



Handling controversial issues - Badgers



Contents

Introduction	Page 1
Diamond Activity	Page 2
Attitudes towards animals	Page 3
Questioning a photograph	Page 4
Question time	Page 5
Consequences	Page 6
Points of view	Page 7
Exchanging views	Page 8
Useful Links	Page 9

This booklet has been produced to help young people:

- Learn about badgers and TB
- Judge the bias and reliability of different sources of information
- Draw their own conclusions having analysed and reflected on their own current views
- Make informed decisions

When handling controversial issues teachers will need to employ approaches that meet the need for balance and objectivity and to ensure avoiding bias. The Oxfam Global Citizenship Guide on Teaching Controversial Issues (2006) contains helpful suggestions on appropriate ways of introducing controversial issues and of managing the responses that result.

These include:

- Setting ground rules e.g. showing respect for the views of others, using appropriate language and giving reasons for having a particular view
- Role of the teacher e.g. objective, devil's advocate or declared interest
- Teaching approaches e.g. group discussion, role-play and community of enquiry

1. Diamond Activity

Aim

To introduce the work of farmers

Resources

On large pieces of paper or card draw a diamond shape with the words Most Important at the top and Least Important at the bottom.

Copy the key activities of farmers below and cut up into sets of individual cards.

Produce food

Care for animals

Run a business

Look after the countryside

Encourage wildlife

Help the local community

Sell food through e.g. farm shops

Provide employment

Offer leisure opportunities

Instructions

1. In groups, pupils rank the farmer's activities in a diamond nine [the highest priority at the top, the next two below and so on].

2. Pupils share decisions as a class, and discuss differences of opinion about what is most or least important.

2. Attitudes towards animals

Aim

To use photographs to explore pupils' viewpoints

Resources

A selection of photographs of animals including wild animals, farm animals and pets

Large sheets of paper

Two colours of sticky notes

Instructions

1. In groups, place photographs on large sheets of paper
2. Use one colour of sticky notes to write negative comments and another colour for positive comments. (You may wish to provide some examples to get started)
3. Pupils add comments to the appropriate picture
4. Display the work and discuss the reasons why the different pictures created different responses

3. Questioning a photograph

Aim

To encourage pupils to generate questions for research and discussion

Resources

Copies of images reflecting different aspects of the badger and TB debate
Large sheets of paper

Instructions

1. In groups, pupils place an image in the centre of a large sheet of paper
2. Around the image pupils write questions about what can be seen. The questions may
 - Seek clarification e.g. why is the badger...?
 - Probe reasons and evidence e.g. is there evidence that...?
 - Explore alternative views e.g. what would say?
 - Test implications and consequences e.g. if this took place what would happen next...?
3. Groups share their questions and observations with the rest of the class
4. Groups now highlight a significant question to research further and debate

4. Question time

Aim

To encourage critical analysis of articles and film clips

Resources

A selection of articles and film clips representing a variety of viewpoints

Instructions

1. Using an article or film clip, pairs of pupils answer the following questions:
 - How does it affect farmers?
 - How does it affect people in your local area?
 - How does it affect people in the UK?
 - How does it affect wildlife?
 - How does it affect cattle?
 - What are the solutions to it?
 - Are the solutions the same for all people?
 - Are the solutions the same for all animals?
2. Once pupils have answered the questions, each pair shares their answers which form the basis of a wider discussion.

5. Consequences

Aim

To encourage pupils to consider and discuss the consequences of different actions

Resources

Large sheets of paper on which three concentric circles are drawn

Instructions

1. In groups, pupils to write at the centre of the first concentric circle "Badger cull" or "No badger cull"
2. Pupils then discuss what will happen as an outcome of either a badger cull or no badger cull taking place e.g. fewer badgers in evidence. These consequences are written within the second concentric circle
3. Pupils next write in the third concentric circle any further outcomes as a result of the consequences written within the second concentric circle e.g. less TB in cattle
4. As a class, pupils share their findings

6. Points of view

Aim

To raise awareness that there are different points of view about issues

Resources

Articles and film clips representing a range of viewpoints

Instructions

1. Pupils draw two columns and head them 'Farmer' and 'Wildlife activist'
2. Drawing on the source information, pupils list points of view from the farmer's perspective and repeat by listing those from the wildlife activist's perspective.
3. Discuss the results as a class

7. Exchanging views

Aim

To generate discussion about a controversial issue and encourage listening to the opinions of others

Resources

Pieces of card

Instructions

1. Read the following statement to the class: “The rights of badgers are more important than the rights of cattle.”
2. Pupils choose their position on this statement and on a piece of card write a number between one (‘strongly disagree’) and five (‘strongly agree’). Class results can be collated and represented as a table or block graph
3. Pupils now find someone whose position is the same and discuss for three minutes. They should then repeat with someone whose position is one step removed from their own. And finally, someone with a very different view to their own
4. As a class, gather information on how many pupils have changed their position and discuss what led them to change their mind

Useful Links

NEWS ITEMS:

BBC Q&A on the badger cull

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-22614350>

BBC piece presenting both sides – farmer and anti-cull protestors.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-22734649>

More views from both sides of the argument

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-gloucestershire-29079354>

Differing views on measures to control bovine TB

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-30820579>

Telegraph Article: Presents both sides and includes farmer human interest story

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/countryside/10093406/Badger-cull-A-tearful-farmer-an-angry-rock-star-and-a-nation-divided.html>

‘Celebrity’ story - the first time Michael Eavis, dairy farmer and Glastonbury Festival founder, has spoken on the cull issue; presents both sides

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2013/jun/21/michael-eavis-badger-cull-glastonbury-festival>

Political – following Parliamentary vote in favour of culls

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/mass-badger-cull-go-ahead-1934435>

FACTUAL INFORMATION:

Anti-cull:

Badger Trust - presenting its viewpoint

<http://www.badger.org.uk/Content/Home.asp>

RSPCA - presenting its viewpoint

<http://www.rspca.org.uk/getinvolved/campaigns/wildlife/badgers>

Wildlife Trusts - presenting its viewpoint

<http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/badgers>

Pro-cull:

Factual information outlining cost and impact on farming

www.tbfreeengland.co.uk/home/

Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency – explains how the disease affects animals and how it is spread

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/ahvla-en/disease-control/bovine-tb/>

Natural England – factual information about licensing of the badger culls

<https://www.gov.uk/badgers-protection-surveys-and-licences>

VIDEOS:

Video with Defra Chief Scientific Adviser outlining the situation regarding vaccination plus links to written information

<http://www.tbfreeengland.co.uk/vaccination/>

Selection of videos of farmers telling their personal stories of the impact of TB on them, their families and businesses.

<http://www.tbfreeengland.co.uk/tb-on-farm/>

Video of Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust's trial of badger vaccination using injections

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-22728938>

Video of Channel 4 News debate between Brian May and farmer Jan Rowe

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g5024zjNoJA>