

SOCIAL JUSTICE GALLERY WALK

In this lesson, students think critically about the parallels between animal abuse and human abuse and examine the causes and effects of discrimination.

Objectives

- **Affective:** Students will be able to draw parallels between the treatment of animals and the historical discrimination against people of color, women, the LGBTQ+ community, people with disabilities, and others who have been and continue to be marginalized or systemically denied basic rights.
- **Cognitive:** Students will be able to advance conversations by posing and responding to questions; to clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and to respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives.



[Angela Davis' University of Cape Town speech video](#) (available online)

Background

Class discussions are an excellent way to get students thinking critically about the abstract concepts of social justice. Older students, however, are sometimes reluctant to participate in these conversations if it means speaking in front of their peers, so high school teachers must get creative in order to inspire rich and meaningful dialog in their classrooms. A gallery walk is a thought-provoking activity that gets students talking to one another about important issues, such as how present-day societies strive to justify abuse just as societies of the past did—regardless of the victims' species.

Materials

- [Angela Davis' University of Cape Town speech video](#)* (Students will watch a three-minute clip from this video.)
- Gallery walk images*
- For a virtual gallery walk: Zoom, Skype, Google Classroom, Padlet, or another virtual tool for hosting online discussions
- For an in-person gallery walk: glue, scissors, construction paper, tape, markers, and up to a dozen poster-size pieces of paper.
- ["PETA Reveals: Why Feminists Must Reject All Violence, Not Just Violence Against Humans" video](#)*

- ["PETA Reveals: Animal Rights Is Not a 'White Thing'" video](#)*
- ["PETA Reveals: Civil Rights Icon Inspired This Lawyer to Push the Boundaries of Animal Rights" video](#)*

Key Vocabulary

oppression: prolonged cruel or unjust treatment or control

Motivation

- Begin the lesson by showing students a clip of [Angela Davis' 2016 speech at the University of Cape Town in South Africa](#) starting at **40:13** and ending at **43:24**,* when she delivers a powerful call for political activism to wipe out racism, sexism, ableism, and society's other ills. (If you have time to have students watch the entire speech, you will see that she elaborates on ways we can oppose oppression of all groups, including animals.) Best known as a longtime human rights activist, Davis is also a committed vegan, and she made sure to highlight the connection between all forms of exploitation and oppression in her keynote address.
- Tell students to pay attention to the examples of activism (e.g., Muhammad Ali's refusal to be inducted into the army) and prejudice (racism, sexism, etc.) that she uses throughout the video.
- Have students discuss with a partner why they think she included those examples. Davis told the packed house, "[S]entient beings ... endure pain and torture as they are transformed into food for profit, food that generates disease in humans whose poverty compels them to rely on McDonald's and KFC for nourishment." Heroes like her leave animals off their plates as they tackle the issues that plague the Black community, because they understand that in the way that matters the most—our ability to

feel pain, love, fear, and acceptance—humans and all other animals are the same.

- Discuss this statement in particular as a class and ask, "Is civil rights related to animal rights? Why or why not?" Have students support their positions with clear reasons and relevant evidence.



Gallery walk images
(available online)

Before the Gallery Walk

If you're teaching virtually or if you need to limit students' movement around the classroom to maintain social distancing, you can still conduct a gallery walk using popular online conferencing tools like Zoom or Skype. Simply display the images individually so that students can see them, or share them in the chat feature and instruct students to respond by typing their responses (as opposed to saying them out loud). You can also use Padlet, an online tool that allows students to post notes on a shared page. If these tools aren't available to you, you can have students discuss each image in an online forum, such as Google Classroom.

Virtual Gallery Walk

1. Using your online forum of choice, create a separate discussion thread for each image. Include a different image in each thread, along with the following instructions: "Consider this image. What thoughts or feelings come to mind? You may write as little as one word, such as 'suffering,' or as much as a few sentences."
2. Designate a time frame during which students are to post at least one response in each discussion thread.
3. Have students post a thoughtful response to at least three of their classmates' posts.

In-Person Gallery Walk

- **Begin by printing out the gallery walk images.*** Cut out each one, and glue it to a piece of construction paper.
- On the day of your gallery walk, tape the images around your classroom at eye level. Next to each image, tape a large piece of paper to the wall. Have markers available at each station.



For this activity, some teachers juxtapose images of humans and other animals (e.g., a homeless person and a homeless dog). You could also use images from your curriculum that your students have already seen.

During the Gallery Walk

Explain the rules of the gallery walk.

- Tell students that as they would explore an art gallery, they should walk around the room and consider each image at least once.

- On the piece of paper next to the image, they should write whatever thoughts or feelings come to mind. They may write as little as one word, such as "suffering," or as much as a few sentences. If they've responded to each image and time is left, they should revisit images and add more impressions to the paper.
- Encourage students to circle important words or phrases on the pieces of paper, draw arrows, or use other symbols, such as exclamation points or question marks, to connect their ideas to those of others. They can even write short responses to their classmates' comments, such as "Yes, I agree!" or "But what if ... ?" Remind them that they should use appropriate language, respond to one another's comments respectfully, and avoid crossing out or obscuring someone else's words.
- All responses should be written, not spoken. Assure students that there will be time to discuss their thoughts afterward.

As students circulate throughout the "gallery," you can play soft instrumental music. Walk around the room with them, monitoring their responses and adding your own comments to the silent conversation. Allow 10 to 15 minutes for students to complete the gallery walk.

After the Gallery Walk

Since students have had the opportunity to respond to the images in writing, without judgment from their peers, some may be more willing to share their thoughts in a group conversation. Initiate and guide the discussion by asking the following questions:

- What did you notice as you participated in the gallery walk?
- What comments did you respond to? What comments received the most attention? Why?
- What similarities did you notice between the images? What differences did you notice?
- If you had to give this "exhibition" a title, what would it be? Why?

Allow the dialog to unfold naturally, letting students do most of the talking. Pose questions, and clarify when necessary.

Then divide students into three groups. Assign each group one of the following videos to watch and discuss. Have students use the accompanying questions to guide their discussion and prepare a brief summary of their video to share with the class.



["PETA Reveals: Why Feminists Must Reject All Violence, Not Just Violence Against Humans" video](#) (available online)

"PETA Reveals: Why Feminists Must Reject All Violence, Not Just Violence Against Humans"*

1. In your own words, explain the link between the consumption of meat, eggs, and dairy and a patriarchal society (one in which men hold the power).

Answer: The production of animal-derived foods that many people consume every day such as meat, eggs, and cheese involves reproductive control, the removal of babies from their mothers, and the deliberate injuring and killing of sentient beings. For example, since cows produce milk only to nourish their calves, dairy farmers keep them pregnant starting from the time they become sexually mature by artificially inseminating them—while they're restrained in a device that the industry itself calls a "rape rack." Like human females throughout history and at present, female members of other species have been exploited for their bodies and dismissed as unimportant, unintelligent, and unworthy of consideration.

2. Carol J. Adams, author of *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, argues that both women and animals are objectified—treated as objects rather than individuals with thoughts and feelings. Do you agree or disagree? Explain your answer.

Answer: Will vary based on student experience. Encourage students to reflect on ways women are portrayed in the media, what they are valued for, and what obstacles they must overcome to be treated equally in society. Have them then consider these same factors as they relate to animals used for food.



["PETA Reveals: Animal Rights Is Not a 'White Thing' video \(available online\)](#)

3. What specific examples does the speaker provide to support her claim that animal rights is a feminist issue?

Answer: In order to force them to have as many babies as possible, pigs are forcibly impregnated and kept in metal crates so small that they can't even turn around. Their piglets are taken away from them shortly after birth to be raised and sent to slaughter. Cows are also artificially inseminated, and their calves are taken from them so that their milk can be sold for human consumption. Hens on egg farms are kept in wire cages so small that they can't spread their wings, and their eggs are taken and sold. When these animals can no longer breed or produce eggs or milk, they are no longer useful to farmers, so they're sent to slaughter.

"PETA Reveals: Animal Rights Is Not a 'White Thing'"*

1. Why did the speaker feel lonely when she first started out in the animal rights movement? What helped relieve some of this loneliness?

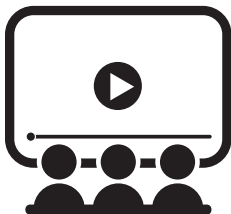
Answer: She was often the only Black person at many of the demonstrations she attended. She felt less alone when she found inspirational Black activists online who wrote blogs about animal rights and being vegan.

2. Why is it important for people of color to be equally represented in the animal rights movement?

Possible answer: The speaker points out that "[t]o think only white people care about health, animals, and the planet is absolutely false" and that referring to the animal rights movement as a "white thing" overlooks all the Black activists who've contributed to it. Equal representation of minorities in the fight for animal rights is important so that everyone can contribute to and benefit from it. Many Black people face health problems like diabetes, obesity, and heart disease because food companies take advantage of them, but if they were to think that only white people can be vegan, they'd miss out on the health benefits. Similarly, many people of color care about animals and the environment and want to do as little harm to both as possible, but if they don't see others like them represented in the movement, they might be reluctant to join.

3. What does the speaker mean when she says, "We can care about more than one struggle" (4:49)?

Answer: It's possible to fight for multiple causes, like the rights of both humans and other animals as well as the health of the planet. In many cases, advocating for one oppressed group can also help another.



["PETA Reveals: Civil Rights Icon Inspired This Lawyer to Push the Boundaries of Animal Rights" video \(available online\)](#)

"PETA Reveals: Civil Rights Icon Inspired This Lawyer to Push the Boundaries of Animal Rights"*

1. Briefly describe the case that PETA argued on behalf of Naruto the macaque.

Answer: Naruto the monkey took a selfie using a photographer's camera. The photographer then published the image, claiming that he'd taken the photo. PETA argued that the rights to the photo belonged to Naruto because he'd taken it himself.

2. How was the lawsuit settled?

Answer: The photographer agreed to donate 25% of the money that he made from Naruto's selfie to charities that will benefit Naruto and his community of macaques and protect their habitat.

3. Why is impact litigation significant?

Answer: Even if they're not won, impact lawsuits such as Naruto's first-of-its-kind case serve as symbolic stepping stones toward the larger goal of freeing all animals from exploitation and abuse. Before this history-making case was heard, many thought it was absurd to grant an animal a copyright, but now the legal community—and society as a whole—is beginning to reconsider what other animals are entitled to. Future lawyers will study this impact lawsuit, increasing the chances that other similar cases will be taken seriously and won.

4. On what grounds does the speaker claim that SeaWorld violates the 13th Amendment?

Answer: The 13th Amendment to the Constitution prohibits slavery. The speaker argues that it doesn't just apply to humans but rather to all animals and that SeaWorld violated it by taking five orcas from their natural habitat, imprisoning them in its tanks, and forcing them to work and breed.

In addition to their responses to the discussion questions, invite students to share other insights that they had during their conversations with their peers. Did everyone agree with one another, or were there differences of opinion? Did any students change their minds after talking with their group? Remind students that discussing social justice issues like feminism, racism, and speciesism can feel uncomfortable, but with practice, challenging our assumptions about longstanding harmful institutions, values, and beliefs becomes easier.

Real-World Connection

Many of history's most iconic leaders and thinkers have opposed violence against animals, understanding that discrimination based on species is no different from discrimination based on skin color, gender, or other arbitrary characteristics. In many cases, those who are working to break down the prejudices that cause animals to be treated as "lesser" are the same people who advocate for LGBTQ+ rights, disability rights, racial justice, religious tolerance, and other social justice issues. In his total commitment to nonviolence, Mahatma Gandhi always included animals, stating, "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated." Martin Luther King Jr., who was inspired by Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence, said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." Bigotry in all its ugly forms is wrong—regardless of who the victim is. And when we witness it, we shouldn't let it go unchallenged.



Wrap-Up Activity



Have students respond to one of the following journal prompts in their notebooks or on a blank sheet of paper:

- How are humans and other animals similar? How are they different? Do these differences make it right to imprison, abuse, or exploit animals? Why or why not?
- What parallels can you draw between humans' treatment of animals and the historical discrimination against people of color, women, the LGBTQ+ community, people with disabilities, or others who have been marginalized or systemically denied basic human rights?
- Some people say that animals are so much like humans that we must capture and study them—for instance, in labs—in order to understand our own species better. On the other hand, they also say that animals are so unlike humans that they don't experience pain, loneliness, and sadness, so they aren't worthy of the same ethical consideration given to humans. Can both of these arguments be true, or are they contradictory? Explain your answer.

Assessment

Evaluate students' written responses, and monitor group discussions for evidence that they're questioning the status quo and responding thoughtfully to diverse perspectives.

Common Misperception/Reality

Common Misperception 	Reality 
<p>The fight for animal rights takes away from the fight for human rights. Humans should be more concerned about helping members of their own species before helping those of others. When we're still tackling the oppression of humans, it's a luxury to be concerned about other animals.</p>	<p>Bullying and violence aren't limited to humans any more than they're limited to certain races or one gender identity. If we want a more just world, we must work to end all prejudice, not just the kinds that affect us personally.</p> <p>The mindset that condones the oppression of humans—whether we're talking about Muslims, women, older people, members of the LGBTQ+ community, or people of color—is the same mindset that permits the exploitation of animals. Prejudices arise when we start to believe that "I" am special and "you" are not and that "my" interests are more important than those of other sentient beings.</p> <p>It is possible to advocate for the rights of all living beings. Many civil rights leaders, past and present, have maintained that as long as one form of prejudice exists, no form of prejudice can be completely eradicated, and thus, civil rights and animal rights are inextricably linked.</p>



Extension

Students can watch the remaining videos in the documentary series [PETA Reveals](#),* which highlights powerful stories from 10 individuals who recognized animal suffering and became determined to take action instead of maintaining the status quo.

Common Core Standards Addressed

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.C**
Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.D**
Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1**
Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.C**
Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.D**
Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

LESSON 1

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.1

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

*Indicates components necessary to implement the lesson are available online only.
Please visit TeachKind.org/SocialJustice to access these materials.