



Albertans and Animals: Exploring Perspectives

TEACHER GUIDE

Grade 4-6



everylivingthing.ca

Albertans and Animals: Exploring Perspectives

People across Alberta hold varying views on animals based on their culture, religion, age, life experiences and values. When students explore these diverse relationships, they begin to see how deeply animals are woven into our identities, communities and daily lives. Understanding this range of perspectives helps students appreciate that each person's unique connection to animals is shaped by more than personal preference — it reflects history, tradition and lived experience.

Exploring different viewpoints helps foster empathy, critical thinking and respectful dialogue. As students compare and contrast perspectives, they learn to recognize nuance, challenge assumptions and approach differences with open minds. This reflection also strengthens the interpersonal skills needed to build kind and caring communities.

Objectives:

Students will:

- explore, consider, and compare various perspectives that Albertans have on animals
- reflect on their own perspectives, how they were formed, and how they may change in the future
- compare their perspectives to the perspectives of their peers and of Albertans from a variety of backgrounds

Vocabulary and Concepts:

- Perspectives
- Diversity
- Responsibility
- Companionship
- Animals as Symbols
- Animal Welfare
- Human–Animal Bond
- Agriculture
- One Health
- Ecosystem

Time:

60–90 minutes (can be split between multiple classes)

Materials:

- Animal Association Slides
- Albertans Perspectives on Animals Activity Sheet (*Appendix A-1*)
- Interview Questions Activity Sheet – optional (*Appendix A-2*)
- Pencil
- Paper

Instructions:**Part One: Animal Association**

People’s views on animals are shaped by personal experiences, culture and values. Our perspectives shape our conscious and unconscious thoughts and feelings about different animals.

In this first part of the lesson, students will examine their initial reaction to a variety of animals and explore what may have shaped this perspective. Exploring these initial associations can help reveal how perspectives vary from person to person.

Ask students to get a piece of scrap paper and a pencil.

Using the Animal Association Slides, instruct students to write down the first word(s) (or phrase) that come to mind when they see each animal slide. Remind students that there are no right or wrong answers and that they should not think about their answer – rather, write the first things that come to their mind.

Show each animal slide (seven in total) for around thirty seconds each. Note: Students should have enough time to write down their initial reactions but not too much time that they overthink the task.

After going through the seven animal slides, discuss the following questions as a class:

- How would you describe the types of words you wrote for each animal?
- What do the animals you described using ‘positive’ words have in common?
- What do the animals you described using ‘negative’ words have in common?
- What do you think made you choose the words that you did? *Past*

experience, culture, friends, family, knowledge, values, etc.

Explain to students that everyone views animals differently and how we view them is based on things such as culture, religion, age, life experience and values. A student who lives on a farm in rural Alberta may have a different perspective than that of a student who lives in a city and has never been to a farm. Both viewpoints are valid, and neither is inherently right nor wrong.

Have students reflect on their own experience with animals (pets, farm animals and/or wildlife) and how it has played a role in shaping the view they hold towards them. Have students create a mind map using words and pictures to demonstrate their connection and experiences with animals.

To spark reflection, ask them the following questions:

- What animals do you interact with in your day-to-day life? Do you (or someone you know) have pets? Visit farms? See wildlife?
- What are some special memories or stories you have with these animals?
- Are there any animals that are important in your culture? Explain.
- What is your favourite animal? Why?
- What other ways are you connected to animals (friendship, food, clothing, etc.)
- Are there animals that you don't like or are afraid of? Why do you feel this way?

After students have had a few moments to reflect, have them share their ideas with a partner through a 'Turn and Talk.' During the 'Turn and Talk,' scan the class and observe. As the conversations begin to dwindle, signal for attention and ask a few students who feel comfortable to share what they discussed.

Part Two: Exploring Perspectives

As covered in the first part of this lesson, views towards animals develop from a combination of individual qualities including a person's culture, religion, age, life experiences and/or values. Therefore, perspectives towards animals (and other topics) can vary considerably from person to person.

In this part of the lesson, students will explore perspectives on animals and animal welfare collected from twelve Albertans across the province.

Distribute the Albertans Perspectives on Animals Activity Sheets to all students. Be sure to distribute the ten different perspectives evenly as possible. Note: If less perspectives would work better for your class, it isn't necessary to use them all.



Individually, have students read the perspective they were assigned and underline or highlight important information, such as the animals mentioned and any factors that influenced the individual's perspective (e.g., experience, age, culture, etc.)

Once students have finished reading the perspective, group students together based on their assigned perspective number (e.g., all perspective 1s together). As a group, have students complete the reverse side of the activity sheet by answering the questions about their assigned perspective. Students will:

- Identify key animals discussed
- Describe factors that influenced that perspective
- Provide a summary of that perspective
- Explain how this perspective is similar to and/or different from their own view on animals

After students have completed the activity sheet, divide them into new groups of 3-4, making sure each group includes students with different assigned perspectives. Students will take turns sharing their perspective with their group until all group members have shared. Ask students to speak about their perspective as if it were their own. While listening to their group members, have each student write down one similarity and one difference between each group members perspective and their own assigned perspective.

Repeat the jigsaw sharing process until all students have learned about all perspectives studied.

As a class, complete a quick summary of each perspective in a mind map or similar brainstorming format, taking time to also research definitions of unfamiliar words and concepts mentioned. Geographic locations can also be noted.

Then discuss the following questions:

- What surprised you?
- Were there any perspectives you felt were missing? If so, what were they?
- Why do people have different ideas about animals?
- Why do you think it is important to consider different perspectives?
- Are there any questions you would like to ask the people who wrote the perspectives you read about? If so, what are they?



- Is there any further information you would like to know? What resources could you use to find out?

Part Three: Student Task

Have students compare their personal perspectives on animals with another perspective by completing one of the following tasks. Encourage students to reflect on:

- How their choice of task will be the right level of challenge
- How it connects to their strengths or interests
- How it relates to a goal they may have set

Option 1: Create a Venn Diagram

Have students create a Venn diagram comparing their personal perspective and a perspective from one of the ten Albertans. Encourage students to be as specific as possible and to give examples where necessary.

Option 2: Write a Compare and Contrast Paragraph

Have students write a paragraph(s) comparing and contrasting their personal perspective on animals with a perspective from one of the twelve Albertans. Students should describe similarities and differences between these views and propose reasons for these similarities and differences. Remind students to revise for fluency and clarity, and to edit for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Option 3: Conduct and Interview

Have students conduct an interview with an adult (e.g., parent, guardian, teacher, grandparent, neighbour, etc.) about their views on animals. Students can use the Interview Questions Activity Sheet to help guide their interview. After the interview, students can use a T-chart to compare and contrast their perspective on animals with that of the individual they interviewed.

GRADE 4 CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

English Language Arts & Literature	
Organizing Idea	Text Forms and Structures: Identifying and applying text forms and structures improves understanding of content, literary style, and our rich language traditions.
Guiding Question	How can text organization influence communication?
Learning Outcome	Students examine how the form and structure of texts can support the communication of ideas and information.
	Skills & Procedures
	Explain how personal preferences for texts inspire, fascinate, or expand understandings.
	Discuss a variety of facts and opinions expressed in non-fiction texts.
Organizing Idea	Oral Language: Listening and speaking form the foundation for literacy development and improve communication, collaboration, and respectful mutual understanding.
Guiding Question	In what ways can listening and speaking skills clarify intent and build relationships?
Learning Outcome	Students examine and demonstrate how listening and speaking support connections and clarify understandings.
	Skills & Procedures
	Describe personal connections to spirit, land, universe, time, or people revealed through oral traditions.
	Contribute respectfully to a variety of interactions that involve listening and speaking.
	Identify opinions or points of view shared in conversations or texts that are listened to.
	Demonstrate active listening when engaging in collaborative work.
	Use a variety of listening strategies to support understanding.
Organizing Idea	Comprehension: Text comprehension is supported by applying varied strategies and processes and by considering both particular contexts and universal themes.
Guiding Question	How do comprehension processes and strategies enhance understandings of texts?
Learning Outcome	Students investigate strategies and connections that support text comprehension.
	Skills & Procedures
	Independently read and demonstrate comprehension of a variety of texts that increase in length or complexity.
	Apply comprehension processes and strategies when interacting with texts.
	Examine connections between texts and self, between a text and other texts, and between texts and the world.
	Compare or contrast aspects of texts within an individual text or between multiple texts.
	Reflect on personal connections to a text that best support understandings.
	Revise or confirm predictions based on new or additional information in texts.
	Examine how making, modifying, or confirming predictions supports text comprehension.
	Combine information from various sources to draw conclusions.
	Synthesize a variety of information when creating summaries of texts.
	Create personal responses to a variety of literature, informational texts, or other texts by synthesizing information.

GRADE 4 CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Organizing Idea	Writing: Ideas and information can be articulated accurately and imaginatively through the use of writing processes and an understanding of the author's craft.	
Guiding Question	How can development of writing processes and expression support effective communication?	
Learning Outcome	Students construct and organize text to share perspectives and develop creative expression.	
	Skills & Procedures	
	<p>Create written texts for a variety of audiences and purposes.</p> <p>Create written texts using a variety of text forms and structures.</p> <p>Share perspectives on a topic in a clear and focused manner.</p> <p>Develop a logical order by grouping ideas into paragraphs.</p> <p>Write paragraphs with topic and concluding sentences.</p> <p>Revise texts to enhance clarity or fluency.</p> <p>Edit writing for spelling, punctuation, and grammar.</p>	

Physical Education and Wellness

Organizing Idea	Character Development: Exploration of life opportunities and virtues develops resilience and personal talents and promotes lifelong learning.	
Guiding Question	How can a variety of life experiences influence resilience and perseverance?	
Learning Outcome	Students interpret how resilience and perseverance can be influenced by a variety of life experiences.	
	Skills & Procedures	
	<p>Determine a variety of contexts in which experiences can be individual or shared.</p> <p>Investigate experiences in a variety of contexts.</p> <p>Examine how experiences with places or artifacts can be meaningful.</p>	
Organizing Idea	Safety: A lifetime of optimal well-being is supported by prioritizing health and safety.	
Guiding Question	How can taking responsibility impact safety?	
Learning Outcome	Students analyze and explain responsibility and how it can impact personal and group safety.	
	Skills & Procedures	
	Identify situations where responsibility supports the rights and feelings of others.	

GRADE 5 CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Language Arts & Literature	
Organizing Idea	Text Forms and Structures: Identifying and applying text forms and structures improves understanding of content, literary style, and our rich language traditions.
Guiding Question	How can text organization support expression and influence meaning?
Learning Outcome	Students examine how text genres, forms, and structures support and enhance communication.
	Skills & Procedures
	Make connections between features of land and personal experiences.
Organizing Idea	Oral Language: Listening and speaking form the foundation for literacy development and improve communication, collaboration, and respectful mutual understanding.
Guiding Question	How can the presentation of ideas and information be enhanced through oral communication?
Learning Outcome	Students investigate how oral language can be designed to communicate ideas and information.
	Skills & Procedures
	Present ideas and information in a logical manner to inform, persuade, or entertain.
	Engage in collaborative dialogue when sharing ideas, solving problems, or making decisions.
	Contribute to discussions or dialogues by agreeing, disagreeing, and adding to or explaining ideas.
	Use respectful language when collaborating with others.
	Demonstrate adaptability to build consensus when perspectives or opinions within groups differ.
Organizing Idea	Comprehension: Text comprehension is supported by applying varied strategies and processes and by considering both particular contexts and universal themes.
Guiding Question	How does the interpretation of evidence support comprehension of texts?
Learning Outcome	Students analyze information, contexts, and perspectives using a variety of comprehension strategies.
	Skills & Procedures
	Respond to texts by summarizing main ideas and providing supporting evidence from self, other texts, or the world.
	Examine ideas and information within texts that are explicit and implicit.
	Revise or confirm predictions based on new or additional information from texts or additional sources.
	Analyze ideas and information in texts to interpret and respond.
	Use evidence from texts or additional sources to support responses and interpretations.
	Explore how varied perspectives presented in texts can influence personal perspectives.
	Identify various perspectives in texts and propose alternative perspectives.
	Examine information from texts that describes context around people, ideas, or events.
	Consider how personal interests, experiences, or perspectives might influence how texts are understood or created.

GRADE 5 CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Organizing Idea	Writing: Ideas and information can be articulated accurately and imaginatively through the use of writing processes and an understanding of the author's craft.	
Guiding Question	How does proficient writing enhance communication skills?	
Learning Outcome	Students enhance the accuracy and artistry of expression through creative and critical thinking processes.	
	Skills & Procedures	
	Create written texts for a variety of audiences and purposes. Create written texts in a variety of forms and structures. Communicate a clear position supported by relevant evidence. Edit writing for spelling, punctuation, and grammar.	
	Write to inform, explain, describe, or report for a variety of purposes and audiences. Develop a main idea or topic supported by facts, details, examples, and explanations.	

Physical Education and Wellness		
Organizing Idea	Character Development: Exploration of life opportunities and virtues develops resilience and personal talents and promotes lifelong learning.	
Guiding Question	How can a variety of life experiences influence resilience and perseverance?	
Learning Outcome	Students reflect and relate life experiences to perseverance and well-being.	
	Skills & Procedures	
	Examine how life experiences can shape understanding over time.	
	Identify life experiences that have influenced thinking or behaviour.	
	Reflect on personal learning and development in a variety of experiences.	
Organizing Idea	Healthy Relationships: Personal well-being is supported through positive relationships built on communication, collaboration, empathy, and respect.	
Guiding Question	How might healthy relationships support understanding in various social contexts?	
Learning Outcome	Students acknowledge and connect perspectives of self and others through communication and listening skills.	
	Skills & Procedures	
	Describe how experiences can affect individual or group perspectives. Identify personal and environmental factors that influence perspectives.	
	Describe how listening and communication skills can support understanding of individual and group perspectives. Identify ways to reach shared understandings when perspectives or opinions within a group are different. Demonstrate respectful communication skills when working with others on tasks or challenges.	

GRADE 6 CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Language Arts & Literature	
Organizing Idea	Oral Language: Listening and speaking form the foundation for literacy development and improve communication, collaboration, and respectful mutual understanding.
Guiding Question	What relationships can be made between skillful oration and communication content, style and delivery?
Learning Outcome	Students connect the quality and efficacy of oral communication to oral language skills.
	Skills & Procedures
	Offer relevant information and logical reasoning to enhance collaborative dialogue. Consider varied perspectives or opinions when collaborating. Reflect on and share new, expanded, or adjusted learnings resulting from collaborative dialogue.
Organizing Idea	Vocabulary: Communication and comprehension are improved by understanding word meaning and structures.
Guiding Question	How does context influence vocabulary and the intentionality of communication?
Learning Outcome	Students evaluate how vocabulary enhances communication and provides clarity.
	Skills & Procedures
	Categorize words and phrases of personal interest gleaned from a wide variety of texts.
	Apply tier 3 words in subject-specific contexts.
Organizing Idea	Comprehension: Text comprehension is supported by applying varied strategies and processes and by considering both particular contexts and universal themes.
Guiding Question	How do comprehension strategies enhance interpretations of texts?
Learning Outcome	Students interpret and respond to texts through application of comprehension strategies.
	Skills & Procedures
	Incorporate a variety of strategies to comprehend, interpret, and manage information from texts.
	Respond to texts by summarizing main ideas and providing supporting evidence from the texts. Make connections between new ideas and information in texts and known ideas and information. Analyze ideas and information to support comprehension and interpretation of texts. Synthesize ideas and information in texts to confirm or expand understandings.
	Revise or confirm predictions based on new or additional information and sources. Interpret and draw conclusions from texts using stated and implied ideas or information. Analyze ideas and information using text evidence.
	Connect perspectives reflected in texts to personal experiences. Compare personal perspectives to varied perspectives found in texts. Select the information needed to support a perspective. Share how considering differences in perspectives can develop empathy.

GRADE 6 CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Organizing Idea	Writing: Ideas and information can be articulated accurately and imaginatively through the use of writing processes and an understanding of the author's craft.	
Guiding Question	How is precise writing influenced by ongoing craft and process development?	
Learning Outcome	Students create texts that reflect personal voice and style through creative and critical thinking processes.	
	Skills & Procedures	
	<p>Create written texts for a variety of audiences and purposes.</p> <p>Create written texts in a variety of forms and structures.</p> <p>Analyze how ideas align with the purpose, audience, and form of writing.</p> <p>Organize writing around clear ideas or positions that are supported by examples or relevant evidence.</p> <p>Express ideas using organizational structures that enhance writing.</p> <p>Revise text for clarity, focus, and audience.</p> <p>Edit writing for spelling, punctuation, and grammar.</p>	
	Write to inform, explain, describe, or report for a variety of purposes and audiences.	

Physical Education and Wellness		
Organizing Idea	Character Development: Exploration of life opportunities and virtues develops resilience and personal talents and promotes lifelong learning.	
Guiding Question	How can lifelong learning be supported?	
Learning Outcome	Students connect strategies for well-being to life opportunities and lifelong learning.	
	Skills & Procedures	
	Examine changes in personal interests, strengths, and skills.	
Organizing Idea	Healthy Relationships: Personal well-being is supported through positive relationships built on communication, collaboration, empathy, and respect.	
Guiding Question	How can perspectives influence healthy relationships?	
Learning Outcome	Students consider and describe a variety of perspectives that support the development of healthy relationships.	
	Skills & Procedures	
	<p>Consider ways in which diverse perspectives align or differ.</p> <p>Identify how the consideration of others' perspectives contributes to empathy.</p>	
	Examine how empathy toward others with different perspectives supports healthy relationships.	

Albertans Perspectives on Animals

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Individually read the following perspective and underline or highlight important information, such as the animals mentioned and any factors that influenced the individual's perspective (e.g., experience, age, culture, etc.)

Perspective 1: Aimee

My name is Aimee and I am an artist, acupuncturist, wife and mother. I am Indigenous from Fishing Lake and Samson Cree Nation, but because of colonial practices and residential schools I did not grow up immersed in my culture or language. It is important for me to reclaim my culture and share it with my kids.

We always had pets in our house as kids, and some of my earliest memories are of my dog Boots. As children we were always taught that our pets were a responsibility and we had a role to take care of them. But even more valuable than the lesson of responsibility for those pets was a sense of companionship and connection to a little spirit that didn't need words to communicate and feel affection for. I have been patiently waiting to give my kids the gift of a family pet (most likely a dog) because I understand the great responsibility that comes with it, and I am waiting for the right time for us to be fully committed.

Growing up my family also did a lot of fishing and hunting. Animals are also a source of food for us, and I was taught to give thanks to the Creator and to the animals for providing us with sustenance we would usually say a prayer and offer tobacco. We would try to make the most of every part of the animal.

For me the Eagle has a special significance; it is my spirit animal and my spirit name is Blue Eagle Woman. The Eagle is an animal that is very close to the Creator and can travel between the spirit world and the physical world to communicate our prayers. In my culture the Eagle feather is very significant and we use the Eagle feather in prayer and ceremony, and certain protocols are followed to take care of the feather. The Eagle feather gives strength to your spirit, strength to tell the truth, and strength to be your highest self

I think an important lesson from animals is that it is not a hierarchy, but a circle relationship. There are a lot of lessons to be learned from our animal relatives. Humans are not more superior than animals, rather we are part of the same complexly beautiful network that couldn't exist without the other.

Instructions: Complete the activity sheet by completing the table.

Perspective # and name:	
Animals mentioned:	
Factors that influenced perspective:	
Summary:	
How is this perspective similar and/or different to mine:	

Albertans Perspectives on Animals

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Individually read the following perspective and underline or highlight important information, such as the animals mentioned and any factors that influenced the individual's perspective (e.g., experience, age, culture, etc.)

Perspective 2: Justin

My name is Justin, and although I was born in Canada, I grew up in New Zealand. I now live in Edmonton. We had a cat growing up named Samson. I remember him being really little and cute, but when he got sharp claws and teeth, he wasn't so cute. He would try to sleep next to me, but would take up too much space, so I would make him get off the bed. I wasn't responsible for looking after any of his needs, my mom handled that.

In New Zealand, when you are driving on highways, you always see sheep and often dairy cows in the fields, so I was always reminded of the agricultural aspect of animals. This was a huge difference I noticed when I moved to Canada; maybe because of the amount of land/space here, you don't see nearly as many farm animals. In university, friends would have to go back to their farm to help during lambing season, and would ask other friends to come help.

The kiwi is symbolic in New Zealand. It is a flightless bird that has a strong cultural significance to the country – we even call ourselves 'kiwis.' The kiwi is a symbol, and it gets used on the branding of sports teams and other national teams. They are nocturnal, so I've never seen a kiwi in the wild, just in a zoo.

I am a lab technician and we use animals for research. I do believe that animals have a place in research as long as the 3 Rs are followed – replacement (is there an alternative to using animals?) reduction (can the number of animals being used be reduced?) and refinement (ensuring they have the best quality of life possible). Coming from a research perspective, particularly studying infectious disease, I think it is important for young people to understand the concept of One Health. We need to look at things (like human disease) not just from a human perspective, but from a whole ecosystem/globe that covers humans, wildlife, domestic animals, plants and the environment. All of these things impact human health and human populations.

The human population is growing and encroaching into forests and other areas, and interacting with different wild animals, which can create spillover with new diseases, or a monoculture sort of crops (instead of diverse forests) which changes the way that wildlife interacts with the land. It is important to think about animals from a global perspective. We are all interconnected and a change in one area can impact another.

Instructions: Complete the activity sheet by completing the table.

Perspective # and name:	
Animals mentioned:	
Factors that influenced perspective:	
Summary:	
How is this perspective similar and/or different to mine:	

Albertans Perspectives on Animals

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Individually read the following perspective and underline or highlight important information, such as the animals mentioned and any factors that influenced the individual's perspective (e.g., experience, age, culture, etc.)

Perspective 3: Shanuki

My name is Shanuki, and I'm from Sri Lanka, but grew up in Canada. In Sri Lanka, I was always surrounded by dogs – my own, my uncles' and aunts', and my neighbors'. My siblings and I have fond memories of going on long walks around the neighborhood with our dogs, Husky, Bruno, and Ranger, and playing near the water at the beach. It was often difficult for us to go to school, as we hated spending hours apart from them. They were our friends, and companions in our crazy adventures. It was heartbreaking when we lost Husky and later, Bruno. As a young person, I learned that animals are not so different from us; they too have feelings, need to bond, to feel loved, and be taken care of. I think understanding this has helped me connect with animals on a deeper level and be more mindful of their needs.

The lion is very symbolic in our culture – it is found on our national flag and represents bravery and strength. While I love dogs, the elephant is my favourite animal. We see elephants all the time in Sri Lanka and I'm always captivated by their presence. To me, they symbolize wisdom and fortitude – powerful creatures who are able to use their strength to overcome negative forces in their lives.

Since moving to Canada, I don't interact with animals as much. We don't have any pets here, but I have many friends who have cats and dogs. Every time we visit Sri Lanka, we stay with my uncle, who takes care of Ranger. Our interactions with Ranger are always rocky the first couple of days of our visit. He is reluctant to trust us after not seeing us for years. In a few days he softens and becomes more comfortable with our presence: sniffing us, tangling himself underneath our legs, and lying on the floor in preparation for long belly rubs. These moments with Ranger are what I look forward to whenever I go back to visit. I think it's important that young people understand and appreciate how much animals do for us – they provide us with food, comfort and companionship, security, and help us with daily tasks. Moreover, the relationships we have with animals should be a two-way street – while animals provide us with all these benefits, it's essential we do our part to address their needs and ensure their safety and well-being.

It's also important that young people understand that having a pet isn't easy – it requires a lot of research, consideration, and dedication to ensuring your pet's needs are being always met. It's important we focus on strengthening the similarities that humans and animals share as opposed to the differences, so that we can be more compassionate towards animals and strengthen our bonds with them.



Instructions: Complete the activity sheet by completing the table.

Perspective # and name:	
Animals mentioned:	
Factors that influenced perspective:	
Summary:	
How is this perspective similar and/or different to mine:	

Albertans Perspectives on Animals

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Individually read the following perspective and underline or highlight important information, such as the animals mentioned and any factors that influenced the individual's perspective (e.g., experience, age, culture, etc.)

Perspective 4: Isabell

My name is Isabell and I was born and raised on a farm near Vermilion, Alberta, (90 years ago). I now live on a farm near Vermillion not too far from my childhood farm. I am very social and community oriented, and enjoy visits with family and friends over a meal or tea. I grow a garden and do all my own canning and freezing of fruit and garden produce, all grown on the farm. I also love to bake and cook.

As a farm kid, we always had a few dogs, cats, horses, milk cows, cattle, chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese, pigs, etc. I loved all the animals, valued them all dearly, and remember them very fondly. I had a deeper connection with pets and livestock than most other farm families at the time. I remember a neighbor lady asking for our rabbit to eat, and being appalled. Our dog used to pull us kids to school on a sleigh and later we used horses. Table scraps were fed to our dogs and cats, as there was no bagged dog and cat food back then.

More monetary value is placed on pets now more than 75 plus years ago. Currently I have six cats and one dog in my home that are all rescued one way or another. The pasture is rented out, so cattle are only here in the summer. My daughter lives right beside me with 2 horses, a cat and a dog. There are deer in my yard and on occasion fox and coyotes that are after the leftover apples. I feed the wild birds all winter. I have a few very old well-loved chickens. They are kept around despite the fact that they hardly ever lay. They sure clean up worms and bugs in the garden and yard!

I was taught to be kind to animals and feed them well. It takes relatively little effort to keep them happy and healthy. Give them a pat, food, fresh water and shelter, and this will give them a joyful long happy life. For outdoor livestock, cattle, horses, etc. they need a straw bed, this is half of the animal's life.

How a person treats animals is a true testament to their character. Take the time to be kind and caring. Animals have a soul. Since it doesn't take much effort at all, that is all an animal asks of you. Get your cats and dogs spayed or neutered to avoid overpopulation. It will make the world a better place.

Instructions: Complete the activity sheet by completing the table.

Perspective # and name:	
Animals mentioned:	
Factors that influenced perspective:	
Summary:	
How is this perspective similar and/or different to mine:	

Albertans Perspectives on Animals

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Individually read the following perspective and underline or highlight important information, such as the animals mentioned and any factors that influenced the individual's perspective (e.g., experience, age, culture, etc.)

Perspective 5: Peter

My name is Peter, and I was born in Wildwood, Alberta, but call Spruce Grove home. Growing up my family had a "mixed farm." We raised sheep, pigs, horses, and chickens. My mother would consistently judge animals at the Wildwood fair. Farming didn't have many safety precautions to follow when I was growing up. As a youth, I was rammed, and knocked over by a ram while feeding my sheep. While trying to transport a calf into shelter during the winter, I fell over backwards off a fence with the calf in my arms. While trying to catch a colt in the horse enclosure, I was running, and struck by a board that the colt stepped on as it was not properly secured. In my youth I attended 4H and I learned from traditions passed down through my family.

Now as an adult I have a "hobby farm." I have five horses that I care for and ride on occasion. I also have numerous cats and two dogs. Farming used to be a source of income, a way of life, now I do it because it brings me joy. I was forced to farm as a child as it was my family's livelihood. As an adult, I do it because it is my passion. I am also aware I now have funds more readily available to run a safe farm, and care for my animals in the best way possible. When I was a child money was tight and we just did what we had to do to get by. My horses mean everything to me, I have raised them all from colts and they feel like a part of our family.

There's no better life than farm life. Working with animals is life-changing and impacts my point of view daily.

Instructions: Complete the activity sheet by completing the table.

Perspective # and name:	
Animals mentioned:	
Factors that influenced perspective:	
Summary:	
How is this perspective similar and/or different to mine:	

Albertans Perspectives on Animals

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Individually read the following perspective and underline or highlight important information, such as the animals mentioned and any factors that influenced the individual's perspective (e.g., experience, age, culture, etc.)

Perspective 6: Gloria

My name is Gloria, and I am a water colour artist who primarily paints animals. My parents are from Hong Kong, so I grew up with both Canadian and Chinese culture and customs. Twelve animals make up the Chinese Zodiac. An animal is assigned to each year, and each animal represents characteristics of people born in that particular year.

I grew up as an indoor child with pet dander allergies, so my experiences with wildlife and farm animals were limited to the rare petting zoo and family road trips to the mountains. I never felt comfortable around animals, even domestic ones. The first pet I felt safe with was my childhood friend's very sweet and cuddly Bichon Shih Tzu, Bubbles

I have more regular interactions with animals now, and I am much more comfortable around them. My sister's beagle, Webster, has been a beloved member of our family for over a decade. My toddler absolutely loves puppies and gets very excited to see them in person. Also, my in-laws are cattle farmers, so I've learned a lot about farming, calving seasons, and raising animals. I've even gotten to pet newborn calves!

The gorilla will always have a special place in my heart! I started painting animals because some of my elementary students in South Korea thought my name was Gorilla, and called me "Gorilla Teacher." I thought it was hilarious and it inspired a series of gorilla drawings, which led to primate paintings, then to a wide array of animals.

I remember learning as a child how animals are essential to our ecology and environment and to respect wildlife. I also remember learning to be gentle when petting animals and that it was important not to alarm them. My parents told me not to waste food and to appreciate that the meat we ate came from animals. I think young people need to learn to treat animals with kindness and to respect their environments.

Instructions: Complete the activity sheet by completing the table.

Perspective # and name:	
Animals mentioned:	
Factors that influenced perspective:	
Summary:	
How is this perspective similar and/or different to mine:	

Albertans Perspectives on Animals

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Individually read the following perspective and underline or highlight important information, such as the animals mentioned and any factors that influenced the individual's perspective (e.g., experience, age, culture, etc.)

Perspective 7: Jad

My name is Jad and I'm 22. I grew up both in Saudi Arabia and Syria and my home now is my bedroom in Calgary. I am a biological anthropology and psychology student. Unfortunately, I did not receive a lot of education on animals as a child. I believe that education (globally and nationally) lacks content on animal awareness.

Growing up in the city of Riyadh, a huge metropolitan area with industrialized communities, there was a large population of street cats everywhere. They would be in the garbage bins and in alleyways. They were not friendly, but still adorable. In my culture, most birds of prey such as hawks or the Arabian falcon are considered representative of strength, intelligence, and tenacity. There is also a history of falcons being used in entertainment, or trained to perform tasks and fetch objects. Now that I understand the emotional bandwidth and intelligence of animals, I do not believe that this is ethical.

As a biological anthropology student, I have studied primates (and other animals) extensively. My interactions currently involve research at the zoo for my classes and studying primate behavior and cognition. There is now definitely a difference in my perception of animals. Growing up, animals were treated quite often as a resource, rather than as individuals. After understanding how animals (mostly primates) think, it is fair to say that animals are almost little people that just lack the ability to speak.

When I said that I see animals as little people, I was specifically referencing the African Grey Parrot. They are sentient, live up to 80 years, can communicate clearly, and are hyper-intelligent. All of these features make me feel as if this bird is just a human that can fly.

Animals have feelings like humans, but communicate them differently! It's important for us to acknowledge that animals have as much right as we do to exist in safety and without stress. We have to stay attentive to their needs and respect the space that they are entitled to occupy.

Instructions: Complete the activity sheet by completing the table.

Perspective # and name:	
Animals mentioned:	
Factors that influenced perspective:	
Summary:	
How is this perspective similar and/or different to mine:	

Albertans Perspectives on Animals

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Individually read the following perspective and underline or highlight important information, such as the animals mentioned and any factors that influenced the individual's perspective (e.g., experience, age, culture, etc.)

Perspective 8: Alice

My name is Alice and I am a fourth-year zoology student at the University of Calgary. Growing up, we had many pets, except for dogs and cats. We've had birds since I was 10, along with amphibians, fish, and hamsters. If you were to ask me what in particular I love about birds— it's hard to say! Ten-year-old Alice would say; "I like how they look and fly!". But 22-year-old Alice says that their behaviour, anatomy, and diversity are super interesting!

I didn't receive too many teachings or lessons about animals when I was younger. However, what I did learn is that they should be respected and treated fairly, just like we treat each other as humans.

Living in Calgary, with the yearly Calgary Stampede, visiting the farm animals was a must. Volunteering at the SPCA helped me appreciate the farm animals a lot more, and I helped with Aggie Days. My main personal interest from when I was little were birds. That's why I decided to pursue a degree in zoology!

It wasn't until recently that I began birding. I had always thought that there were no cool birds in Calgary, but wow was I ever wrong! Instead of taking the bus home from school, I began to walk home, taking photos of birds. While birding, I have also developed an interest in other animals and nature in general.

I took an entomology (study of bugs) course last year, which was super inspiring to me. We had to go and find bugs out in Calgary and either take a photo of them, or do a bug collection. Because of bug ethics, I decided to make most of my collection digital. Insects are such important animals! Because of my love for both birds and bugs, I now want to become a naturalist.

I think it's important to appreciate the diversity and role of animals in our environment. Every individual animal is important and carries out a very important role in our ecosystem. Sadly, through a lot of human activities, we are going through a sixth extinction event. It is important that we learn and appreciate all life, so that we can make sure we are doing our job to protect them.

Instructions: Complete the activity sheet by completing the table.

Perspective # and name:	
Animals mentioned:	
Factors that influenced perspective:	
Summary:	
How is this perspective similar and/or different to mine:	

Albertans Perspectives on Animals

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Individually read the following perspective and underline or highlight important information, such as the animals mentioned and any factors that influenced the individual's perspective (e.g., experience, age, culture, etc.)

Perspective 9: Gwen

My name is Gwen and I'm a retiree. I grew up in 12 different small communities across Alberta, and now live in Edmonton. As a child, we had a terrier named Tippy and she was my best friend. As my parents and brother and I moved to a new town almost every year, Tippy was one of the few constants in my life. Tippy went everywhere with us, whether we were out on our little boat fishing, playing in our neighbourhood, or traipsing through the woods. I also loved cats, as my sister almost always had a cat. Both of my parents were animal lovers, and taught us to respect not only pets but farm animals and wildlife.

I have always been drawn to kangaroos. They really are the most magnificent creatures, ranging from when they are tiny and adorable, first learning to hop, to the enormous alpha male adults, who can be quite intimidating. I would love to travel to Australia to visit a kangaroo sanctuary that I support.

My interactions with animals have only grown since childhood. One of my first goals as an adult was to get my own dog, and in total I've had five. Each one has been my closest companion, and they have joined me in a lifetime spent as a volunteer in animal welfare. Several of them did school visits with me for the Alberta SPCA. My current dog Gilly also does weekly visits to a seniors' home as part of a pet therapy program.

I think it is vital for young people to recognize animals as sentient, feeling creatures and to treat them with respect and kindness

Instructions: Complete the activity sheet by completing the table.

Perspective # and name:	
Animals mentioned:	
Factors that influenced perspective:	
Summary:	
How is this perspective similar and/or different to mine:	

Albertans Perspectives on Animals

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Individually read the following perspective and underline or highlight important information, such as the animals mentioned and any factors that influenced the individual's perspective (e.g., experience, age, culture, etc.)

Perspective 10: Jeffrey

My name is Jeffrey and I live in Morinville, Alberta. Growing up we often had outdoor cats at the house. I would help family members on their farms and participated in 4H raising a heifer calf. I recall falling asleep on her during the showing day. My immediate family weren't really animal people and it wasn't something that was ever talked about in school despite being in a rural community. I watched family raise beef cattle, but the methods were very traditional and the way they were raised always bothered me. After doing more school, and working in animal industries, I learned a lot about better practices.

I've studied bats in Costa Rica and squirrels in Algonquin Park in Ontario. I also now have a horse and I'm training him using positive reinforcement rather than pressure and release, like traditional horse training. Animals are the core of my life now; if I'm not working with one, I'm typically reading or watching videos of them.

When I adopted my German Shepherd, Magnum, in university, it completely changed my life trajectory. Up until that point I had been planning on working with wildlife. Magnum had some very serious behavior issues including animal and people directed aggression, which wasn't flagged at the time of adoption. I was instantly in love with him and I spent a lot of time learning how to manage and train him. Now, I have a MSc in canine behaviour and welfare. I've had the opportunity to work with dogs at nearly all levels, from kennel care of dogs at animal shelters, to doing behaviour assessments on adoptable dogs. I've also had the chance to work with service dogs, and currently I work with wellness/therapy dogs.

There are a couple of things that young people should learn about animals. One is animals have emotional states just like humans and treating them with respect and being kind to them is the most important thing. Another is that at the end of the day they are animals, so no matter how well you know them, there is always some risk they could injure you if you don't listen to what they are telling you. I think learning to ask animals for their permission to interact with them, and learning their body language, is key to making interactions better between people and animals.

Instructions: Complete the activity sheet by completing the table.

Perspective # and name:	
Animals mentioned:	
Factors that influenced perspective:	
Summary:	
How is this perspective similar and/or different to mine:	

Interview Questions

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Use the following questions to guide your interview. Is there anything else you would like to ask?

What is your name?	
Where are you from?	
Where did you grow up?	
Where do you call "home"?	
Is there anything special about your family or background that you'd like to share?	
When you were growing up did you have any pets, visit farms or see wildlife? Do you remember stories about animals from when you were young?	
What animals do you spend time with now? Is this different from when you were young? How?	



Are there any animals that are important to your culture? Explain.

Are there any animals that are special to you? Explain.

What did adults teach you about animals when you were growing up?

Ask your own question.