

Vegan Education in Schools

Vegan Clubs

Years 7 to 12

Empathetic writing prompts

Overview

Empathetic writing prompts encourage students to explore their empathy for animals and express their thoughts creatively. By responding to thought-provoking questions and scenarios, students develop a deeper understanding of animal protection issues while honing their writing skills. This activity provides a platform for reflection, imagination and advocacy, inspiring students to articulate the importance of empathy and conservation.

How to use empathetic writing prompts

1. Introduce the purpose and benefits of the activity.

- Explain the goals of empathetic writing prompts:
 - a) Foster empathy and understanding for animals and their experiences.
 - b) Encourage critical thinking and creative expression through writing.
 - c) Highlight the importance of animal rights and environmental protection.
 - Emphasise that there are no “right” or “wrong” answers, allowing for personal perspectives and creativity.
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2. Provide a selection of thought-provoking prompts.

- Offer a variety of prompts to inspire different forms of writing, such as essays, stories, poems, or letters:
 - a) **Perspective-Taking Prompts:**
 - "Imagine you are an animal in a sanctuary; tell your story."
 - "What would you say if you could speak on behalf of animals to the world?"
 - "Describe a day in the life of a stray dog searching for safety."

b) Reflective Prompts:

- "What would a world be like without wildlife?"
- "How would your life change if no animals were harmed for food or clothing?"
- "Write about a time when you felt connected to an animal and why it mattered to you."

c) Advocacy Prompts:

- "If you could write a letter to your school to advocate for animal rights, what would you say?"
 - "Design a campaign to encourage people to protect endangered species."
 - "How can humans and animals coexist harmoniously?"
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3. Provide resources and guidance to support the writing process.

- Share examples or templates to inspire students:
 - a) A sample letter to a policymaker advocating for animal protection.
 - b) A short story or poem written from an animal's perspective.
 - Offer tips for structuring and enhancing their writing:
 - a) Use vivid descriptions and sensory details to create an immersive experience.
 - b) Incorporate facts or real-life examples to support reflective or advocacy-based prompts. View rescues from Hope for Paws and Edgar's Mission.
 - c) Encourage personal connections to make their writing authentic and impactful.
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4. Create a comfortable and supportive writing environment.

- Provide a quiet and inspiring space for writing:
 - a) Play soft instrumental music or display images of animals and nature for inspiration.
 - b) Allow students to work individually or in small groups, depending on their preferences.
- Ensure access to necessary materials, such as notebooks, pens, or computers.

5. Share and celebrate students' work.

- Encourage students to share their writing with peers or a wider audience:
 - a) Host a reading session where students can present their work.
 - b) Publish selected pieces in the school newsletter or on social media.
 - c) Create a display board featuring excerpts from their writing alongside visuals or artwork.
 - Provide constructive feedback and celebrate their creativity and effort.
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6. Reflect on the experience and its impact.

- Lead a discussion or reflection session to explore key takeaways:
 - a) "What did you learn about animals and empathy through this activity?"
 - b) "How did writing from an animal's perspective change the way you think about their experiences?"
 - c) "What actions can we take to make the world a fairer place for animals?"
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7. Use the writing activity as a foundation for advocacy projects.

- Encourage students to turn their writing into actionable efforts:
 - a) Submit letters or essays to policymakers, newspapers, or animal protection organisations.
 - b) Develop campaigns or presentations based on their ideas.
 - c) Incorporate their writing into other activities, such as fundraising events or educational materials.
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Outcomes

- **Empathy and understanding:** Students gain insight into the experiences of animals and the importance of empathy.
- **Creative expression:** The prompts encourage students to explore their ideas and emotions through writing.
- **Critical thinking:** Participants analyse complex animal protection issues and articulate their perspectives effectively.
- **Advocacy skills:** Writing prompts inspire students to use their voices to advocate for animals and raise awareness.

Connection to nature: The activity fosters a deeper appreciation for animals and their role in the environment.