find our more, read ***For the Love of Kin***, an allegory inspired by this historical event and told from the perspective of *Pecorino*, the rescued sheep, still living at a Western Cape animal sanctuary, who became part of it all.

[READ HERE](#)

See Comprehension Notes on page 27

Possible scenarios (CONTINUED)

- By analysing animal sounds, body language, stress hormones, and behaviours **AI could translate their feelings into human language:**

Dr Con Slobodchikoff, CEO of Animal Communications Ltd., and his team of scientists have set a goal for themselves.

Within a decade or so, they believe they will have developed an App that will enable us to interpret and understand nonhuman language. See zoolingua.com

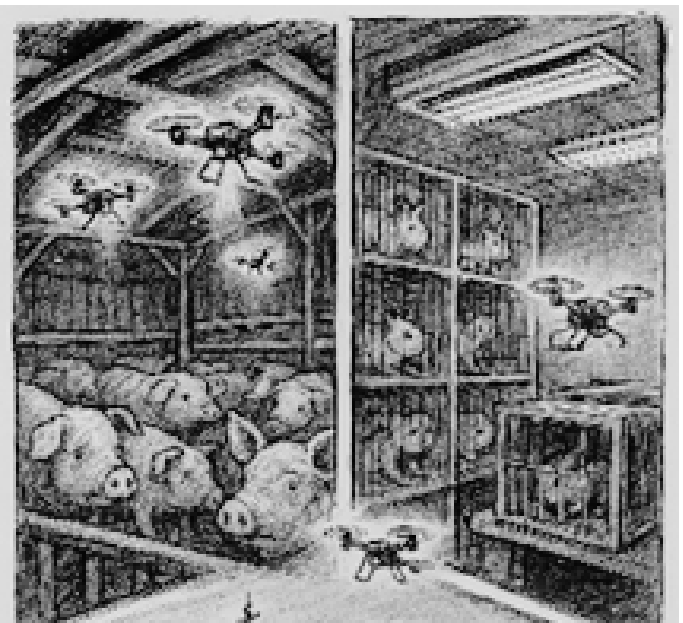
He explains: *“At Zoolingua, we believe communication isn’t about teaching animals our language—it’s about learning theirs. Using cutting-edge AI and ground-breaking scientific research, we’re decoding the unique ways animals express emotions, needs, and even ideas. This isn’t science fiction; it’s the future of human-animal connection.*”



“My client seeks relief from human harassment, m’lord”

- **AI could uncover hidden cruelty:**
AI-powered micro-drones could record proof of abuse on factory farms, fishing fleets, or laboratories, with blockchain authentication preventing denial.

- **Immersive empathy-building:**
AI-generated holographic experiences could allow people to live a day as a factory-farmed pig, chicken, a hunted lion, or a laboratory animal used for medical research.



Take a look at the **Five Freedoms for Animals**, as endorsed by the *World Organisation for Animal Health*, as basic requirements for animal welfare.

THE FIVE FREEDOMS FOR ANIMALS World Organisation for Animal Health Founded as OIE

FREEDOM from HUNGER and THIRST by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour	FREEDOM from DISCOMFORT by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area	FREEDOM from PAIN, INJURY or DISEASE by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment	FREEDOM to EXPRESS NORMAL BEHAVIOUR by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind	FREEDOM from FEAR and DISTRESS by ensuring conditions and treatment that avoid mental suffering
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Yet, industrialised farming (factory farming) does not comply with the Five Freedoms.

25 million laying hens in South Africa are kept in battery cages...



We wouldn't keep our dogs like this, but we keep our pigs like this...

 LESSON 2

Animal Sentience and Human Rights

In 2023, the United Nations made an unprecedented addition to the Convention on the **Rights of the Child (CRC)**. In General Comment No. 26 (GC26), the UN decreed that all persons under the age of 18 are to be protected from witnessing violence – including violence inflicted on animals.

(Please see UN [General Comment 26 Article 19](#).

Please also see [Concluding Observations](#) delivered by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on 08 February 2024, specifically Section 27e.)

This historical development marked the first explicit entry of animal welfare into the human rights domain, acknowledging growing scientific evidence that exposure to violence – whether against humans or animals – alters brain development in children and can have lifelong mental health consequences.

Empathy at the Core

To understand why this link is so important, we must consider the role of **empathy** in human development. Empathy is the ability not just to sympathise (“feeling sorry for”) but to **feel** with another – understanding and sharing their emotions as if they were our own.

It is not only humans who experience empathy. Many species of sentient animals – such as elephants, dolphins, dogs, pigs, rats, and primates – have demonstrated empathetic behaviours, including consoling others, refusing rewards when others are harmed, and cooperative problem-solving. This suggests that the evolution of communities and civilisation itself depends on empathy.



Professor Simon Baron-Cohen, University of Cambridge, is a leading scholar on empathy. He explains:

“When empathy is dimmed, it causes us to think only of our own interests. When we are solely in the ‘I’ mode, our empathy is switched off.”

Empathy, therefore, is not a luxury—it is the foundation of moral society.

What Causes Empathy to Be Lost?

If empathy is so vital and innate, what erodes it? One powerful factor is exposure to violence, including violence against animals.

When we witness suffering caused by violence, our brain often initiates a numbing process to shield us from emotional pain. This is called desensitisation. Over time, progressive desensitisation leads to:

- the normalisation of violence,
- the erosion of empathy,
- the disruption of fundamental human values,
- and, eventually, an acceptance and participation in violent acts.

The Cycle of Empathy Erosion:

1. Exposure to violence
2. Progressive desensitisation
3. Normalisation of violence
4. Decline of empathy
5. Disruption of moral values
6. Acceptance of violence as “normal”
7. Participation in violence

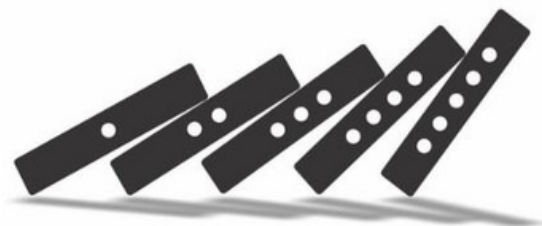
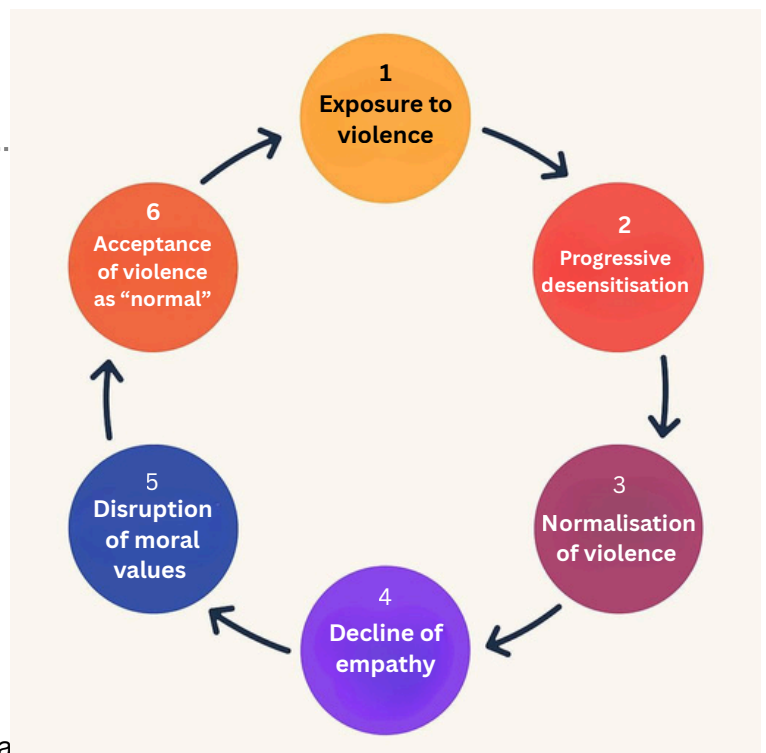
This cycle is not abstract.

Research in criminology has shown strong correlations between animal abuse, child abuse, and domestic violence. Where animals are harmed, humans are often at risk too.

See [European Link Coalition](#)

See [National Link Coalition](#)

See Teesside University [Research](#)



Why Animal Sentience Matters

If animals were not sentient, how we treat them would have no moral relevance. But science is clear: animals are sentient. They experience pleasure, pain, fear, and joy.

Thus, protecting animals from abuse is not only about animals – it is about protecting human dignity, empathy, and society itself.

Practical Implications

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has gone further, explicitly calling for an end to bullfighting and trophy hunting, recognising them as forms of violence with harmful psychological impacts on children. These practices objectify animals, ignore their sentience, and entrench violence as entertainment or sport.



Education as Prevention: The Danish Example

Denmark includes empathy education in its national curriculum. This approach has been shown to:

- reduce bullying,
- improve mental health and well-being,
- and foster greater respect for life, both human and nonhuman.

If societies embedded empathy education alongside recognition of animal sentience, children would be supported to grow into adults better equipped to resist cycles of violence.

Questions for Reflection and Debate

- Should animal well-being be considered a human rights issue?
- Why or why not?
- Does exposure to violence of any kind harm the psychological development of children?
- Can you give examples from your own community or life?
- Would granting nonhuman animals the legal right to protection from abuse reduce violence in human society? Is our empathy incomplete if it excludes nonhuman animals?
- Can we be fully, proudly human without extending moral concern to other sentient beings?

Conclusion

The recognition of animal sentience within human rights law represents a watershed moment. It underscores that protecting animals from abuse is inseparable from protecting children from psychological harm and protecting societies from the erosion of empathy. Violence against animals is not a separate issue from human justice – it is a mirror that reflects and shapes our humanity. To protect children, uphold human rights, and build compassionate societies, we must also protect animals.

Class Activities

Activity 1: Comprehension Questions

1. What does the UN's General Comment No. 26 (2023) say about protecting children?
2. Explain the difference between empathy and sympathy. Give an example of each.
3. What happens during "desensitisation"?
4. List the stages in the "Cycle of Empathy Erosion."
5. Why does protecting animals also protect children?

Activity 2: Small Group Debate

Motion: ***"Animal welfare is a human rights issue."***

Divide into groups of 4–5 learners. Half prepare arguments for the motion, half against. Then hold a short debate.

Activity 3: Reflective Writing

Write a one-page essay answering:

"Is our empathy incomplete if it excludes animals?"

Encourage learners to use examples from their own experiences, such as pets, farm animals, or wildlife.

Activity 4: Empathy vs Sympathy Comparison Chart

■ Sympathy vs Empathy

Sympathy	Empathy
"I feel sorry for you."	"I feel with you."
Pity, concern, distance	Shared experience, connection
Example: "That's sad."	Example: "I understand your sadness because I've felt it too."

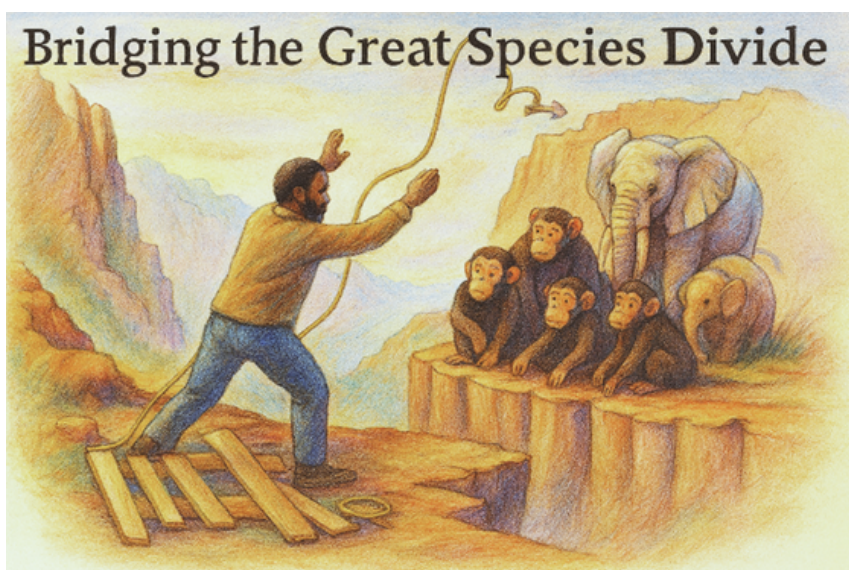
Empathy builds stronger connections ■

Learners can be asked to role-play scenarios from each side.

Activity 5: Human + Animal Rights Connection Bridge

Draw your own version of a bridge with two sides:

- On the left bank: "Children's Rights"
- On the right bank: "Animal Rights"
- The bridge itself = Empathy.





LESSON 3

Animal Sentience and the Words we use

Language shapes how we think

Linguists remind us that the words we use matter. Language can either build respect or reinforce discrimination.

- **Positive language** affirms and strengthens others.
- **Negative or derogatory language** can diminish others, creating the perception that they are less worthy or inferior.

Think about the words that have been used to insult or belittle you or others. How did they affect the way you felt about yourself? Now imagine how this applies to animals.

Insults to animals in everyday speech

Philosopher **Professor David Benatar**, in his book [Very Practical Ethics](#), notes that when someone calls another human an “animal,” it is rarely meant as a compliment. This shows that, hidden in our language, there are many insults to animals.

Perhaps the most commonly-slur is the b-word so often used to denigrate women. However, change is beginning to happen. For example:

- Instead of saying pets, many people now say companion animals.
 - Why? Because companionship is a **two-way relationship**, not a one-sided one.
- Instead of saying an animal has an owner, some prefer guardian or caregiver.
 - Why? Because words like “owner” suggest animals are property, like objects, rather than sentient beings.

The language of oppression

One of South Africa’s leading socio-linguists, [Professor Raj Mesthrie](#), explains that derogatory words are not harmless. They are a central part of discrimination. He argues that we need “linguistic disinfection” – in other words, cleansing our language of anti-animal slurs.

See [Animal Voice](#)

The language of oppression

The language we use against non-humans reflects dominance and subjugation. Think about it...

“Stock” or “livestock” – Reduces sentient beings to economic units, implying they exist primarily for human profit.

“Game” – Frames wild animals as targets for sport rather than as autonomous creatures.

“Pest” – Justifies lethal control of animals deemed inconvenient, erasing moral consideration.

“Harvest” – Often used in hunting or culling contexts, implying animals are crops rather than lives.

“Problem animal” – Labels creatures in conflict situations (like elephants near farms) as obstacles rather than sentient beings.

“Resource” – Positions wildlife as commodities for human use, whether in tourism, meat, or trophies.

“Population” (in ecological management) – Focuses on numbers instead of individual welfare, enabling mass culling or sterilisation.

“Vermin” – Dehumanises or delegitimises existence, historically used to justify extermination.

Words that show respect

Animals are not objects. They are **sentient beings** — capable of feeling, experiencing, and having their own personalities. This is why many people choose to use **he** or **she** instead of it when referring to an animal.

By changing our words, we can also begin to change our attitudes. If language can harm, it can also heal.

Comprehensive Tasks

A. Understanding the text (CAPS: Reading & Viewing – Demonstrates understanding of ideas and information in texts)

1. What does it mean when we say “language shapes how we think”?
2. Explain what Professor Raj Mesthrie means by linguistic disinfection.
3. Why does Professor Benatar believe it is wrong to call someone an “animal” as an insult?
4. What is the difference between calling an animal a pet and a companion animal?
5. Why is it problematic to call someone the owner of an animal?

B. Critical thinking (CAPS: Language – Thinking and Reasoning / Writing & Presenting – Developing arguments)

1. Think of a time when someone used negative words about you or others. How did it feel?
2. Can you think of common sayings in English or another language you know where animals are used as insults (for example, “you pig”)? Why might these be harmful?
3. Do you agree that animals should be called he or she rather than it? Give reasons for your answer.
4. What changes in language could you make in your own life to show more respect for animals?

C. Vocabulary (CAPS: Language Structures & Conventions – Expanding vocabulary and using words in context)

Match the term with the correct definition:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| a) Sentient beings | 1. Words or expressions that insult or belittle others. |
| b) Derogatory language | 2. Living beings capable of feeling and experiencing. |
| c) Companion animal | 3. Replacing harmful words with more respectful ones. |
| d) Linguistic disinfection | 4. A term showing a two-way relationship between humans and the animals they live with. |

D. Writing task (CAPS: Writing & Presenting – Short transactional/reflective writing)

Write a short paragraph (6–8 sentences) explaining how changing our language can help people treat animals with more respect. Use at least two terms from the vocabulary list in your answer.

READ: For the Love of Kin

We understand that this story is an allegory.

Definition of allegory:

An allegory is a created work in which all of the elements (characters, events, and setting) are symbolic and work together to express and reflect a social idea.

[READ HERE](#)

Opportunities for discussion and debate based on the short story *For the Love of Kin*

CHAPTER 1

The Sheep is a Symbol of the Voiceless and Marginalized

The sheep narrating the story represents beings who are often dismissed or overlooked, especially animals. By giving this sheep intelligence, emotion, and memory, the story challenges the dismissal of the feelings of sentient beings.

- The sheep opens with a confrontation of prejudice: people see sheep as stupid and only valuable for food. Despite being considered “less than,” the sheep claims a proud role in changing the world for the better, pointing to the power of compassion and the dignity of every life, no matter how small.

Allegorical Themes

1. Self-Respect and Inner Worth

The narrator’s insistence on self-respect reflects a moral awakening. Even the most disregarded life form has inherent value and potential to affect change.

2. Miracles and Second Chances

The story of Sweet-pea the hen is symbolic of rebirth and the possibility of redemption, even after trauma and neglect.

3. Interconnectedness of Life

The idea that all creatures in the sanctuary are part of a family shows an ecological and ethical worldview, where all life is worthy of love and protection.

In Summary: This chapter, though told from the perspective of a sheep, is an allegory for social justice, compassion, and the transformative power of kindness. It critiques societal norms that prioritize utility, dominance, and efficiency over empathy and intrinsic value. It calls readers to reconsider how we treat those we consider “lesser”, and imagine a world shaped by care and respect for all living beings.

Opportunities for discussion and debate based on the short story *For the Love of Kin*

CHAPTER TWO

Chapter Two continues to build on the emotional and symbolic world introduced in Chapter One, where animals are not only rescued but are treated as deeply cherished individuals, each with their own story and emotional depth.

Esel's story is the emotional core of this chapter. It tells of a *lifelong partnership* between a donkey and a man who, though poor, has immense dignity and love for his animal companion. Their life together is portrayed with beauty and hardship inter-woven – gathering firewood, selling scrap, and sharing humble meals.

Esel and Oom Piet are equals in endurance and in affection. They work together, rest together, and ultimately age together. Oom Piet's farewell to Esel is filled with sorrow but also *selflessness*. He does not want Esel to see him walk away. His request to Thuli is humble, as he entrusts his oldest friend to her care.

Grief, Memory, and Healing

Esel's grief after Oom Piet's departure is deeply relatable. He isolates himself, unable to engage with the sanctuary or accept comfort. His mourning is quiet, personal, and painful – *a mirror of human grief*.

Esel's gradual return to life, encouraged by Thuli's kindness, is a narrative of **healing**. He does not forget, but he comes to *understand* that Piet's parting was an act of love, not abandonment. The sanctuary becomes not just a place of safety but of emotional recovery.

Thuli remains a quiet but powerful presence in this chapter. Her approach to care is not just physical – it is emotional, intuitive, and respectful of each animal's individuality. She knows when to comfort, when to give space, and when to encourage. Her sanctuary is not just a refuge; it's a **home**, rich in emotional complexity.

Chapter Two deepens the reader's understanding of the sanctuary not just as a place, but as a philosophy where every life matters, where emotional wounds are tended with as much care as physical ones, and where love sometimes means saying goodbye.

Opportunities for discussion and debate based on the short story *For the Love of Kin*

CHAPTER THREE

Chapter Three is a confrontation between two worldviews: one rooted in traditional animal agriculture and utilitarianism, and the other in compassion, dignity.

Koos and Thuli – A Clash of Values

The **central tension** in this chapter comes from the heated exchange between Thuli and Koos who represents the traditional farmer, and sees Bill the goat as a possession – a goat that has served his reproductive purpose and now, in old age, should serve one final use: as meat and a wall trophy. His casual tone as he sips coffee and discusses “lovely chops” and trophy horns reveals how normalized this mindset is.

Thuli’s emotional response shine a light on how fundamentally different her view is. She doesn’t just see Bill as an animal – she sees him as a sentient being.

Their argument escalates into a **philosophical standoff**:

- Koos appeals to tradition, history, and human entitlement (“what our ancestors have always done”).
- Thuli appeals to justice, empathy, and a future beyond exploitation (“we give more consideration to a bunch of grapes than to a farm animal”).

This chapter doesn’t paint Koos as a villain, though. It shows him as *human*, a product of a cultural legacy that treats animals as means to an end.

Chapter Three blends personal conflict, moral philosophy, and a touch of wry humour. Bill is more than just a goat – he is a symbol of the lives that are often cast aside once they are no longer “useful.” In saving him, Thuli doesn’t just add another animal to her sanctuary – she secures a victory for compassion, and perhaps even plants the seed of change in a man like Koos.

Opportunities for discussion and debate based on the short story *For the Love of Kin*

CHAPTER FOUR

We learn that the name of the narrator used to be **Lambkin**, a diminutive that signals innocence, dependence, and youth. His renaming to **Pecorino** (ironically, a cheese made from sheep's milk) is laced with unexpected meaning.

This renaming signals **maturity, respect, and individual recognition**. Pecorino is no longer a "lambkin" – a helpless baby – but a conscious being, worthy of being named anew.

Pilgrim enters the story not as a preacher or a warrior, but as a person who allows himself to *feel*. His reaction to the pigs being transported is not dramatized – it's humanised. His tears are real. It shows us how **bearing witness to suffering** can break open even the toughest shells.

One of the most touching aspects of this chapter is how **Pecorino comforts Pilgrim**. The roles are reversed. We expect humans to console animals. Instead, Pecorino hears a snuffle, sees a man in pain, and offers his head to be scratched – a **silent gesture of mutual recognition and care**. This moment reflects the **reciprocity of sanctuary life** – animals are not merely recipients of compassion, they are capable of **giving it back**.

Themes at a Glance

- **Empathy in action** – Pilgrim's emotional honesty challenges societal norms of masculinity and stoicism.
- **The power of naming** – Names have power. Pecorino's new name signals identity, recognition, and a shift in status.
- **Silent suffering, shared pain** – The pigs are unseen, but their screams echo into the hearts of those who listen.
- **Sanctuary as transformation** – Not just a refuge for animals, but a crucible where people change too.
- **Hope through small acts** – Thuli reminds us that even one meal, one gesture, one saved life matters.

Chapter Four is about a quiet rebellion against institutionalised violence and cruelty.

Opportunities for discussion and debate based on the short story *For the Love of Kin*

CHAPTER FIVE

Chapter Five is about the once-quiet sanctuary blossoming into a **vibrant hub for food, education, and change**, centred around *Pilgrim's plant-based restaurant, The Hungry Herbivore*.

We learn that **Pilgrim is a chef**, and not just any chef. Through his food, he challenges belief systems more effectively than lectures ever could. This is **gentle activism**: feeding instead of fighting, proving instead of preaching. It is activism that is both gentle and powerful.

Koos returns, and announces: “*I’m not a vegan but I’m happy to be a flexitarian,*” he told Pilgrim cheerfully.

This statement isn’t revolutionary – but it is **realistic**, and that’s where its power lies. Pilgrim and Thuli’s work hasn’t alienated Koos; it’s **shifted his perspective**. He hasn’t transformed overnight, but he’s moved. And in this world, *movement* matters more than perfection.

Themes at a Glance

- **Food as philosophy** – Every dish Pilgrim makes is an invitation to a better world.
- **Environmental ethics** – Bamboo, seed pod garlands, nasturtiums: the design of the restaurant is activism in form.
- **Change through joy** – There’s no moralizing here – just good food and warm hearts.
- **Reconciliation** – Koos’s return shows that transformation is possible, even for those once on a different path.
- **Sanctuary as ecosystem** – The animals, plants, people, and buildings are all in delicate, respectful balance.

Opportunities for discussion and debate based on the short story *For the Love of Kin*

CHAPTER SIX

Chapter Six quietly pivots the story into a realm that is at once intimate and cosmic – a chapter about **bodily integrity, betrayal (with kindness), and a mysterious scientific destiny**. Told with Pecorino’s usual charm and gentle confusion, it’s both funny and poignant.

The Tone of Deception: Love in Disguise

Right from the opening lines, we’re alerted to a **change in energy**:

“I knew something was up the morning I detected a note of sympathy...”

This emotional intuition shows how deeply **attuned** Pecorino is to the humans around him. He notices the way their voices shift, their movements, even their *intentions*. That intuitive recognition of mood, so often associated with animals, is very evident.

But what follows is a subtle betrayal – done with love, for his “own good,” yet experienced as a **breach of trust**:

“I couldn’t believe how roughly I was being treated, and I bellowed out my objection.”

Neutering and Its Dual Meaning in the context of the story:

Pecorino’s neutering serves two purposes, both **practical and symbolic**:

- **Practical:** To prevent him from fathering more lambs – a decision Thuli frames as part of responsible animal care.
- **Symbolic:** A literal turning point in Pecorino’s life. He’s now truly set apart from the traditional cycle of animal reproduction, farming, and commodification. No offspring of Pecorino’s will ever be raised for profit. This single act breaks a cycle.

(It is important here to relate the above to our responsibility towards companion animals – spaying and neutering)

The Peppercorn-Sized Mystery

Just when we think the chapter is over, it throws us a curveball:

“What I couldn’t possibly have imagined was that... a tiny peppercorn-sized piece of me... had also been extracted... placed into a sterile container... straight to the city...”

This line marks a **radical shift in tone**, from the rural to the futuristic. Suddenly, this humble sanctuary story now reaches toward the **world of biotech and scientific wonder**. A *piece* of Pecorino is now bound for a lab, a place where “the world’s most talented young scientists”

Opportunities for discussion and debate based on the short story *For the Love of Kin*

CHAPTER SEVEN

Chapter Seven shifts from mystery to **miracle**, weaving themes of **celebration, trauma, rescue, and transformation** – all against the backdrop of a sanctuary that continues to be a place where **lives are not only spared but reborn.**

Celebration with Underlying Significance

The chapter opens with an unusual kind of toast:

“To a kinder world!” ... “Here’s to Pecorino!”

This signals a triumph – not merely of a personal milestone, but of **something larger**. We’re not told exactly what has just been achieved, but there are hints: Pilgrim’s “special nerd friends at the bioreactor place”; suggest something scientific and **groundbreaking**, likely connected to the tiny piece of Pecorino harvested in the previous chapter.

The clinking of glasses and the pomegranate juice give the scene a special quality. There’s hope and celebration in the air, even though it’s unspoken.

The sudden arrival of a **police van** immediately disrupts the celebratory mood, creating tension:

“Thuli didn’t like policemen arriving at the sanctuary.”

But this time, the police aren’t adversaries. They are heroes in the rescuing of Pretty.

The Naming of Pretty: Claiming Identity

“Pretty (as she named her)”

Once again, **naming** becomes an act of **liberation and love**. Just like Pecorino was renamed with intention, Pretty’s new identity marks the beginning of **her new story**.

There’s something radical about this: to call a formerly bound, silenced animal “Pretty” is not only loving – it’s an **act of restoration**. She is not a thing. She is not food. She is **seen**.

Closing Thoughts

Chapter Seven is about **rescue in all its forms** not just Pretty from her physical captivity, but perhaps humanity itself from its own numbness. It’s also a reminder that healing is never done in isolation. It takes community, courage, and sometimes... a police van and a pair of kitchen scissors.

Opportunities for discussion and debate based on the short story *For the Love of Kin*

CHAPTER EIGHT

Chapter Eight marks a seismic shift in the story's moral terrain. What began as a charming sanctuary tale has now grown into a **philosophical fable about the future of food, ethics, and science.**

Unknowingly, Pecorino becomes a pioneer

“Unbeknown to me... the peppercorn-sized piece of me... had grown in size.”

This passage balances the **innocence** of the narrator with the **momentousness** of what is unfolding in the background. Pecorino has **inadvertently become a symbol**, a bridge between species, science, and the future.

Science as stewardship

“Under the watchful and anxious eyes of super-smart bio-technicians... exaltation at their success...”

The scientists are not merely techies – they are portrayed as **visionaries**, caretakers, almost like midwives delivering a new kind of hope into the world.

They are not playing God; they are attempting to **re-write a broken contract** between humanity and animals.

Cultivated meat “Real meat to people without killing animals...”

Here, the text takes a bold philosophical stance. The notion that **death is not a prerequisite for meat** is radical. The act of growing animal cells, without harm, without violence, suggests an **entire paradigm shift in human consumption.**

It also invokes the **ethical dilemma** that has haunted humanity for millennia:

- Can we enjoy the sensory pleasure of meat **without moral compromise?**
- Can technology rescue us from our own destructive appetites?
-

The chapter suggests: maybe yes. A single meat ball becomes:

- a product of **hope.**
- a symbol of **nonviolence.**
- a **beginning**, not an end.

Pecorino, the once-frail Lambkin, has become something more – a **living symbol of a kinder world.**

Opportunities for discussion and debate based on the short story *For the Love of Kin*

CHAPTER NINE

The transformation of Thuli and Pilgrim into almost unrecognizably elegant versions of themselves symbolizes the weight and formality of the occasion. It's not vanity –it's reverence for life and a better and kinder way of living.

From here, the story dares to glimpse into the future.

The Epilogue jumps the reader forward a quarter-century to imagine a post-industrial, post-violence world where children learn about the shocking reality of a world they never knew.

Their incredulous response captures it all:

- Violence is no longer normalized
- The word 'animal' is a relic of history. The reframing of animals as Kin is not just a linguistic shift – it represents a new moral framework, one grounded in equality, empathy, and responsibility
- Pecorino is memorialised for his role in human progress. His story becomes legend, his impact eternal.

INVITE the learners to explore the internet for the current situation regarding cultivated meat, to discover whether it has a chance of revolutionising our future.



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