

Arguments For and Against Using Animals



This activity will help you to:

- Outline arguments for the use of animals in psychological research
- Use evidence and/or examples to support these arguments
- Use counterarguments and counterexamples to criticise these arguments
- Draw conclusions

You will be working in pairs or three for this activity.

Below are some arguments in favour of using animals in psychological research. Each group will have a different argument.

What you need to do:

- Come up with or find an example or piece of research that supports your argument
- Come up with or find a suitable counterargument
- Use an example or a piece of research to support your counterargument
- Draw a conclusion about which side is stronger.

Once you have made some notes on each of the points above, write a couple of paragraphs, one about your argument, one criticising it and drawing a conclusion.

Choose someone with clear handwriting to do the writing, as it will be photocopied for the group.

The Arguments...

- We share common ancestry with other animals, and they have many structural and behavioural features in common with us. Therefore, animal research produces valid and useful results.
- We can use animals in ways we can't use humans. For example, their shorter lifespans and breeding cycles make intergenerational research possible.
- Animal research is demonstrably useful. Our knowledge of human psychology, especially at a physiological level, would be very restricted without animal research.
- We have a moral duty towards our own species. If a small amount of animal suffering leads to a greater reduction in human suffering then it is justified along utilitarian lines.