Be Aware

The Endangered Species

The Endangered Species is a teaching slide/filmstrip set produced by the International Fund for Animal Welfare and Wildlife Agencies. The Endangered Species is a phrase that may bring to mind thoughts of successful adaptation by some animals to life in a world dominated by humans. In actuality, “un-endangered species” is often used by hunting groups to differentiate “game animals” from those whose numbers are fully protected by law in order to imply that it is “acceptable” to kill animals like deer and turkey for fun because their populations are healthy.

The message of this teaching tool is that human educators who question the veracity of this premise and are concerned about the ethics of managing wildlife primarily to fulfill human needs should be alerted about this program.

—submitted by Debbie Hillyman
fifth grade teacher
Myers Street Elementary School
Dover-Foxcroft, ME

Without A Classroom

For humane educators at shelters and other special places...

Tell Your Favorite Teacher

The New England Anti-Vivisection Society announces its fifth Annual Scholarship Essay Contest for high school seniors. Participating students are asked to write an essay titled “A Brighter Day for Animals: Putting a Stop to Animal Experimentation.” We want to encourage young people who may or may not have had any contact with vivisection or the anti-vivisection movement, to research the topic and relate their feelings.

NEAVS will award two $1,000 first-place awards, two $500 second-place awards, and four $250 third-place awards. Essays must be received no later than March 1, 1986. For a list of contest rules, write to Sandra Larson, Director of Education, New England Anti-Vivisection Society, One Bullfinch Place, Boston, MA 02114.

Beware!

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These university classrooms and co-curricular activities that are written to ERCIC want you to understand the education activities and other materials you may have authored relating to the education and development of children from 1 to age 12. Here’s a good deal for budding authors! Now may be the time to write up those human education activities we’ve outlined but never had a chance to put formally into words. Submit activities or curriculum materials that you have written to ERCIC. If accepted, your work will be announced in ERCIC’s monthly journal, catalogued, abstracted, and indexed. In addition, it will be stored for computer retrieval, as well as reproduced and distributed in microfiche and paper copy. You will receive a copy of the accepted materials for your files. It’s easy to be an ERCIC author. And since documents are not copyrighted by ERCIC, they may be submitted elsewhere for publication. Send two copies of your material to ERCIC/ERCIC Acquisitions, College of Education, University of Illinois, 601 S. Pennsylvania Avenue, Urbana, IL 61801-4977. And while you’re at it, be sure to send a copy to us at Children of Animals, Box 392, East Hadam, CT 06423 for possible inclusion in the magazine.

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That is the message of this teaching tool. Human educators who question the veracity of this premise and are concerned about the ethics of managing wildlife primarily to fulfill human needs should be alerted about this program.

—submitted by Debbie Hillyman
fifth grade teacher
Myers Street Elementary School
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Caution: Math, Nutrition Puzzles, board games, word search and crossword puzzles, rainy day and car activities, and more. A bonus center game teaches children about cooperation and working with others to help animals. To order “I Love Animals and Broccoli,” send $5 to Baltimore Vegetarian, Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203.

—submitted by Detra Wasserman
and Charles Stahler

Children of Animals

Teaching About Stray Pets

Charlie, the Dog Nobody Wanted is a hard-hitting, fourteen-minute video documentary on the fate of an abandoned dog.

The story begins with an adorable litter of pups. Charlie is adopted by a man who abandons him two years later in the middle

of a financial hardship. Charlie wanders the streets for a year. Ultimately picked up by a humane society, he is eventually euthanized because nobody wants him. The film goes black at this point. I recommend stopping the tape here and discussing with the audience what happened to Charlie and why animals are euthanized.

There is an additional sequence of events that follows. The film director reappears with Charlie and explains that Charlie’s story happens for real to millions of animals each year. My students and I found this additional sequence confusing. I don’t recommend using it, although other humane educators may disagree. It allows for a “happy ending” of sorts, as advertised in the material accompanying the video, but I did not find it very effective. The tape is appropriate for children in third grade and above. It is very important that not every animal finds a home in discouraging people from allowing their pets to breed. It is available from the Massachusetts Humane Association, 9725 East Hampden Avenue, Denver, CO 80231. Write to them for price and ordering information.

—submitted by Carolyn L. Ridg Program Specialist Massachusetts SPCA

Euthanasia

Euthanasia is not a pleasant topic, yet you probably address it in many of your classroom presentations in schools. A good way to introduce this sensitive topic is the following quick activity which graphically demonstrates the pet overpopulation problem.

Divide the class into two groups. (Students remain seated at their desks, however.) Tell students that both groups will be clapping a rhythm and when you say “stop” they are to stop. (Stress beforehand the students may be reluctant to stop clapping!) Tell one half of the class to clap 15 times with you leading the pace as you count down from 1 to 15. Tell the other half of the class that they are to clap only every other time that the other group claps for numbers 1 and 3. Hence, the rhythm is 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 (clap on 15), repeat.

After you have reached 15 four or five times, stop the activity. Explain that for every 15 dogs that are born in the United States, only 1 United States citizen is born. (With older students, you can explain that no one knows the exact ratio of dog births to human births in the United States. This particular estimate is taken from Zero Pet Population Growth in Los Angeles, California. For cats, the estimated ratio is 45 births for each human birth.) Explain to students that in order for every dog to have a home, each person, even newborn babies would have to take care of 15 dogs. Ask students why many dogs would have to be in their house. Ask if they think they could provide all the love, food, housing, exercise, medical care, and so on that would be needed by all of the dogs in their house.

On the Rocks

Would you undergo a slight sense of trepidation if your organization were asked to participate in a rockfest? We at the Providence Animal Rescue League were at first, but the opportunity to reach more than 3,000 young people was too good to pass up. We set up a booth, where we provided educational materials and responded to hundreds of questions from young adults. We were very pleased to receive much positive feedback from an age-group that is often neglected by humane education efforts. Donation Doughty received an overwhelming amount of commitments from concert attendees. Just goes to show, you shouldn’t let any event pass you by—no matter how unlikely an audience you anticipate. Anyone who would like further information about how we got involved in our rockfest, please contact me at the Providence Animal Rescue League, 34 Elbow Street, Providence, RI 02903.

—submitted by Celeste Cabot
Providence Animal Rescue League

24 CHILDREN & ANIMALS / DECEMBER 1985

CHILDREN & ANIMALS / DECEMBER 1985 25