

Form 1 (Age 10-11)

General Theme: Rights, Freedoms and Truth

General Introduction

The Form 1 programme brings together the central moral notions of right and obligation, freedom and duty conceived as obedience to the moral law. These are not new notions for the students who will have encountered them already earlier in the Primary Ethics Programme. Hence they will be familiar with them and they will have some basic understanding already of their meaning and use. The object now is to help them think them through in a more systematic and organized way so that they can better understand how they are used in the context of contemporary discourse and everyday life. In other words they learn the meanings the terms are given in an intellectually more mature moral language, and the moral force they have in moral arguments that use and appeal to them. The point to be made here and throughout Programme A in general, is that all these moral notions and others are tools of language, tools of exchange, that are conspicuous in our contemporary multi-cultural moral culture. Understanding how they are used will prepare the students to engage with that moral language and the issues it comprehends in an informed and reflective way and encourage them, eventually, to contribute to it.

A deeper understanding of the terms will prepare the students to use them in a more sophisticated and reflective way both in moral self-reflection and in the debate on the topics and issues that will feature in the second half of the secondary programme. The importance of this thinking through the terms one uses in order to clarify their meaning before one enters into discussion of them with others is emphasised by the teacher. The teacher explains how people can fail to communicate because though they use the same words they may use them with **different meaning**, and how, though disagreement can be only a verbal matter solved by clarification, it is often a first, and exceedingly formidable, obstacle to agreement. In any case, that the question ‘what do you mean?’ – ‘what do you mean by a right, a freedom, an obligation, the truth?’ and so on, is a key question to be asked where there is moral disagreement.

In Form 1 students also learn to evaluate simple **written** arguments and to do brief written reports on the arguments. The arguments selected by teachers for the purpose should relate to the themes taken up in this module, i.e. to moral arguments brought in defense or justification of claims to, or positions on rights, freedoms, and/or obligations. Students are taught how to assess the arguments for their **validity** (the technical term is now introduced to the students), how to pinpoint the reasons for the invalidity, and how to articulate these causes in a brief report. In Form 1 students also begin to keep a weekly journal in which they briefly **record** the ethics sessions of the week.

Assessment for Form 1:

- (a) The Ethics Journal.
- (ii) Exercises testing the students’ ability to assess the formal validity of arguments.

Module 1: Rights

Introduction

This module explores the modern idea of **rights** which is dominant in our moral culture in a general way by analysing the language we use to speak about them. It begins from the observation that people, even children themselves, are always claiming rights of various sorts, to this, to that. So to see whether these claims are justified one needs to ask what it means to have a right to something, and whether rights are not sometimes confused with other things and the claim to them too quickly made. The teacher must make the point that stating that someone has a right to something in our society is making a particularly strong **claim** to something, different from saying that someone **wants, wishes for, or desires** something, since to claim a right is a claim **entitlement** to something, a claim that something is one's **due**, something one is **owed** – hence to claim rights for oneself or others is to claim **duties** or **obligations** owed to oneself and others.

The notion of a duty or obligation will come later. Besides distinguishing rights (which are connected with objective human **needs**) from wants, wishes, and desires (which are all merely psychological states), the module makes the point that not all rights are moral. It distinguishes different kinds; such as legal, political, social, institutional that are **particular** rights related to one's membership of an association of people, a society, community, club, etc., or an institution, a church, a school, a family, etc. from moral rights that are universal and related to our being human – hence they are often referred to as **human rights**, while originally they were called **natural rights** (rights that belong to our human nature) precisely to distinguish them from **conventional rights** (rights that belong to us because we belong to a particular societies, group, institutions, and so on).

Objectives:

- to establish the value of the tool of conceptual analysis in moral argumentation, discussion etc.;
- to begin a weekly journal briefly recording the contents of the week's lessons;
- to introduce the notion of a valid argument as distinct from an invalid;
- to explore the notion of a right, its meaning, as it is used in different languages that we speak in everyday life; legal, political, social, etc. as well as moral or human, with the students;
- to help them see the difference between what truly has the status of a right and what is merely desired, wished for, or wanted, and what should not count for a right;

- to introduce the idea of rights in different contexts of **membership** in the classroom, the school, the community, the society distinguishing such rights from **moral** rights that are universal or human;
- to introduce them to the idea of specifically children's rights and to the Charter of Children's Rights;
- to explore the notion of a universal right as a 'human right' and to introduce them to this expression, which will continue to be used;
- to distinguish rights into the two main kinds; freedom and welfare rights;
- to establish that the rights of whatever kind one enjoys are never absolute and are curtailed by similar or other rights of others;
- to establish that rights always come with duties, responsibilities, or obligations;
- to discuss the 'right to play' as a human right and to make a case against bullying.

Teaching Strategy:

Tools: Narrative, exposition, analysis, discussion, exploration, comparison.

Resources required: Stories, narrative, cartoons, videos, documentaries, docudramas, others.

Content and method

- (a) The students are taken into a discussion about rights and what they are, what it means to have a **right** to something. The teacher begins with a narrative or narratives from daily life where someone's claim to the right to play or participate in a game or activity is denied. This will take the students straight into familiar territory. The students are asked to discuss the narrative/s and the teacher lets the discussion proceed with the minimum of interference but taking notes that s/he may want to pick up on later as s/he leads them into new territory. S/he will limit his/her interference in the discussion to asking the students to clarify their claims and statements when this is required.
- (b) In the discussion the students are asked what they think having a **right** to something means – in other words to **define** a right. They should be led to the definition of a right as an **entitlement** to something, to play in this case, something the others **owe** me and which, therefore, I can **claim** from **them** – important words and relationships that need to be explained with other examples of owing and claiming. They are then asked to identify other rights they think they have besides the right to play, and to say why they think these things they identify should be regarded as rights and not simply as **wishes**. The suggested rights are listed with the teacher on the white board as they come in, then they are discussed and accepted as such or rejected. Then the revised

list is discussed with the students again to see why they retained those that were retained and discarded those that were discarded.

- (c) The object of the last discussion in (b) was to make the point that not everything that is claimed as a right need be so and to make the point that right claims, because they are strong, need to be examined before they are accepted as such. Using the revised list the teacher then asks the students to say whether these rights have anything in common, whether they can be classified into different types according to whether they should belong to everyone **in general**, or to particular people only, one's friends, the members of one's family, other children like oneself, members of their club, classroom, or school, and so on – this discussion should lead to the conclusion that **right claims** can be of different kinds. The students are asked if they think that there are some that are more important than others, and why.
- (d) The teacher then focuses the discussion on their belonging to the class and school and puts the students in groups to draw up a list of the rights they enjoy as members of the class and school that they would not enjoy if they were **not** members. The lists (separate for the class and the school) produced by the groups are compared and made into comprehensive lists which take all the suggestions on board, which are then reviewed and discussed to see if there are items in them that should **not** qualify as rights, and then approved. Next the students are invited to discuss whether they think that there are **other** rights they **should** enjoy and that they don't, that are not on the list. Then whether the students should have the same rights as their teachers, and where the difference lies – the point of **status** comes in here which is relevant where **particular** rights are concerned but **not** for moral or human rights.
- (e) The students are next asked whether they can identify other groups or communities besides school and classroom they belong to and are members of, and are helped to identify their family, their church, their ethnic group, Maltese society, team, sports club, cultural group, and so on. The purpose is to reinforce the idea that particular rights are claims tied with **membership**; that the enjoyment of rights in this case is tied to being **recognised** as a member of a particular group or community, and that not being recognised as a member means not being able to claim or enjoy them.
- (f) Next the students are asked whether they think they should have rights that are particular to them **as children**, irrespective of the family, club, school, ethnic group, religion, and so on, they belong to, rights that are the same for children everywhere - **because** they are children. They are then introduced to the UN Charter of Children's Rights and its general contents through visual narratives, documentaries with broad multi-cultural material taken from different parts of the world and different human situations depicting the deprivations children and others who have no home, belongings, family, nothing – no membership except of the human race – are exposed to. The situations are discussed and the teacher uses them to lead back into the notion of **human** rights – rights we possess as humans and that correspond with our human needs, no matter who we are. The teacher distinguishes them as **universal**, as

belonging to **all** human beings irrespective of school, family, society, club, religion, race, and so on. Students are referred back to the material shown and asked which they would identify with human rights matters. Then they are asked to discuss whether they think the right to play is a **human** right.

- (g) The next move is to get the students to look still more closely at the notion of a right by returning them to the question: Does the fact that I want, wish for, or desire something mean that I should have the right to it? They are asked to consider what would happen if we are **entitled** to everything we want, wish for or desire. The point to be made is that a right is a **special** claim to be **distinguished from**, not confused with, wants etc., because a right claim I make is tied to my needs and signifies an **obligation** on the part of others to **respect** it. The teacher then identifies two kinds of right people claim: (i) **freedom rights**: to pursue or enjoy one's freedom without interference; (ii) **welfare rights**: to be **provided** with one's needs. Examples of both kinds are given by the teacher to explain the difference.
- (h) The discussion is returned to the right to play to illustrate both; it can mean either of two claims: either that I should be left **free** to play and **not be interfered with**, or it can mean that someone is obliged, has the duty, to **provide** me with the means to play as part of my welfare. Examples the teacher will give of welfare rights are: to learn, to walk safely in the street, to healthy food, to unpolluted air, to a safe and comfortable home, to medical aid when one is ill, and so on, all corresponding with my human needs. Claims that do not qualify because they are mere wishes are such as staying up late, having ice cream on demand, being bought expensive toys or clothes, etc. The discussion is returned to the question of play, whether it is a right and, if so, which kind?
- (i) The teacher makes the point that if I claim the right to play I cannot consistently deny that same right to others and presents it as a rule of **justice** which everyone must respect, since justice requires consistency of behaviour and **the equal recognition** of the same **rights** for others that one claims for oneself. S/he invites a discussion of **bullying as** denying others the right to play or to participate as an injustice of this kind. S/he invites the students to identify other forms bullying can take besides denying others the right to play, and the rights being a victim of bullying denies the victim. At the conclusion of the discussion s/he asks the students to pass a resolution against bullying in all forms which will take the form of a charter of **rights** and which will be displayed in the classroom as a sign of the collective commitment of the class to it.

Module 2: Rights/Duties/Obligations

Introduction

This module continues with the point of reciprocity from the previous module, namely that there are no rights without duties or responsibilities,. The students are returned to the distinction between particular rights and universal moral rights and reminded that individuals have right of both kinds they share with others. Using the family as an example of the first enables the teacher to explore the idea of ‘family’ as a social unit and institution with the students, locating it within a wider society with which it interacts in different ways of dependence and contribution and a **private** unit which exists with its own realities. The idea of a **family culture** is introduced and the point made that different societies permit and sustain different family cultures. The students are returned to what was said about **multiculturalism** in the primary part of the Ethic programme. [Yr?]

The notion of a culture is explored to explain what a culture is and the reality of many societies, like the Maltese, where different family cultures coexist together pointed out to make the point that humanity is multicultural. The reality of the dependence of children on their parents and the question of **parental authority** and the obligation of **obedience** and **respect** with it is also returned to from the primary programme [Yr?]. These particular duties are distinguished from moral duties that are owed to everyone the same regardless of their status. The reality of a multicultural world is used to point out that different human societies have different **moral cultures** and therefore different ways of understanding morality, what is right or wrong, good or bad, to do or not to do, and that their members are therefore raised with different beliefs about rightness and wrongness. At the same time the idea of human rights as a universal aspiration is returned to from the previous Module and the students introduced to the UN Charter of Human Rights.

Objectives:

- to continue to press on the use and value of the tool of conceptual analysis in moral argumentation, discussion etc.;
- to continue with the weekly journal;
- to do simple exercises with the students distinguishing valid argument from invalid arguments;
- to consolidate the understanding of the distinction between particular or membership rights and universal rights thus consolidating their understanding of a moral right;
- to examine and explore the notions of family, culture, dependence, duty, authority, and human rights thus far encountered to a different depth;
- to further explore the ethics of dependence, family rights and obligations of care, respect and obedience owed to parents;
- to further the discussion of cultural difference in order to illustrate how its is reflected in the family cultures of different societies, and to link cultural with moral difference;

- to introduce the idea of the reciprocity of rights and obligations using the family community as a model and extending it to other social groupings;
- to represent lack of voice as a restriction on claiming/enjoying one's rights and to explore the question whether we are not morally obliged to speak for the voiceless;
- to represent the practice of bullying as a violation of human rights as part of the case against begun in the Primary programme.

Teaching Strategy:

Tools: Narrative, exposition, analysis, discussion, exploration, comparison.

Resources required: Stories, narrative, cartoons, videos, documentaries, docudramas, current affairs, others.

Content and method

- (a) The teacher returns to the discussions about rights in the previous module to revise and consolidate points returned to in this module; the distinction between: (i) having moral rights which are **universal** and human and that are the same for everyone, and (ii) having other rights that accompany one's membership of a **particular** social group or community, that depend on one's status in the group and that, therefore, vary between groups and communities. The point made is that individuals have both kinds. The point made about moral rights is that they correspond with human **needs** that are **objectively** required for persons to live and flourish as human beings. The teacher reminds the students of the difference from wishes, wants, and desires that are **subjective** and that can result in actions that we may not necessarily want to approve of and that may even be harmful to oneself and others. At this point the teacher should avoid any deep discussion of the difference between **objective** and **subjective**.
- (b) The discussion is then focussed on the family where we have both rights. The notion of a family is explored; means, every family, the teacher points out, like every society, lives its own reality which makes it different even from others within the same wider society; its home, way of life and story, its priorities and ways of doing, viewing, and valuing things. Though it is similar to other families in the same society in many respects it is an **independent** and **private** entity. The expression **family culture** is introduced with this discussion and explored with the students who are then invited to explore the similarities and differences by referring to their own experiences of being in a family. The teacher will connect differences between family cultures with the reality of **multicultural** societies (later necessary to the debate on tolerance), including the Maltese. The importance of **history and circumstance**, of **custom, religion, and tradition** in accounting for the differences is highlighted through the examples given to make the point that these have a key impact on moral outlook since our first moral education comes from our family and we are influenced by the moral outlook of our

society. The teacher however, makes the point that there are people and families in our society and others, particularly in the West with a non-religious, or secular, outlook on life as well as a religious. **These distinctions return the students to the work in Years 5 & 6 of the primary programme which will have prepared them for this discussion.**

- (c) The teacher points out that despite the cultural differences: (i) in all societies the first moral and legal responsibility of care for their children falls on parents/guardians; (ii) in **no** family are rights and responsibilities the same or equal for all – that rights and responsibilities depend on **status** within the family (as a son/daughter, brother/sister, parent/guardian etc.). On the other hand families being part of a wider society: (i) they are subject to its laws and culture; (ii) the society itself has a moral and legal duty to care for all its members, including its children, in that it is legally and morally obliged: (a) to assist families to cater for their children's needs, in housing, health, education, and so on; (b) to step in and make them its wards when, for any reason, children have no family to care for them; (c) to protect children from abuse by or within their own families and to safeguard their legal, including their human, rights.
- (d) The students are invited to reflect on their own daily needs, and non-needs, the daily **comforts** they enjoy and that are satisfied for them by their parents and others and to itemise them. The object is to sensitize them to their **dependence** on their family and others. They are asked to distinguish the **needs** from the **comforts**, the teacher reminding them that it is only to the satisfaction of needs that they have **moral and legal rights** what they enjoy as comforts or luxuries they have no right to. Then the point the teacher makes is that while parents/guardian have the obligation to **care for** their children's needs the same parents/guardians have the right to have the authority of their status **respected** by their children who have the obligation to show such respect. The teacher makes the point about the **ethics of dependence** that the relationship of dependence may be reversed with time; as parents grow older **they** may, in turn, become **dependent on their children** for their needs, and the obligation to care now falls on them. **[care of the elderly for later]**.
- (e) The concepts of **caring for** and **respecting** are explored further with the students for their meaning and implications using stories, anecdotes, and examples of different kinds for illustration. A crucial aspect of respect owed to parents takes the form of **obedience**. The three ideas of respect, obedience and authority are explored together in the discussion and the examples chosen accordingly. The next point to be made is that rights are recognised and enjoyed when they are protected by rules (this is again returning to the primary Ethics programme, **find**). Respecting rights means respecting the rules made to protect them as well as respecting whoever has the authority to make them, whether in the family, at school, in the class, at the club or society.
- (f) The distinction between **civil** and **political** rights protected by rules we call **laws** and moral rights which are not so defined and protected, is explored a bit further at this stage. The students are asked to give examples of laws they know of and told that the

rights that they enable people to enjoy are called **civil** and **political rights**, and that, unlike moral rights they are particular and vary between societies according to social and political culture (the teacher provides examples, there should not, however, be any detailed discussion of these rights, which belongs to citizenship education), and are enjoyed by members of those societies and citizens. They are told that laws are defined and made by political authorities and enforced by the **courts** and judicial systems. The same can be true of **moral** rights, sometimes referred to as **natural** rights and more commonly **human** to distinguish them from civil and political rights, which are also written down in legal codes and enforced by international law and by the law courts of several countries.

- (g) The teacher makes the point that though they are referred to as **human rights** the notion is **not** recognised in every society though it is in our Maltese society and in other European ones. This is because different societies have different **moral cultures** – i.e. different ways of understanding morality, and many do not recognise the notion of ‘rights’ at all, though this does not mean that there are not moral values that many societies share; like respect for truth, honesty, honour, integrity, compassion, and so on. But these words are given different meanings in different moral cultures. At this stage, however, s/he introduces the students to the United Nations **Charter of Universal Human Rights** which attempts to promote international moral targets and standards for different member nations and societies to reach and actively promotes the language of rights. The students are given historical and factual information about the Charter without an in-depth discussion of its contents. The point the teacher makes at this juncture is that though human rights are meant to be universal they are not recognised or respected universally.
- (h) The point following is that non-awareness of one’s moral rights (and therefore being unable to claim them) does not mean that one does not possess them, but that they are being denied. S/he suggests that the inability to claim one’s rights, **having no voice**, can have different reasons and invites and helps the students to give examples of the voiceless in our society and others; the very young, the unborn, the intellectually disabled, the marginalised through poverty and/or discrimination or slavery, and so on. The first point to make following this discussion is that being voiceless means being **vulnerable** to the abuse of one’s right and being **dependent** on the voice of others to claim them on one’s behalf. The two terms are further discussed with the students who are asked their views on whether there is not a **duty** for those with a voice to speak for those without one, the voiceless. The second is that voice is a matter of **power**, and that one can be **deprived** of one’s voice – by bullies, for instance, through intimidation, which is a deprivation of voice, of different kinds. The teacher suggests the denial of voice as violating a human right and adopting of a resolution to speak for the bullied and against bullying.

Module 3: Animal Rights

Introduction

The discussion of animal rights brings this set of modules on rights to completion. Most people today feel that animals should not be treated as objects to be used and dispensed with at will, hence they should not be treated as objects or mere items of property – but the distinction needs to be made with the students. This is true with pets in particular who we **own** and **are** therefore rightly inclined to regard as our property; the notion of property needs to be entered and the distinction made between the treatment of inanimate objects and live or sentient pets that are both our property but in different ways. What is said of pets is true also of other animals, domestic and otherwise and which human beings use in various ways; as food and clothing, for transport, to produce drug, in labs, and so on. But can we speak of animals as having rights, and if so what kind? In this module the right that is focused on is the minimal right not to be treated and used as objects, and therefore valued for their utility only.

The question whether their rights should be similar to human rights, which means that they should be regarded and treated like humans, is raised but not pursued except to make the point, with examples, that there are various ways we treat animals we would regard as unacceptable ways of treating humans. More critical questions about using animals for food or transport, or entertainment, or to make cosmetics or clothes, will come in later years. At this stage students need to be sensitized to animal cruelty which may be happening even in their homes in the way their pets are treated. They need also to be informed that in Malta the cruel treatment of animals is banned by law and animal rights are recognised, and introduced to the government agency and to the NGOs jointly working in the field of animal welfare. They also need to be sensitized to the fact that animals belong to a wider natural environment which is the natural heritage of humankind, and to the indirect threat to their existence from the human pollution of that environment.

Objectives:

- to continue to illustrate the value of, and to use, the tool of conceptual analysis in moral argumentation, discussion etc.;
- to continue with the weekly journal;
- to do simple exercises with the students distinguishing valid argument from invalid arguments;
- to extend the discussion on rights to animals by raising the question of the moral status of animals and the sense in which animals can be said to have rights;
- to explore the idea of animals (pets in particular) as human property in terms of rights and obligations;

- to raise consciousness on the need to respect animal life in all its forms and to discuss what that could mean;
- to sensitize students to different kinds of animal cruelty, represented as a harm;
- to introduce them to the legal measures in Maltese society to fight animal cruelty in its different forms;
- to introduce the students to the idea that our wild life is the natural heritage of the whole of humanity and needs to be respected as such.

Teaching Strategy:

Tools: Narrative, exposition, analysis, discussion, exploration, comparison.

Resources required: Stories, narrative, cartoons, videos, documentaries, docudramas, current affairs, others.

Content and method

- (a) The discussion on rights is turned to **animals** who are voiceless and very frequently defenceless and vulnerable. The teacher distinguishes different kinds of animals in the evolutionary scale, from higher, sentient animals, mammals and others to the lowest non-sentient creatures. S/he also distinguishes animals raised in the home as domestic animals or pets from animals raised for other human purposes, food, scientific experiment, industrial products, entertainment in zoos, circuses, oceanaria, transport, and so on, and from animals that grow freely in the wild. These diverse ways of using animals by human beings raise issues about their use and treatment. The discussion that follows is a generic one about whether we should consider animals as having moral rights or simply as instruments for human use or pleasure, since not to have rights is to have purely instrumental value, to have the value of an object.
- (b) The students are asked whether they think that it is just human beings who should have recognised rights: ‘Should animals be recognised as having rights too, or should they be regarded as objects or human property to be used and disposed of without consideration of any sort?’ This is the first subject for discussion. If we do not want to regard them as objects then we should recognise their right to be treated as **moral subjects**; i.e. subjects with rights. ‘Should these rights, however, be the same as human rights? If not why not?’ This is the second subject for discussion. Then: ‘Should it be all animals that have rights or only some, the higher or sentient animals?’ This is the third subject for discussion but none of the subjects is discussed in depth the point being at this stage to show the complexity of the question of animal rights, that it cannot be contained in one comprehensive basket, and to open the subject up for debate.

- (c) The teacher makes the point that the question of animal rights turns on the kind of relationship human beings **want to have** with the different kinds of animals they encounter in their lives since **animal rights** can only be **entitlements recognised by human beings not by the animals themselves** who are only dimly reflective and do not make moral judgments (nor are they subject to moral judgment), they determine how humans should treat animals. The teacher reminds the students using examples that: (i) animals are regarded and treated differently in different cultures; there are examples of cultures and civilizations which give special status to animals including treating them as gods while others are indifferent to animal cruelty, and (ii) cultures that **do not** recognise even human beings as having rights are not likely to recognise animal rights.
- (d) The teacher points to the common practice of defining the human **against** the animal, by **distinguishing** the property that is supposed to make human beings **different** from animals, obscures what they hold in common. Among the candidates that have been proposed for this purpose are possessing reason, language, emotions, making and using tools, possessing an immortal soul, and so on. This difference is taken to **justify** treating animals differently from human beings, as brutes. However, these distinctions (with the exception of possessing an immortal soul, which is, however, a matter not of science but of religious belief), do not stand up to scientific evidence, or ordinary observation of animal behaviour that shows that animals think, anticipate, feel, and communicate, some make and use tools, etc. – examples are given by the teacher, the life and habits of ants, dolphins, apes, and so on.
- (e) This raises the question, discussed with the students, whether we should not focus on what **unites** us with the animal kingdom, what we **share** in common with animals, rather than what distinguishes us from them? The teacher uses the discussion to make the point that this change our attitude to **respect** animals rather than **insensitivity** towards them, and this, in turn, means respecting animal rights. But are animal rights similar to human rights, after all we do use animals in ways that we would not other human beings – the teacher gives the examples outlined in (a)? Before trying to answer the question, the teacher points out, it is important to consider the minimum of what having rights means, i.e. **not to be treated as expendable objects or as dead property**, like chairs, mobile phones, toys, the family car, and so on which we **value** purely for their use.
- (f) The distinction between animal and object already discussed in the earlier years of the Ethics course **[find]** is returned to and explored anew. The difference is, of course, between being sentient, being conscious of one's surroundings to some degree, and having feelings and sensations (including those of pleasure and pain, physical and/or mental which are also basic for humans), which animals are, have, and communicate, and which objects lack completely. So **caring for** an animal means something very different from caring for an inanimate object even if both are one's **property**, and respecting animal rights means, minimally, **not treating animals as objects or things**. This implies a minimum right also to be protected from **cruel** or **harsh**

treatment by their owners or others, and this right is recognised not just morally but **legally**, by means of laws and enforcement agencies, in our society. The students are given information on these laws and on how these protection agencies operate by the teacher.

- (g) The discussion is now focused on the rights of pets who are treated as property by their owners, which they are. Again, the difference is that unlike other property chairs, clothes, mobile phones, the family car, and so on they are **not objects valuable only for their use** but sentient beings. This means that they should be cared for **differently** than objects. But pets are different also from other animals because they are animals **we choose to acquire** and which, as **domestic** animals, are utterly dependent on their human owners and more vulnerable to ill-treatment than animals living in the wild. In other words, our **responsibility** for caring for our pets is greater than for other animals. The students are invited to discuss the treatment of their family pets in their homes, then invited to broaden the discussion by identifying other kinds of animal cruelty and threats to their existence in our society and elsewhere in the world. The discussion is enriched with documentaries about the extinction of wild animals and connected with the destruction of the natural environment which is described by the teacher as the **natural heritage of humanity** – a concept which is introduced and discussed here. [other animal rights issues connected with slaughter for food and experimentation will be taken up later in the course]