

YEAR 9-10 DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGIES

Consuming Cruelty: Analysing Animal Product Consumption and Designing Future Alternatives

Australian Curriculum Alignment

Learning Area	Design and Technologies
Year Level	Year 9 and 10
General Capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy • Numeracy • Critical and Creative Thinking • Personal and Social Capability • Ethical Understanding • Information and Communication Technology Capability
Strands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Technologies Knowledge and Understanding
Content Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critically analyse factors, including social, ethical and sustainability considerations, that impact on designed solutions for global preferred futures and the complex design and production processes involved (ACTDEK040) • Explain how products, services and environments evolve with consideration of preferred futures and the impact of emerging technologies on design decisions (ACTDEK041)
Elaborations	<p>(ACTDEK040)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critiquing mass production systems taking into account ethics and sustainability considerations, for example the mass production of food, clothing and shoes and why manufacturers produce different versions of the same product <p>(ACTDEK041)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explaining the consequences of social, ethical and sustainability decisions for products, services and environments, for example a managed public environment such as a theme park • Predicting the impact of emerging technologies for preferred futures • Recognising real-world problems and understanding basic needs when considering designed solutions, for example Engineers Without Borders High School Outreach Program allows students to design solutions to problems in a country in Asia

Cross-Curricular Priority

Sustainability

Systems

[01.2](#) - All life forms, including human life, are connected through ecosystems on which they depend for their wellbeing and survival

[01.3](#) - Sustainable patterns of living rely on the interdependence of healthy social, economic and ecological systems

Futures

[01.7](#) - Actions for a more sustainable future reflect values of care, respect and responsibility, and require us to explore and understand environments

[01.8](#) - Designing action for sustainability requires an evaluation of past practices, the assessment of scientific and technological developments, and balanced judgements based on projected future economic, social and environmental impacts

[01.9](#) - Sustainable futures result from actions designed to preserve and/or restore the quality and uniqueness of environments

Acknowledgments: This Australian Curriculum alignment statement is based on the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) materials, which are licensed under CC BY 4.0. The material has been modified from the [Australian Curriculum](#) website (accessed January 2020).

Information to teachers

The suggested activities below have been developed for a Stage 5, Year 9-10 Design and Technologies class and focus on innovation and creativity. The suggested activities ask students to critically examine the facts and figures used in the [Voiceless Animal Cruelty Index \(VACI\)](#); questioning how **animal cruelty** can be linked to the consumption of animal products. Students will then consider what countries could be doing better in order to protect animals from cruelty. Students will have the opportunity to design sustainable solutions to current and predicted future environmental problems to protect our world and the animals within it.

The [Voiceless Animal Cruelty Index \(VACI\)](#) tracks the **animal welfare** performance of fifty countries which were selected among the largest producers of farmed animal products in the world. The interactive Index evaluates and ranks the countries based on the nature, extent, and intensity of cruelty associated with farmed animal production. In addition, it also assesses and ranks the consumption of farmed animals and animal products and evaluates the regulatory frameworks put in place to protect animals within each country.

Time Allocation

50-100 minutes

Target

Mixed ability class with extension tasks.

Unit Focus

Question - what do you think constitutes **animal cruelty**, and what do you think countries could be doing better to protect animals from cruelty?

Consider - the different views on this issue, and decide for yourself where you stand.

Discuss - with your friends, family, classmates and teachers. Debating complex issues is healthy and helpful.

Voiceless Resources

- [The Voiceless Animal Cruelty Index \(VACI\)](#). Voiceless, the animal protection institute, 2021, vaci.voiceless.org.au.
- Voiceless Video – [Animal protection around the world - who ranks best and worst?](#)
- [The Voiceless Animal Cruelty Index – The Index Logic](#). Voiceless, the animal protection institute, 2021, vaci.voiceless.org.au.
- [Glossary](#) (selected words appear in **bold**)
- [Quizlet](#)
- [Animal Protection Encyclopedia](#). Voiceless, the animal protection institute, 2020, https://voiceless.org.au/encyclopedia_category/animal-protection-encyclopedia/.

Find all resources at www.voiceless.org.au.

Other resources

Iyengar, Sridhar. [Synthetic Biology Might Feed Us: Beyond Meat](#). Maize, 2019, <https://www.maize.io/magazine/meat-food/>.

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How does consuming animal products relate to **animal cruelty**?
- How important is it to consider new technologies and solutions in order to combat climate change and improve the lives of animals?

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. PRE TEST

Students watch the Voiceless Video [‘Animal protection around the world - who ranks best and worst?’](#)

2. EXPLORE

In order for students to have a good understanding of the VACI, it is recommended they spend some time exploring the interactive Index and read the following pages:

- [Consuming Cruelty: In-depth](#);
- [About the VACI](#);
- [The Voiceless Animal Cruelty Index – The Index Logic](#).

Students to use the Index to locate the following:

- Countries consuming the most animal products (choose up to 5);
- Countries consuming the least animal products (choose up to 5).

3. DISCUSS

As a class, hold a discussion on the benefits and consequences of a mass production system such as **factory farming**. Consider both the ethics and environmental sustainability of such a system.

Notes could be collated on the board in two columns (Pros/Cons).

From this initial discussion, students are then given a design brief and research task which would work well as a summative assessment or homework task.

Read: '[Synthetic Biology Might Feed Us: Beyond Meat](#)' by Sridhar Iyengar. This will help students in the following task.

Design Task: Predicting Future Technologies and Solutions

Student Instructions

The world is becoming more aware of the impact that factory farming is having on both animal welfare and our environment. Imagine the world in 2050, 30 years from now.

How does the world look? What is environmentally sustainable and ethical – what isn't? What real-world problems are people, animals, and the environment facing?

In your research and response to the design brief you must include the following:

1. Identify a real-world problem/s faced by the world in 2050 – this must connect in some way to the VACI (Voiceless Animal Cruelty Index);
2. Design a solution for this problem (you must consider basic needs and human rights in your concept/s);
3. Explain the social, ethical, and environmental sustainability decisions for your design;
4. Choose ONE of the statements below and explain in 150 words how your design responds to the statement.
 - Actions for a more sustainable future reflect values of care, respect and responsibility, and require us to explore and understand environments.
 - Designing action for sustainability requires an evaluation of past practices, the assessment of scientific and technological developments, and balanced judgements based on projected future economic, social and environmental impacts.
 - Sustainable futures result from actions designed to preserve and/or restore the quality and uniqueness of environments.

(Sustainability outcomes taken from:

<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/>)

4. SHARE

Students to share research/design concepts with one another.

5. REFLECT

Students write a 250-500-word reflection on a class member's product.

TAKING IT FURTHER

Voiceless would be delighted to receive completed student work to consider for publication on the Voiceless website. If you have student and parental consent, please email work or feedback to education@voiceless.org.au

We are always looking to improve our educational resources, please get in contact with us if you would like to provide some feedback on this APE, including how it was received by your students. education@voiceless.org.au

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Animal protection around the world - who ranks best and worst?

COMPARING

CRUELTY



Worksheet to accompany video

Access the video here:

voiceless.org.au/schools/comparing-cruelty

1. What question does the narrator ask in the opening of the video?
2. Comment on the symbolism of the scales – what do you think they represent in this context?
3. How do you feel when you see these animals in cages?
4. What is ONE way to measure how a country contributes to animal cruelty?
5. What does the acronym 'VACI' represent?
6. Identify the three categories the VACI uses to rank countries.
7. How many farmed animals are slaughtered around the world for human consumption each year, according to the VACI?
8. What is the more common term that is used to describe intensive industrial animal farming systems? Why do you think this term is used?
9. How is the welfare of farmed animals impacted by intensive industrial animal farming systems?
10. Finish this sentence: The third category is the sanctioning of cruelty based on a country's _____ and _____ attitudes towards animals.
11. How do Australia, France, and India perform on the Index?
12. How many land animals are slaughtered per person each year in Australia?
13. What is the global average of land animals slaughtered per person each year?
14. Where does Australia rank in the 'Consuming Cruelty' category?
15. Some countries around the world have banned battery cages for hens. Has Australia banned this practice also?
16. Is France slaughtering more than the global average of land-based animals per person/per year?
17. Finish the sentence: The French diet contains a high proportion of...
18. India does not consume as much meat as Australia or France. Outline some of the reasons as to why this is the case.
19. Write short responses to the following questions
 - What do you think constitutes animal cruelty?
 - What do you think countries could be doing better to protect animals from cruelty?

Note:

The VACI was published and last updated in 2020. You can access the VACI here:

vaci.voiceless.org.au

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voiceless.org.au/schools/comparing-cruelty/



Vocabulary

Definition

Animal Cruelty

Causing an animal pain that, in the circumstances, is unjustifiable, unnecessary or unreasonable.

Animal Rights

Moral and legal entitlements of animals.

Animal Welfare

How an animal is coping with the conditions in which it lives.

Battery cages

Small cages used to house layer hens for egg production, which can be less than an A4 size of paper.

Ethical

Adhering to moral principles concerning beliefs on what is morally 'right' and 'wrong'.

Factory Farming

A system of large-scale intensive animal agriculture, where animals are generally confined indoors, and unable to perform most natural behaviours.

Sentience

The ability to perceive and feel things, such as pleasure and pain.

Sow Stalls

Small metal and concrete crates used to house mother pigs (sows) during pregnancy, which prevent them from turning around.

[For more terms and definitions access the online Animal Protection Encyclopedia](#)

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voiceless.org.au/schools/comparing-cruelty/