



Supporting materials:

[Animals in need](#)[The Animal Welfare Act 2006](#)Presentation –
visual prompts
(see downloads)

A nation of animal lovers

This lesson introduces the concept of cruelty to animals, with a focus on pets, and whether cruelty is deliberate or based on neglect. Pupils will research, discuss and debate topical issues, problems and events that are of concern to them and offer their recommendations to appropriate people. Pupils will understand that they have different kinds of responsibilities (towards all living things) and that there are laws to protect animals.

? Did you know?

- A person commits an animal welfare offence if they do not take reasonable steps to ensure that the needs of an animal for which they are responsible are met.
- Most of the cases seen by RSPCA inspectors are of neglect caused by people who do not know how to look after animals properly. People don't understand how much time, effort and money are needed to care for their pets properly. Sadly, some people are also deliberately cruel to animals.
- Every 30 seconds, someone somewhere in England and Wales dials: 0300 1234 999 – the RSPCA's cruelty and advice line – for help.

1 Starter activity

Types of cruelty

- Ask the pupils to think about cruelty to animals. What types of things do they think are cruel? Pupils often focus on deliberate cruelty – hitting and beating. Once they have been given a range of examples, ask them to think about the difference between:
 1. **Deliberate cruelty:** intending to do something that hurts an animal.
 2. **Neglect:** failing to do something, which means that an animal suffers.
 3. **Not meeting an animal's needs:** not providing an animal with the things it really needs.
- Do the pupils think one type of cruelty is worse than the other? Some pupils may feel that malice – deliberately wanting to hurt something – is worse than neglect. However, ask the pupils to think from an animal's point of view. All of these types of cruelty result in unnecessary suffering (see teachers' notes [The Animal Welfare Act 2006](#)).

2 Main activity

Case studies

- Use the factsheet [Animals in need](#) as a focus. The case studies are based on real cases prosecuted by the RSPCA. They involve deliberate cruelty, neglect and not meeting the needs of an animal.
- Ask the groups of pupils to read through the factsheet. Each group could appoint a reader and leader.
- Ask the pupils to discuss each case study in turn and decide whether they think it is deliberate cruelty, neglect or not meeting an animal's needs.

The answers are as follows:

1. *Lucky the puppy* – deliberate cruelty.
2. *Sadie the dog* – neglect.
3. *A full house* – not meeting an animal's needs.

Plenary activities

Helping animals

Having read and thought about the case studies, what would the pupils most like to change about the way some people treat animals? How would they like to help animals?

What next?

English version

Want to explore the topic of caring for pets further?

Try these lessons:

- How do we care for animals?
- Campaigning for animal welfare
- Exotic animals as pets
- A nation of animal lovers

Bilingual version

We have relevant resources for each Progression Stage on our website:

<https://education.rspca.org.uk/education/teachers/lessonplanswales>