Teacher Guide Section 1

2 Humans and other species

General

This is an introductory chapter, in which students are given an early opportunity to try out and practise skills without the pressures of assessment. Coming from many education systems today where there is huge pressure on students to achieve highly in subject-based assessment, they will need:

● reassurance that it is ok not to be perfect – failure, mistakes and partial attempts are all acceptable, and indeed, essential parts of the learning process.

● encouragement to try thinking and acting for themselves

● reminders that the content is important and interesting, but that the ability to find, think about and use information is much more important than the actual information

● support as they learn to direct and manage their own learning – it is particularly important to give students time to make this step, rather than giving up in frustration and telling them what to do.

Guidance to activities

Activity 2.1

Encourage students to choose in line with their interests, but also to keep their minds open to change as they gain new information.

Activity 2.2

Encourage students to think about the kind of information they need rather than about the answers to the questions. Some students may be ready to consider the overlaps and blurred boundaries between different kinds of information.

(a)(i) Definition.

(a)(ii) Statistical information. In an ideal world this would be factual but this will depend on definitions (does “vegetarian” include people who eat dairy products, fish, or chicken) and on estimates. These estimates might also use predictions about trends in vegetarianism.

(a)(iii) Prediction. This could be based on facts and statistics about what has been happening over the past few years. You would need to look at a variety of possible consequences and try to avoid extremes.

(a)(iv) Opinion. This could be based on value judgments.
(a)(v) The number of species in Brunei’s Sungai Ingei Conservation Forest seems to be a simple fact that can be verified. But it’s actually based on estimates because it is extremely difficult to check. You might consider some of the difficulties in the way of exactness.

(a)(vi) This question can only be answered with opinions, and is likely to be based on value judgments about what does actually matter. You could also use other kinds of information to support your opinions – statistical information about value of logs, medicinal value of plants and animals and so on.

(b) Allow students to work independently and edge their way towards finding the right questions and identifying the right sorts of information.

Activity 2.3
For (a) and (b) there are no right answers. Allow students to spend time playing with different combinations of search terms to investigate which produce better results.

For (c) again, there are no right answers – there are various combinations that can work. The important feature here is for students to begin thinking for themselves about how they will look for key words, and experiment with success. Encourage students to go beyond simple underlining of words from the question. For instance, a student who looks only for “Indian rainforest” might miss relevant information expressed differently.

Activity 2.4
(a) “We should all become vegetarians” is an opinion. It cannot be checked or verified as a fact. It may be based on value judgments such as “eating meat is wrong” or factual, statistical or predictive evidence about how many people can be fed by plant-based food versus meat.

(b) Facts: It takes 7kg of grain to produce 1kg of beef. It also takes thousands and thousands of litres of water.

These can be checked and verified. They are clearly subject to dispute and discussion, as we can see from Jacquie’s response.

Opinion: We should all become vegetarians.

Prediction: If we did [stop eating meat] there would be enough food for everyone.

Some students may argue that Keith is only talking about what would happen, not saying what will happen. In some cases this would be a valid point, but here you could just as well write, “If we all stop eating meat, there will be enough food for everyone”.

Value judgment: It’s wrong to eat beef. It’s murder.

These could be classed as opinions, as value judgments are one specific kind of opinion.

(c) This is an opinion because it is so generalised. If Jacquie was talking about one field, we could check and verify that the land isn’t good enough for grain production. But we can’t do this for all land used for grazing. We can verify that quite a lot of this land would not support grain, so we can say that Jacquie’s opinion is well founded in fact.
(d) Allow students to consider various possible consequences – anaemia, weight loss, limited diet, more varied diet, meat cravings. Refine these down to the realistic and likely.

(e) Allow students to explore the possibilities, encouraging first creative imagination and then analytical refinement of the ideas in terms of what is realistic and likely. Encourage students to explore the difference between unfounded speculation (including long imaginative stories about personal, health and animal welfare disasters that might occur) and reasonable possibilities such as: there would be some financial problems while food markets readjusted; people’s diets might become generally healthier; countries which export a great deal of meat such as Argentina would become poorer until they found an alternative source of income.

(f)(i) Allow students to consider possibilities, thinking about habitats, endangered species, local and global economies. Refine down to the realistic and likely.

(f)(ii) Encourage students to engage with this and respond to the evidence.

Activity 2.5
Encourage students to begin to work independently. Support them with questions and gentle direction rather than direct instruction.

Activity 2.6
Encourage students to work in groups and individually to think about the questions. Fiction can help some students to reflect – you could ask students to share any poems, stories, films or television programmes that have influenced the ways they think about humans and other species. Some students may find that drawing, assembling collages or writing (stories, poems, scripts, mind maps, diaries) can help them to reflect on the issues. Others will prefer to talk in groups. At this stage of the course, it is important to help students to make a start, and to explore possibilities for reflection. As the course develops, students can be encouraged to think about the relationship between a task – writing a poem, making a collage – and reflection, and how to balance focus on the task and focus on the thoughts. It’s a feature of reflection that thoughts may refuse to come when we want them, but pop up when we are engaged in another task, so students will need to learn to manage this.

Activity 2.7
Students are likely to need assistance in focusing on the task planning rather than the content.

Example 1
(a) Report on soya bean growth in South America
(b) Researchers – Joel and Ali; writers – Mariah and Jonas

(c)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Who will do it</th>
<th>When it should be done</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Research soya bean growth</td>
<td>Joel and Ali</td>
<td>January</td>
</tr>
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</table>
This group of students needs help to refocus their ideas. This is a very weak plan of action. The outcome is vague – “write a report about soya bean growth”. This is not active, it is not focused, and it seems likely to lead to writing some random facts and opinions about soya bean growth with no goal and no purpose. Dividing the roles and tasks into writers and researchers is not helpful – how are Mariah and Jonas to write about things they haven’t researched or thought about themselves? What will Mariah and Jonas do if Joel and Ali do not do their share of the work or do it too late? Who will urge people to fulfil their tasks on time? How will the research be structured? What is being researched? What is the precise focus of the report? Why a report rather than an active project?

Example 2

(a) Produce a public service video advertisement to show actions we can all take to reduce the impact of our lifestyle on other species.

(b) Group leader with responsibility to ensure tasks are completed on time: Monique

Creative director with responsibility to produce advertisement: Qing Yu

Other team members: Sarah and Ka Yan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Who will do it</th>
<th>When it should be done</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Decide length of video</td>
<td>Whole group discuss possibilities with teacher</td>
<td>This lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Discuss how we can show consequences of our actions for species in a video</td>
<td>Whole group</td>
<td>By the end of this lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Start to produce script, images</td>
<td>Monique and Qing Yu to direct the rest of us</td>
<td>This lesson and next lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Meet to discuss next steps</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Two weeks’ time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Finalise editing</td>
<td>Qing Yu to direct, all of us to help her</td>
<td>Final deadline</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is a much more promising beginning. The students have chosen a task from the suggested projects in the book, and have really engaged with breaking the tasks down into manageable chunks and giving deadlines. They can now be helped with specifics of organising the task:

Is the length of the video the first thing to consider? What other tasks might be more important?

How can task 3 be broken down into manageable steps so that everyone knows exactly what they are doing?
Activity 2.8
Encourage students to write one, two or three clear sentences for each heading, using their own words. Suggest that they use a maximum of one quotation per section, and/or refer to statistics briefly. For causes and consequences, students might be more comfortable using diagrams or charts, as used in the skills section. This is not intended to be assessment-ready work. Encourage relevance, clear summaries of the issues, use of own words and clear analysis of the issues. Discourage over-long responses, overload of information and long passages clearly taken without manipulation from sources. Some able students may find the restrictions frustrating, and may need to be reminded that selecting the right 300 words is a greater skill than producing 3,000 words with less thought.

Activity 2.9
Encourage students to think carefully about their project work. These questions will lead eventually to project evaluations, but at this stage students are only beginning the process. They may need assistance in considering problems and solutions without unpleasant recriminations or blame casting.

Developing material from this section for assessment
The tasks in this section are intended as introductory materials and not as assessment-ready work. However, the topics are on the IGCSE Global Perspectives syllabus and work in these areas can be submitted for assessment. If students choose to submit work in these areas, it is recommended that they revisit the areas after further study.

Research questions
The research questions suggested in the topic could be used for assessed work, with more developed, analytical answers. It might be useful to move from “how” to “what actions could we/governments take”.

Projects
The projects suggested in this topic are too limited to be submitted for assessment, focusing more on managing the process of presenting thoughts than on taking action. Possible projects for assessment might include:

- design a poster, campaign, or public services advertisement to persuade people to take action to reduce the impact of our lifestyle on other species (note the shift of emphasis from description to persuasion)
- design and/or engage in a conservation project dealing with other species; produce a photo/video report of the aims, methods and success rate of the project.