

## Vegan Education in Schools

### Vegan Clubs

### Years 7 to 12

## Rescue story read-aloud sessions

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### Overview

Rescue story read-aloud sessions are a powerful way to connect students emotionally with animals by sharing real-life stories of rescues. These sessions provide an opportunity for students to read or listen to inspiring narratives about animals saved from challenging circumstances, such as animal farms, wildlife exploitation or abusive situations. By hearing these stories, students can develop empathy, a deeper understanding of animal rights and an appreciation for the organisations and individuals who work tirelessly to rescue animals.

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### How to run rescue story read-aloud sessions

#### 1. Choose a mix of emotional and inspiring rescue stories to share.

- Select stories from sanctuaries, wildlife rescue organisations or advocacy groups.
  - Examples:
    - a) "The story of Mabel, a cow used in the dairy industry. Mabel is a partially blind cow who was severely neglected and close to death before her rescue, now living peacefully in a sanctuary." (Liberation Sanctuary)
    - b) "The tale of a koala saved from a bushfire zone and nursed back to health by wildlife carers."
    - c) "A sea turtle's journey from being entangled in plastic waste to being rehabilitated and released back into the ocean."
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#### 2. Involve students by having them share or read aloud the stories.

- Ask students to choose a rescue story they find meaningful or provide a selection of pre-written stories they can read aloud.
- Encourage students to reflect on why the story resonates with them after sharing it.

### 3. Include multimedia elements to make the session engaging.

- Show videos, photos or before-and-after images of rescued animals to accompany the stories.
  - Play short clips from organisations like Edgar's Mission, Animals Australia or Sea Shepherd to give a visual connection to the narrative.
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### 4. Create a safe and reflective atmosphere for discussion.

- After each story, ask reflective questions to encourage empathy and discussion:
    - a) "How do you think the animal felt before and after being rescued?"
    - b) "What can we learn from this story about the importance of animal rights?"
  - Allow students to share their thoughts, feelings or similar stories they've encountered.
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### 5. Highlight the work of rescue organisations and how students can support them.

- Provide information about the groups involved in the rescues, such as:
    - a) Edgar's Mission (farmed animal rescue)
    - b) WIRES (wildlife rescue in Australia)
    - c) Captain Paul Watson Foundation (marine animal rights).
  - Share ways students can help, such as volunteering, fundraising or raising awareness for these organisations.
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### 6. Tailor the stories to focus on relevant issues and local contexts.

- Use stories related to Australian animals and broader issues to make the session relatable.
    - Example: Share stories of koalas, platypuses or wombats rescued from bushfire-affected areas.
  - For older students, include stories that touch on broader issues like animal farming, animal transport or habitat destruction.
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### Additional ideas for rescue story sessions

### 7. Incorporate creative activities to deepen engagement.

- Ask students to illustrate the rescue story they read or heard.
- Encourage them to write a fictional "rescue story" for an imaginary animal based on real issues.

## 8. Organise guest speakers to share firsthand rescue experiences.

- Invite staff or volunteers from animal sanctuaries, wildlife rescue centres or marine conservation groups to share their personal experiences.
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## 9. End the session with a call to action.

- Share simple steps students can take to support animals, such as adopting veganism, donating to rescue organisations, or advocating for animal-friendly policies.
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## Outcomes

- **Empathy and connection:** Students develop a deeper emotional connection to animals by hearing their stories.
- **Education and awareness:** Rescue stories educate students about the issues animals face and the work being done to protect them.
- **Inspiration to act:** Students feel motivated to take impactful steps in their lives to support animal rights efforts.
- **Critical thinking and discussion skills:** Reflective discussions after the stories encourage students to think critically about animal rights issues and express their thoughts.