

YEAR 9 CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP

Sanctioning Cruelty: Do Laws Protect or Facilitate Animal Cruelty?

Australian Curriculum Alignment

Learning Area	Civics and Citizenship
Year Level	Year 9
General Capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy • Critical and Creative Thinking • Personal and Social Capability • Ethical Understanding • Intercultural Understanding
Strands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civics and Citizenship Knowledge and Understanding – Citizenship, Diversity and Identity • Civics and Citizenship Skills – Questioning and Research / Analysis, Synthesis and Interpretation / Problem-solving and Decision-making / Communication and Reflection
Content Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How and why individuals and groups, including religious groups, participate in and contribute to civic life (ACHCK079) • Develop, select and evaluate a range of questions to investigate Australia's political and legal systems (ACHCS082) • Account for different interpretations and points of view (ACHCS085) • Recognise and consider multiple perspectives and ambiguities, and use strategies to negotiate and resolve contentious issues (ACHCS086) • Reflect on their role as a citizen in Australian, regional and global contexts (ACHCS089)

<p>Elaborations</p>	<p>(ACHCK079)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigating why a particular group advocates for change (for example, in relation to gender equity) <p>(ACHCS082)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selecting key questions to investigate an aspect of Australia’s political and legal systems (for example, the role of juries) <p>(ACHCS085)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking on roles for a discussion to explore various points of view about a contemporary political or social issue <p>(ACHCS086)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognising that common issues may need to be seen through diverse cultural lenses Recognising that people will not always agree and using strategies to accommodate difference and accept compromise <p>(ACHCS089)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considering Australian, regional and global futures and how students might contribute as active and informed citizens
<p>Cross-Curricular Priority</p>	<p>Sustainability</p> <p>World Views</p> <p>01.5 - World views are formed by experiences at personal, local, national and global levels, and are linked to individual and community actions for sustainability</p> <p>Asia and Australia’s Engagement with Asia</p> <p>Asia and its Diversity</p> <p>01.1 - The peoples and countries of Asia are diverse in ethnic background, traditions, cultures, belief systems and religions</p> <p>01.2 - Interrelationships between humans and the diverse environments in Asia shape the region and have global implications</p>

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 have been developed for Stage 5, Year 9 Civics and Citizenship class and focus on investigating the laws and regulations set up to protect animals within a range of countries. Students will have the opportunity to conduct research, share findings and participate in class discussion.

The activities refer to the [Voiceless Animal Cruelty Index \(VACI\)](#) as its primary resource. The VACI tracks the **animal welfare** performance of fifty countries that 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.

Through these tasks, students are asked to critically examine the facts and figures of the VACI; questioning how **animal cruelty** can be measured and considering what countries could be doing better in order to protect animals from such cruelty.

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, 2020, vaci.voiceless.org.au.
- Voiceless Video – [Animal protection around the world - who ranks best and worst?](#)
- [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

- [API - Animal Protection Index](#). World Animal Protection, 2020, <https://api.worldanimalprotection.org/#>
- Evans, Jake. [Animal sentience recognised for the first time under new ACT laws](#). ABC News, 2019, www.abc.net.au.
- [What is the Australian legislation governing animal welfare?](#) RSPCA Australia, 2020, <https://kb.rspca.org.au/knowledge-base/what-is-the-australian-legislation-governing-animal-welfare/>.

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How does a government's laws and regulations regarding animals contribute to, or minimise levels of **animal cruelty**?
- In what ways do the societal and cultural attitudes present within a country directly affect the welfare and protection of animals?

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. PRE TEST

Ask students the following questions to ascertain what they already know about **animal welfare** laws in Australia.

Suggested Questions:

- **Animal Rights / Animal Welfare** – What is the difference? Refer to the VACI **Glossary** for definitions.
- What laws exist in Australia regarding **animal welfare**?

1. Give students 15-20 minutes to explore the **animal welfare** laws for their jurisdiction by using the RSPCA website.
2. Direct students to '[What is the Australian Legislation Governing Animal Welfare?](#)'
3. From here, students can click into the Animal Welfare Acts for each jurisdiction.
4. Ask students to note down 5 laws of which they were previously unaware and/or are surprised by.

TEACHER TIP

- Direct students to 'Offences', 'Codes of Practice' or 'Cruelty' subcategories to locate laws.
- An interesting discussion could be had here regarding the different classifications of animals in addition to why certain laws pertain to some animals but not others. i.e. 'stock' animals vs. 'domestic' animals.

2. STARTER

Watch the Voiceless Video '[Animal protection around the world - who ranks best and worst?](#)'

Instruct students to complete the following 3.2.1 task after viewing.

Students write down:

- 3 – thoughts or ideas you had while watching;
- 2 – things you found interesting;
- 1 – question you still have.

3. EXPLORE

Sanctioning Cruelty? What does it all mean?

The Sanctioning Cruelty Sub Index assesses countries based on their societal and cultural attitudes to animals, as reflected in the quality of the legislative and regulatory frameworks that are in place to protect animals.

Read the short section from the VACI Sanctioning Cruelty webpage – access it [here](#).

TEACHER TIP

Read as a class and spend some time in discussion with your students. Clarify 'societal' and 'cultural' attitudes. How/why might these differ from country to country for instance?

Group Work – Profiling Jigsaw

Students form groups of three and decide on three countries to profile. These should ideally include Australia and 1 country from the Asia region.

Groups use Google Docs as a collaborative tool in which to collate and share their findings. Each student within the group will profile 1 country.

Research should include the following:

- The VACI Sanctioning Cruelty Index (numerical and grade ranking) for the selected country.
- Reasoning for ranking – to be written in student's own words.
- Are there any defining social/cultural attitudes towards animals (within the selected country) that should be taken into consideration?
- The API includes the category: 'Protecting animals used in farming'. How did the selected country score in this category and why?
- The API includes the category: 'Government accountability for animal welfare'. How did the selected country score in this category? Does the country have animal welfare laws and policies? What general comments can you make about *how* the government is addressing the welfare/protection of animals in their country?

TEACHER TIP

The VACI relied on the [World Animal Protection's API \(Animal Protection Index\)](#) in order to assess each of the 50 countries for the final category 'Sanctioning Cruelty'. Direct your students to this webpage as an additional and very useful resource.

4. SHARE

Students now reconvene into their groups of three and complete the jigsaw by spending some time discussing their research and findings with one another.

5. DISCUSS

Class Discussion

Project or give students a copy of the questions below – allow enough time for students to process and make some notes before entering a discussion.

- Who is responsible for the welfare of animals?
- Do you think some animals should have better legal protections than others? What about if they are **sentient**, and have the same ability to suffer?
- Is it fair that laws exist to protect animals in some countries but not others? What are some reasons as to why this might be the case?
- There are many varied points of view when it comes to **animal welfare** – who might have differing opinions on this issue, and why?
- How do you think governments should manage such varying points of view?

TEACHER TIP

Students should discuss; farmers, industry, politicians, consumers, **animal rights** activists and so on.

6. REFLECT

Direct students back to the following unit focus questions and ask them to write a 250-word reflection which addresses the following:

- Consider the different views on **animal cruelty** and decide for yourself where you stand.
- What do you think constitutes **animal cruelty**, and what do you think countries could be doing better to protect animals from cruelty?

7. EXTENSION

Is change afoot in Australia?

Australia ranked 34 on the Sanctioning Cruelty category under the VACI and received a 'D' rating under the API. This was largely due to the country's limited national animal protection laws, and the fact that it continues to permit battery cages for layer hens, live export and painful husbandry procedures without the use of anaesthetic.

In 2019, the ACT became the first Australian jurisdiction to formally recognise animals as **sentient** under **animal welfare** legislation.

Read the article from the ABC to find out more about what this change may mean for animals.

Find it at: www.abc.net.au '[Animal sentience recognised for the first time under new ACT laws](#)'.

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

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/