



The
Economist

EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATION

VEGANISM

Child-led learning resource

ABOUT

This activity helps you to think about what veganism means for our society and lets you explore really interesting questions like:

- Why do people choose to be vegan?
- What factors are important when people make lifestyle choices?
- Is a vegan society a better society?

You can give this a go on your own, but if there's someone at home who can join you, why not work together? You could also connect with someone by telephone or video.

We'll practise some critical-thinking skills which are important for understanding and discussing the news.



Ready? Let's go!

THINKING QUESTIONS

A vegan is someone who doesn't consume any animal products - meat, dairy, eggs etc. That means no cheese, yoghurt or cream!

Think about, or discuss, each of the four questions for three minutes each.



REASONING

Say why you think what you do



OPEN-MINDEDNESS

Consider the opposite point of view and why you disagree with it

1. What makes people choose to be vegan?
2. Is a vegan society a better society?
3. Should we always accept people's lifestyles without question?
4. Are some reasons for people's choices more important than others?

CONSIDERATIONS

Why do people become vegan?
See if you can come up with
five reasons.

Watch this video which explains why some
people choose a vegan diet.

Click on each section to make it play.

After the section has played, pause the video
to think about, or discuss, the question that
comes up.

Repeat until you've seen all four sections.

You can find the video here:

view.wirewax.com/8087675



Note: This video was produced in 2018.

WHAT MATTERS?

Which do you think is the most important consideration and why?

Are there any considerations that don't matter to you?

Can you make a connection between any of the different considerations? For example, health and economy are connected because if people are healthy, they will be able to work more which is good for the economy.



HEALTH

A person's mental or physical condition



ETHICS

The moral principles that help someone decide if an action is right or wrong



ECONOMY

How a country or group is using money and trading



ENVIRONMENT

The world around us

INDIVIDUAL PERSPECTIVES

Read the personal perspectives and answer the questions.

Perspective #1

HELEN AND JOHN

A working couple



Helen and John live in Wakefield, in Yorkshire. Their children are grown-up and the pair have busy jobs, often travelling around the country for work. Back at home, there aren't many vegans. The 'Wakefield Vegans' Facebook group has fewer than 200 members, compared with more than 12,000 members of the 'London Vegans' group.

Helen and John became vegan over two years ago. "It is interesting because it wasn't about the morals or the principles when we first became vegan, but that is the thing that has ended up being most important to both of us." John has also recently been reading about how food impacts upon the environment and they're both getting more interested in that.

For the couple, money is not a major concern when it comes to food. Helen said, "I thought going vegan would be cheaper because we weren't going to be buying meat or eating out as much but it isn't. We're lucky that we can still do it though."

**Have Helen and John always been vegan?
Is a vegan lifestyle cheaper?**

INDIVIDUAL PERSPECTIVES

Perspective #2

GRAHAM

Dairy farmer



Graham is a dairy farmer in Cheshire. He has milked cows since he left school and has 250 of them on his farm! "It offends me when people say it is cruel to keep cows for milking because we spend a lot of our time making sure they're happy." According to Graham, only happy and healthy cows produce good milk.

Graham gets up at 5:30am to start milking and is usually out until around 6pm, tending to his cows and farm. He needs to be healthy to work such long hours and usually has to have a sleep when he gets in.

Although his milk is sold by Tesco, some of his other farm products are sold locally, so he likes to support other local food producers. "It isn't good for the environment when food has to travel thousands of miles around the world. As much as we can, we buy local food."

The cost of farming has gone up since Graham first started out so he has to be a bit careful with money.

What kind of food does Graham like to buy?

What time does Graham have to wake up?

Perspective #3

KIRSTY

Single mum



Kirsty is a single mum with three daughters. She lives in Llangollen, a Welsh town. For her, teaching her girls to be healthy is important, and so is teaching them to make their own choices about food.

"I raised the girls to be vegetarian but as they got older, they started asking to eat meat. I was allowed to go vegetarian when I was young and it really empowered me to be able to choose what I ate. So I let the girls do the same."

"I take the kids food shopping and they're allowed to pick what fruit we have and help me decide what else to get. Being involved in that teaches them about different food but it also teaches them about money. We can't afford everything so they know they can't just put what they want in the trolley."

What two things are important for Kirsty as a mum?

INDIVIDUAL PERSPECTIVES

Which of these is the ***most*** important to each person?
Which is ***least*** important?



HEALTH



ETHICS



ECONOMY



ENVIRONMENT



Perspective #1

HELEN AND JOHN

A working couple



Perspective #2

GRAHAM

Dairy farmer



Perspective #3

KIRSTY

Single mum

INDIVIDUAL PERSPECTIVES

Imagine that a new supermarket is due to open in your local area.

There are three possible options:

- **Hopelessly Healthy** – sells health food
- **Cheap, Cheerful and Chockablock** – sells lots of really cheap food
- **Loco Local** – only sells food made within 10 miles

Choose one of the perspectives and act in character as that person. Present an argument for which supermarket they think should open and why.

Even better, work with someone else. Take on different perspectives and present your views about the new supermarket. Afterwards, see whether you can come to a decision.



Perspective #1

HELEN AND JOHN

A working couple



Perspective #2

GRAHAM

Dairy farmer



Perspective #3

KIRSTY

Single mum



INDIVIDUAL PERSPECTIVES

Reflection

- Did anyone's perspective make you think about something new?
- Are there any other perspectives that are missing?
- What difficulties would your family have if you chose a vegan diet? What would the positives be?



SUPER-REFLECTION

- What makes people choose to be vegan?
- Are some reasons for people's choices more important than others?
- Is a vegan society a better society?

NOW...



Do some research

Find out more about veganism and try to develop your answers to the super-reflection questions



Have a discussion

Talk to someone else about the issues covered in these activities



Become the teacher!

See if you can go through these activities again, as the teacher, with somebody else in your household