

Vegan Education in Schools

Vegan Clubs

Years 7 to 12

Themed movie afternoons

Overview

Themed movie afternoons are a fun and impactful way to engage students while introducing them to important animal rights issues. By screening animal-themed films, students can explore topics like animal exploitation, conservation and empathy through powerful storytelling. The addition of vegan snacks and post-movie discussions creates a relaxed yet educational environment that fosters critical thinking and meaningful dialogue.

How to organise themed movie afternoons

1. Choose movies that highlight a range of animal rights themes.

- Select films suitable for your audience's age and interests:
 - a) **Animal Rights and Ethics:** "*Okja*" (a touching story about a genetically engineered animal and corporate exploitation).
 - b) **Wildlife Conservation:** "*Jurassic World*" (exploring themes of control over nature and animal captivity).
 - c) **Empathy and Rescue:** "*The Plague Dogs*" (an emotional tale of animals escaping a research facility).
 - d) **Marine Life:** "*Blackfish*" (a documentary exposing the treatment of captive orcas).
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2. Include age-appropriate films for younger audiences.

- For younger students, choose animated or family-friendly options:
 - a) "*Finding Nemo*" (highlighting marine life and human impact on ecosystems).
 - b) "*Charlotte's Web*" (a story about empathy for farmed animals).
 - c) "*Happy Feet*" (addressing environmental issues affecting penguins).

3. Set up a comfortable and inviting movie area.

- Arrange seating with cushions, bean bags or chairs to create a relaxed atmosphere.
 - Use a projector or large screen for an immersive viewing experience.
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4. Provide vegan snacks to enhance the experience.

- Offer treats like:
 - a) Vegan popcorn with different flavours (salted, caramel or nutritional yeast).
 - b) Vegan chocolate or lollies.
 - c) Fruit platters and refreshing drinks.
 - Label all snacks as vegan to align with the theme of respecting the rights of animals.
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5. Introduce the movie with a brief context to set the tone.

- Share a short introduction about the film's themes and why it was chosen:
 - Example: "Today, we're watching *Okja*, a story about a girl's fight to protect her best friend from corporate greed. This film explores themes of animal exploitation and the power of individual action."
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6. Facilitate a post-movie discussion to deepen understanding.

- After the screening, engage students with guided questions:
 - a) "What emotions did the movie evoke and why?"
 - b) "How do the themes in this film connect to real-world issues for animals?"
 - c) "What actions can we take to help animals based on what we've learned?"
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7. Incorporate activities to reinforce the movie's message.

- Organise creative follow-up activities such as:
 - a) Writing reflections or essays about the film's impact.
 - b) Designing posters inspired by the movie's themes.
 - c) Hosting a debate about the ethical issues raised in the film.

8. Make the event interactive with quizzes or games.

- Before or after the movie organise a trivia quiz about the film or related animal rights topics.
 - Example: For “*Blackfish*”, ask: “What year was SeaWorld founded and what impact has the documentary had on their practices?”
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9. Tie the movies to real-world actions students can take.

- Use the films as a starting point for advocacy or awareness campaigns:
 - a) Example: After “*Blackfish*”, discuss alternatives to visiting marine parks, such as virtual whale-watching tours.
 - b) Encourage students to write letters to organisations or policymakers advocating for animal rights.
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10. Share follow-up resources to expand learning.

- Provide students with recommendations for related books, articles or documentaries.
 - Suggest ways they can stay involved, such as joining local advocacy groups or volunteering at animal shelters.
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Outcomes

- **Emotional engagement:** Films create a powerful emotional connection, helping students understand animal rights issues on a deeper level.
- **Critical thinking and reflection:** Post-movie discussions encourage students to analyse ethical dilemmas and form their own opinions.
- **Awareness and education:** The movies introduce real-world animal issues in an accessible and engaging format.
- **Motivation to act:** Students are inspired to take steps toward advocating for animals or making empathetic choices in their own lives.
- **Community building:** Sharing a movie experience fosters a sense of connection and shared purpose among students.

