

Humane Emergency

Story Reference: *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Humane Heroes Volume III, Story 10, “Unusual Mortality Events”*

Lesson Description: In 2015, over 3,000 sea lion pups were stranded along the California coast in an Unusual Mortality Event (UME) that prompted a massive rescue and rehabilitation effort. Not all pups who survived could successfully return to the ocean and fend for themselves. Two pups, named Jupiter and Neptune, continued to strand themselves and therefore needed to be permanently relocated. To help, the American Humane Conservation-certified Georgia Aquarium welcomed the pups into their family of sea lions, and now Jupiter and Neptune have become ambassadors for sea lions everywhere. In this lesson, students prepare to write a persuasive essay to engage others in the humane treatment of animals.

ELA Alignment:

- Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.

Lesson Objectives:

- Outline a persuasive essay to engage others in the humane treatment of animals.

Vocabulary:

- Unusual Mortality Event (UME)
- Pinniped
- Husbandry

Materials:

- Rhetorical Analysis Graphic Organizer
- Persuasive Writing Graphic Organizer

Resource Links:

- Unusual Mortality Events video
<http://www.chickensoup.com/ah/volume-3/story-10>
- NOAA Marine Mammal Unusual Mortality Events
<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/health/mmume/events.html>

Introduction: Conduct an opinion survey (5 minutes)

- Write this statement on the board:
 - *Animal species are distressed or endangered because of human behavior.*

- Tell students who agree with this statement to move to one side of the room. Tell students who disagree with this statement to move to the other side of the room.
- Have students on each side take turns briefly explaining why they chose to stand in their position.
- Note that student positions may change when this exercise is repeated at the end of the lesson. Make sure that students remember their original position.

Read and analyze: Analyze rhetorical aspects of the text (15 minutes)

- Prior to reading “Unusual Mortality Events,” tell students that as they read they should contemplate what the author might want us to know about a phenomenon called Unusual Mortality Events (UMEs), the impact on animal welfare, and how people and organizations respond humanely to these events. Explain that students should analyze the rhetorical aspects of the story. Hand out the Rhetorical Analysis Graphic Organizer for each student to complete as he or she reads.
 - *What are some claims the author makes in this text? Why does the author make these claims?*
 - *What is the tone of the story? (e.g., humorous, sarcastic, friendly, personal, impersonal) How does the tone contribute to the message of the story?*
 - *What is the author’s purpose? (e.g., to explain, to inform, to incite emotion, to motivate, to persuade). Why does the author choose this purpose? What is the effect?*
 - *Who is the author’s intended audience? In what ways does the author engage the audience? List evidence that supports the ways in which the author engages the targeted audience.*
- Have students share with a partner what they feel is the main point that the author was trying to convey and whether they feel the message was effective.

Guided practice: Write a persuasive outline (20 minutes)

- Ask students to connect the information they have just read to what they may already know about humane ways to treat animals. Call on several students to answer the following questions:
 - What are some new ideas you learned that extended or broadened your thinking about the humane treatment of animals?
 - What are some challenges or puzzles that the story raised for you?
- Allow students to speculate on some reasons they believe that UMEs occur. Write “Possible Causes of UMEs” on the board. Call on a student to share the explanation provided in the story: that food sources sometimes move farther offshore which drives nursing mothers too far out into the ocean, causing starvation. Start a list on the board with “starvation/malnutrition” as the first item on the list.
 - Develop the list as students contribute ideas about other possible phenomena that would cause UMEs. The list might also include: changes caused by the warming of the seas, infectious disease, pollutants in the water, or biotoxins (algae blooms).

- Next, discuss the meaning of humane treatment of animals. Ask students to contribute examples they may have learned from the text. Some possible answers might be:
 - Provide care - administer veterinary aid and emergency medicine
 - Show kindness - treat with compassion and rescue from harm or cruelty
 - Protect wellbeing - support basic needs, care, and feeding
 - Respect the environment/habitats - clean up trash and contaminants
- Hand out the Persuasive Writing Graphic Organizer. Tell students to outline a persuasive essay that takes a position about humane treatment of animals. Why should human beings treat animals humanely? What are some specific ways to treat animals humanely?
 - Write the topic.
 - State your opinion. What claim are you making?
 - Provide three reasons for your opinion/claim.
 - Explain each reason by citing outside sources, or by providing facts and examples.
 - Include an opposing viewpoint.
 - Write a concluding statement.

Closing: Repeat the opinion survey (7 minutes)

- Ask students to recall their original positions about whether animal species are distressed or endangered because of human behavior.
- Ask students if they feel the same about this question. If their feelings have changed, allow the students to change to a new side.
- Encourage students to articulate how the text and the subsequent discussions changed their thinking.
- Ask students to share the concluding statements from their persuasive essay outlines.

Rhetorical Analysis

What the author does	Why the author does it
What are some claims the author makes in this text?	Why does the author choose these claims?
What is the tone of the story? (e.g., humorous, sarcastic, friendly, personal or impersonal)	How does the tone contribute to the message of the story?
What is the author's purpose? (e.g., to explain, inform, incite emotion, motivate, persuade)	Why does the author choose this purpose? What is the effect?
Who is the author's intended audience?	Why does the author engage the audience? List evidence that supports the ways in which the author engages the target audience.

Persuasive Writing

Topic (hook):

Opinion/Claim:

Reason

Fact/Example

Fact/Example

Fact/Example

Reason

Fact/Example

Fact/Example

Fact/Example

Reason

Fact/Example

Fact/Example

Fact/Example

Conclusion: