

L2 RESEARCH - LESSON PLAN PAGE 1/6

English level 2/8 – External 90381

Investigate a language or literature topic and present information in written form

Teacher Guidelines

This lesson plan is based on the assessment material entitled You Can Say That Again! It supports internal assessment for New Zealand English achievement standard 2.8, AS90381 version 4 – Investigate a language or literature topic and present information in written form. This achievement standard involves students investigating a language topic of their choice. This investigation includes a written report accompanied by process notes.

Context/setting:

Students will have been introduced to language issues in class. Using the sample topic 'the language of battery hen farming' students will be taken through the assessment research process and the written report.

Students will then select and investigate their own language topic. Students will present a written report accompanied by process notes.

Conditions:

This activity requires a combination of class and homework time. Students can collect information and develop their reports in and out of class time. Teachers will need careful checkpoint procedures to ensure authenticity of student output.

Headings and examples have been suggested for aspects of the research process and reports. Students should follow these. Explanatory Note 6 requires that a written bibliography be provided.

Resource Requirements:

Access to information sources to model the research process should be given during class time.

Possible Local Adaptation

Where local adaptations are made, teachers and schools should ensure that they have:

- checked that the adapted assessment validly assesses the achievement standard;
- checked the copyright status of any material imported into the assessment resource;
- complied with all internal and external quality assurance requirements.

Student Instruction Sheet

This activity requires you to select and investigate your own language topic. You will present a written report accompanied by material showing the research process.

Your teacher will introduce you to the research process using the sample topic 'the language of battery hen farming'.

You will complete work in class and for homework. Your teacher will guide you on how much time you have to prepare the task.

You will be assessed on how well you:

- propose research questions.
- select relevant information from a range of referenced resources.
- present information accurately, drawing conclusions.
- structure and organise your information and ideas in an effective written format.

Introduction

English is a constantly evolving and developing language, always moving and adjusting to meet the needs of its users. In this activity you will investigate an aspect of the English language that interests you, and present your findings.

You could focus your investigation on the ways we use language or changes within our language itself.

For example:

1) The ways we use language.

If you decide to look at the ways we use language you could investigate a **particular context** and its impact on language use. You could investigate how writers and speakers craft language and the effects they create from contexts as wide ranging as war, or travel, or sport, or music, or human-animal relations.

For example:

2) Changes within our language itself.

If you decide to examine changes within English, you could look at **the types of change** and why they have come about. You could investigate how language users borrow, lend, coin, shift and adjust language to put words to new ideas, concepts and technologies. You might look at the history of language change and its impact on our language today.

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TASK 1: MODEL THE RESEARCH PROCESS: THE LANGUAGE OF BATTERY HEN FARMING.

What do you know already?

- a) You need to establish what you know already about your topic before you set the focus for your research. Using the language of battery hen farming to model the research process, divide into groups of three or four.

Look over a range of texts about battery hen farming provided by your teacher. You could read/use some of the texts shown in the data chart on page 6.

Based on the these texts, record what you notice about the **language used** to write about battery hens.

Look for similarities and patterns

- b) Working in groups, organise this information into **broad categories**. With some teacher input, it might be that you decide on categories like:

Jargon terms used to describe battery hens. Differences in language use in various texts. Positive and negative references. The effects created by these references.

What do you need to find out?

- c) From these broad categories formulate key questions which extend from your existing information. Your questions should encourage you to research new areas and to expand your understandings about the language of battery hen farming. You should develop key questions which can incorporate a wide range of sources, as your research will now move beyond the teacher-provided texts to materials sourced by you.

You should develop **open-ended questions**, including factual and interpretative questions. It is important that you include interpretative questions, as they help you draw conclusions.

e.g. These key questions were developed from the categories in task 1(b):

Jargon terms used to describe battery hens. Differences in language use in various texts. Positive and negative references. The effects created by these references.

- 1) What words and terms are used in reference to battery hen farming and how they have affected our language use?

FACTUAL QUESTION

- 2) What effects to these words have on attitudes to the birds in battery farms?

- 3) How are these ways of using language being challenged by opponents of battery hen farming?

INTERPRETATIVE QUESTIONS

What keywords do you need to use to find answers to these questions? Record keywords. Decide which words will be the most useful for searching a database like INNZ, the database in your own library, or the Internet, then try searching, experimenting with your keywords. e.g. animals + language, 'battery hens', 'animal rights' + language

Select a range of sources which could be relevant to the research topic 'The language of battery hen farming'.

Scan

- d) As you consider each source, you need to scan it to determine its usefulness and relevance. Scan the source by looking at the title, looking for keywords (from task 1(c)), and looking over the home page or first paragraph.

Skim and select / take notes

- e) When you have determined if a source is potentially useful, skim read it, keeping your key questions in mind.

Select information which relates to your key questions. You could use a data chart, or note down single words, phrases or ideas, which can then be expanded later into fuller notes.

TASK 1 cont . . .

KEY QUESTIONS			Source and Date of Source
What words and terms are used in reference to battery hen farming?	What effects do these words have on attitudes to the birds in battery farms?	How are these ways of using language challenged by opponents of battery hen farming?	
Hen described by poultry industry leader as an 'egg production machine'	Industrial farming views animals as resources rather than as living beings		Peter Singer; Animal Liberation, 2nd edn, Thorsons, 1991 4/7/06
People "seem to feel uncomfortable using 'he' or 'she' to refer to a chicken"		Argue that referring to chickens as 'he' or 'she' rather than 'it' would remind us that these are birds with individual sensations and feelings	Jeffrey Masson, The Pig Who Sang to the Moon, Ballantine 2003 5/7/06
'End-of-lay' and 'spent hen' as the terms for chickens that are no longer regular egg producers		Gives example of the 'all purpose insult — birdbrain' — implies chickens are too unintelligent to be worthy of concern	Jeffrey Masson, The Pig Who Sang to the Moon, Ballantine 2003 5/7/06
Key terms: 'normal patterns of behaviour', 'good practice', 'scientific knowledge'	Neutral-sounding term functions as a euphemism: obscures the fact that these birds are slaughtered although they are still relatively young		Jeffrey Masson, The Pig Who Sang to the Moon, Ballantine 2003 5/7/06
	Examples of terms that can be understood in different ways: poultry industry and animal advocates will argue about their meaning		Animal Welfare Act 1999; Karen Petersen and Anthony Terry, SAFE Submission on Draft 10 of the Animal Welfare (Layer Hens) Code of Welfare 2002 10/7/06

DATA CHART

KEY QUESTIONS			Source and Date of Source
What words and terms are used in reference to battery hen farming?	What effects do these words have on attitudes to the birds in battery farms?	How are these ways of using language challenged by opponents of battery hen farming?	
Public concerns about battery hen farming dismissed as 'unscientific'	Debate about what the term 'scientific' actually means in the context of battery hen debates		Michael Morris, 'Life in a Cage: Science Say Chooks Should Run Free', Organic NZ Jan/ Feb 2005 10/7/06
'a life of hell and continued abuse'		Such phrases are used to counter the euphemistic jargon of battery hen industry	Hans Kriek, media release: "Minister Challenged over Abusive Battery Hen and Pig Codes" 10/7/06
Phrases used on packaging of eggs: 'Happy Hens', 'Country Fresh', 'Farm Fresh'	Obscures the treatment of the birds that produced the eggs	Challenge to label eggs in ways that make clear whether they are from free-range or battery hens	'Behind Bars', 60 Minutes, 1993: TV current affairs item 11/7/06

A data chart is a useful way of organising material you have selected as you prepare to write your report.

Evaluate

f) Look back at the information you have assembled.

- have you kept to your topic?
- have you answered your key questions?
- should you adapt any key questions, given the nature of the information you have found?
- have some resources been more useful than others?
- have any issues or questions arisen from your investigation which you should mention in your report?

TASK 2: MODEL THE RESEARCH REPORT: THE LANGUAGE OF BATTERY HEN FARMING.

The language of battery hen farming

- a) Read the research report which has been developed from the research completed in Task 1. It includes:
- an outline of objectives (key questions)
 - judgements and conclusions based on the information in your report
 - a bibliography

A useful way of making sure that you include judgements is to use a 'Statement, Examples and Comments' structure for each paragraph as shown below:

Research Report: The Language of Battery Hens

My research objective was to look at the language of battery hen farming. I wanted to compare the language used by the poultry industry with the language used by its opponents in the animal rights and welfare movements. I wanted to think how the different kinds of language used affected attitudes towards the birds and the farming systems involved in the debate.

What words and terms are used in reference to battery hen farming?

The battery hen industry uses language that represents chickens as nothing but resources for production. For example Peter Singer quotes one industry leader who refers to hens as 'egg-producing machines'. According to Singer this is an example of a widespread attitude in the industry which avoids seeing chickens as living beings capable of experiencing pleasure or suffering.

Statement

Example followed by comment.

Examples followed by comment.

In the same way, technical language used by poultry farmers includes terms such as 'end of lay' and 'spent hen'. These phrases refer to birds that are still relatively young but are due to be slaughtered because they no longer lay eggs as frequently as the farmer needs them to in order to keep profits high. In fact these birds, which are usually about two years old, would live for several years more if they were allowed to. I think these kinds of expressions are used as euphemisms, in order to obscure the reality of some aspects of battery farming from the public.

The same is true of some of the language used on packaging for eggs on sale in shops and supermarkets. Eggs that come from hens in 'battery cages' can be labelled 'Happy Hens', 'Farm Fresh' or 'Country Fresh'. Shoppers who are concerned about animal welfare are very likely to assume that these phrases mean that the birds who produced these eggs were happily pecking about on free-range farms, while in fact they were confined in battery cages.

Rather than euphemisms or misleading expressions, the terms used by the Animal Welfare Act to regulate how chickens can be treated tend to be very vague. This creates loopholes that allow hens to be kept in ways that are not consistent with other parts of the Act. For example, expressions like 'normal patterns of behaviour' can be debated back and forth by farmers and their opponents but never really proven. The Act also insists that farmers must adhere to the principles of 'scientific knowledge' and 'good practice' but these are also terms that can be interpreted in very different ways depending on who is using them. This shows how language can be used to protect the interests of groups, for example the poultry industry, who have influence over how legislation is written.

What effects do these words have on attitudes to the birds in battery hen farms?

By referring to birds as 'units' or as 'egg-producing machines' in the way described by Peter Singer, those in the poultry industry avoid having to think of them as living creatures capable of pleasure and suffering. They can also use jargon (such as the terms referred to by Jeffrey Masson, including 'end-of-lay' and 'spent hen') to hide some of the realities of battery hen farming from the public.

Information is interpreted. Qualitative judgements are made here, and throughout the report.

Integrates information/ conclusions from more than one source to construct new understandings.

Information is presented, with some interpretation. Some brief qualitative judgements are made at the end of the paragraph.

Integrates information/ conclusions from more than one source to construct new understandings.



TASK 2 cont . . .

Masson also suggests that some of our habitual or common-sense ways of talking about animals also prevent us from thinking about the suffering they may experience – for example, the suffering experienced by hens in battery cages. He claims that when he tells people stories about chickens he has seen at farm sanctuaries, they say 'but it's just a chicken', and that they 'seem to feel uncomfortable using 'he' or 'she' instead of the impersonal 'it' to refer to a chicken, as if giving chickens a gender would make them too personal or 'too real'. According to Masson, common insults like 'bird-brain' are also examples of the kinds of language use that reinforce uncaring attitudes to chickens, because they reinforce the idea that birds are so stupid that we don't need to consider their well-being. I think these terms help us feel less concerned about how animals are treated in the farming industry because they reinforce the idea that we are so different from animals and so superior to them that we need not worry too much about their suffering.

How are these ways of using language challenged by opponents of battery hen farming?

In contrast, opponents of battery hen farming who are concerned about animal welfare and animal rights use expressions such as 'a life of hell and abuse' which are designed to shock the public into being concerned about battery hen farming. The language used in this situation is very deliberately emotional and confrontational. For example in one media release about the decision by the Minister of Agriculture to retain battery cages indefinitely, animal rights campaigner Hans Kriek stated that 'the Minister's pen might as well be a club used to personally bludgeon these animals to death once the Minister signs off these codes'. By using the language of violence and deliberate cruelty, opponents of battery hen farming try to present the public with a different view from the euphemistic one presented by the poultry industry

Meanwhile, both sides of the debate also argue about the meaning of the key terms used in the legislation that controls what farmers can and can't do: terms like 'normal patterns of behaviour', 'good practice' and 'scientific practices' are interpreted in different ways

depending on whether the person using them is supporting or opposing battery farming. A submission by the animal rights organisation SAFE on the proposed Code of Welfare for Layer Hens, argues that prominent scientific experts on animal behaviour and common-sense both 'tell' most members of the public that a severely caged bird cannot express most of its natural innate behavioural needs and that therefore its welfare is compromised. This shows how closely language use is related to the ways in which our society decides on its values and the laws that should enforce them.

Information is interpreted. Qualitative judgements are made.

Information and ideas are organised and structured in an appropriate and effective written format:

- Introduction states focus of research
- Body of accurate information presented
- Relevant conclusions drawn from information presented

Bibliography

'Behind Bars'. 60 Minutes, TVNZ, 22 August 1993.

Kriek, Hans. 'Minister Challenged Over Abusive Battery Hen and Pig Codes'. *SAFE Media Release* 22 December 2004.

Masson, Jeffrey Moussaieff. *The Pig Who Sang to the Moon – The Emotional World of Farm Animals*. New York: Ballantine Books, 2003.

Morris, Michael. 'Life in a Cage. Science Says Chooks Should Run Free'. *Organic NZ* January/February 2005.

Petersen, Karen and Anthony Terry. *SAFE Submission on Draft 10 of the Animal Welfare (Layer Hen) Code of Welfare 2002*. Christchurch, SAFE 2002.

Singer, Peter. *Animal Liberation*. Second Edition. London: Thorsons, 1991.



TASK 3: COMPLETE YOUR OWN RESEARCH

- a) Select a **language research topic**. The topic must be of sufficient breadth for your own conclusions to be based on what you have found.
Choose a topic from the list below or develop your own. You must gain teacher approval for your topic before beginning research.
You could choose to research the battery hen topic or other animal-related topics, such as: the language of dairy farming, sheep farming, science, environmentalism, hunting, pet-keeping or animal rights.
- b) Look at task 1 (a) and follow the same process modelled there. Find one or two initial resources or pieces of information to get you going. If other students are working on the same topic you could complete task 1 (a) – What do you know already? and task 1 (b) – Looking for similarities and patterns together. You should work individually from task 1 (c) on.
- c) Before you begin your report, read the research reports from student exemplars and discuss their strengths and areas where they could be improved. Note especially how judgements are included in the report in the excellence exemplar. You may not include any material from the exemplars in your report or in your notes.
Note:
Student exemplars can be found at:
<http://www.tki.org.nz/e/community/ncea/resources.php>
Click on 'English' and then scroll down to 'Eng/2/8 – A version 4'
- d) You are now ready to present your findings in a written report. Structure and organise your information and ideas to include:
 - An introduction stating the focus and scope of the research. You should include details about the writer you have selected, the works you have read and the issue(s)/theme(s) raised in these works.
 - A body of accurate information from which relevant conclusions are drawn linked to your key questions, together with evidence to support the points you make.
 - A conclusion.
 - A bibliography.
- e) Write at least 500 words in your report. Include a bibliography. Attach to your report the notes you have taken to show the information you have selected from each text. Refer to the student exemplars for suggested appropriate formats.

English Research

The Language of Battery Hens

Student Name _____

Date _____