

# ANIMALS OFF THE MENU?

## LESSON & ASSIGNMENT

**Learning area:** English

**Years:** 8-11

**Curriculum level:** 5

### Achievement Objectives

*Students will:*

- Integrate sources of information, processes, and strategies purposefully and confidently to identify, form, and express increasingly sophisticated ideas.
- Show an understanding of how language features are used for effect within and across texts.
- Show an understanding of how to shape texts for different audiences and purposes.
- Select, develop, and communicate purposeful ideas on a range of topics.

**Key Competencies:** Thinking, using language, symbols and texts, relating to others.

### Lesson and assignment outline

Students will identify and discuss the main ideas, concepts and points of view in the Wheeler Centre's 2012 debate *Animals Should Be Off the Menu*. Students will analyse how language features position listeners to respond in a particular way and use this knowledge to create and deliver a speech that informs, persuades and engages an audience on a chosen topic.

### Learning outcomes

*Students are learning to*

- Identify the main ideas and points of view in a debate.
- Use evidence to support or challenge different perspectives in relations to animal rights and welfare.
- Create purposeful texts that inform, persuade and engage.
- Think critically and ethically about meat consumption in the industrialised world.

**Reference links:** Video link of the debate *Animals Should Be Off the Menu* (110 minutes in length):

[www.wheelercentre.com/broadcasts/intelligence-squared-animals-should-be-off-the-menu](http://www.wheelercentre.com/broadcasts/intelligence-squared-animals-should-be-off-the-menu)

and summary notes of the debate:

[www.wheelercentre.com/notes/22b6c7dc3f5e](http://www.wheelercentre.com/notes/22b6c7dc3f5e)

**Corresponding worksheet:** Writing a Persuasive Speech

### Lesson

1. As a class, brainstorm arguments for and against eating meat. Some reasons for eating meat may include: taste, convenience, and tradition. Some reasons against it may include: environmental, animal welfare, animal rights, health, and food security.
2. Play the debate *Animals Should Be Off the Menu* in class, or assign students to watch the full video at home. If you're short on time, select shorter segments of

the debate which can be found on YouTube.

3. As a class, ask students to identify the main idea and point of view of each speaker in the debate. Write student answers on the board.
4. Next, ask students to think about which language features are employed by each speaker to persuade their listeners. Some responses may include the use of humour, silent pauses, body language and gestures, rhetorical questions, formal/casual tone, repetition, and colloquial language. Focus on how the tone and manner of the speeches shape listeners' interpretations. What pieces of evidence are used by speakers to persuade their audience?

**Assignment:** Ask students to write a four-minute speech to persuade their audience to consider and adopt a certain point of view. Using the *Writing a Persuasive Speech* worksheet, students may examine any topic relating to animals used for human purposes and choose to represent any argument they wish. (For the purposes of the THINK KIND competition, the argument would need to be pro keeping animals off the menu.)

Topic ideas include:

- Wool, fur, sheepskin and leather
- Testing cosmetic and household products
- Greyhound racing and horse racing
- Zoos, marine parks and aquariums
- Circuses and mobile animal farms
- Animal dissection and/or scientific vivisection
- Chick hatching programs
- Meat, dairy and eggs

Students should use evidence to support their argument, presenting visual evidence such as slideshows, posters, graphs or props.

### Evaluation

Use the following rubric to self and peer assess student speeches:

- Demonstrates a deliberate use of persuasive strategies.
- Demonstrates an understanding of key terms and provides clear definitions where relevant.
- Uses visual material as evidence to support their argument.
- Uses a clear voice.
- Presents information in a logical, interesting, and easy-to-follow sequence.
- Demonstrates knowledge of their chosen topic.

### Wrap-up discussion questions

*Why do you think audience members of the Animals Should Be Off the Menu debate were persuaded to change their position?*

*Did any of the key speakers in the debate compel you to reconsider your own point of view? Give examples.*

*What kind of evidence or language features are most effective in persuading listeners to adopt a point of view?*

# WRITING A PERSUASIVE SPEECH

Take notes on this sheet to help plan your speech.



1. **Write a strong opening. Before you can begin persuading your audience, you need to open the speech in a way that will make them want to pay attention. Give a little background information about your topic.**

**My opening:**

2. **Make your points in a logical order and use evidence to back up your opinion. You should provide your audience with several convincing reasons to support your viewpoint. Use slides, posters, graphs or props to display your points.**

**Point 1:**

**Point 2:**

**Point 3:**

**Display idea:**

3. **Use body language, gestures, humour, silent pauses, rhetorical questions or repetition for effect.**

**Record some ideas:**

4. **Use words that add power to your argument.  
e.g. strongly, important, decisive, evident, opposed, imagine if.**

**Record some ideas:**

5. **Explain key terms e.g. sentience**

**Definition 1:**

**Definition 2:**

**Definition 3:**

6. **Re-state your opinion and make a strong call to action.  
e.g. Please don't buy makeup tested on animals.**

**My call to action:**