

Lesson 7: English

Looking at Language

AIM:

To explore how language is used in the animals in medical research debate to affect a particular response in the reader.

OBJECTIVES:

To identify examples emotive and objective language.

To understand the different impacts of emotive and objective language.

To write an article using either emotive or objective language.

NATIONAL CURRICULUM LINKS

ENGLISH (Reading) KS3 1a, 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d

RESOURCES:

INFORMATION SHEET: Articles

ACTIVITY:

- 1) In the play, Sonny and Anita argue over whether a procedure used on animals during research is “force” or “restraint”.

Read out extract below:

ANITA OK (Reading) “For Asthma research we use the mouse inhalation routes, which can be the whole body, or the nose only. Whole body is done in a special chamber. Nose only requires the animals to be restrained with plastic tubes.”

SONNY So. They basically force themselves to inhale Asthma drugs to see if it harms them?

ANITA To see what the effects are, not just if it harms them. And force isn’t the right word.

SONNY Excuse me, “restrained with plastic tubes”? They tie them down, they make them asthmatic so they can’t breathe, so they feel just like I did, like I had a slab of concrete on my chest, choking me to death. Then they make them inhale something that may not even make them better!

Discuss: Why are they both keen that their word is right?

- 2) There are many different organisations involved in the animals in medical research debate, each with a different viewpoint and each keen to convince the public to agree with their view.

Ask: Who do you think these groups are and what point of view would they have? (i.e. Animal Rights Groups – you might like to draw the distinction between extremists, activists and those who campaign for animal welfare, medical research organisations, drugs companies. Refer also to the Media and their interest in having an angle and story)

- 3) Read articles 1 (ANIMAL AID) and 2 (THE DAILY MIRROR) from INFORMATION SHEET: Articles

Discuss the following questions:

What words are used to describe:

Scientists
Animal Rights Campaigners
Animals
Experiments
The outcomes of experiments
The behaviour of Animal Rights Campaigners

- What phrases have the biggest impact on you? Why?
- What does the article focus on? What are its main themes?
- Does it tend to use facts or opinions? Does it seem to appeal more to reason or emotion?
- What impact does the article have on you?
- Do you think this is the aim of the piece?
- Does it present a balanced view?

- 4) Read articles 3 (RDS) and 4 (THE INDEPENDENT) from INFORMATION SHEET: Articles and discuss the same questions.

- 5) Is it possible to identify the source of each article from the list below at the bottom of the sheet?

- 6) Which articles do you trust the most? Why?

- 7) Use the information from all the articles on INFORMATION SHEET: Articles and what you have learned from the play to write your own piece.

Decide if it is going to be:

- emotive or objective
- For or Against or Neutral
- for a Tabloid or Broadsheet Newspaper or Campaign organisation

Give your article a headline, then write your article.

You may need to refer your students to further resources. See RESOURCES.