

Is it right to eat meat?

Discussion

First answer these questions on your own:

1. Are you vegetarian?
2. Do you eat meat? How often?
3. Do you eat fish? How often?
4. Do you know any vegetarians?
5. Do you know why they are vegetarian?
6. Are there many vegetarian restaurants where you live?

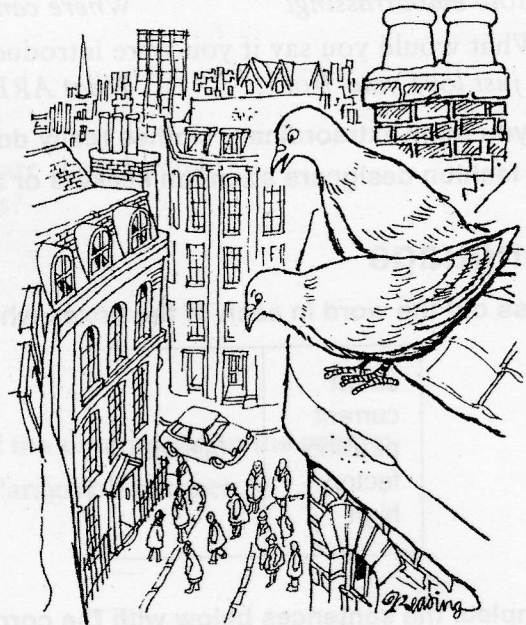
Compare your answers in pairs or small groups.

Reading

Read the texts below and answer these questions.

According to the texts which person:

- a. enjoys eating meat?
- b. has been a vegetarian for a long time?
- c. enjoys watching animals?
- d. thinks the other is a hypocrite?



"Their protective colouring sometimes makes them very difficult to hit."

IS IT RIGHT TO EAT MEAT?

YES

Some people think that in an ideal world we would all be vegetarians. A lot of poor unfortunate animals would therefore be able to enjoy their lives without the prospect of needless suffering and a premature death. But the way I look at it is this. If we didn't eat meat, no one would keep sheep, cows or any other animals that provide food. We would never be able to enjoy watching young lambs and calves playing in the fields. Instead of trying to encourage people to do something which seems rather unnatural, why don't we try and make sure that food animals are treated well? Being vegetarian really isn't necessary. Let's just treat our animals with a bit of kindness and respect.

NO

It seems a bit hypocritical to preach for the better treatment of animals – only to kill them and eat them! Of course we don't need to eat meat. I'm 82 years old and I've been a vegetarian since I was 25. What's more, I'm extremely fit and active. In fact, I ran the London Marathon last year. Some people seem to think it's natural to eat meat – but that's not so. Sure, we used to eat meat in the past, but that was before we knew how to grow enough fruit and vegetables. Anyway, not even all animals are vegetarian. Look at elephants, for example, they live on grass and hay; they are enormously strong; and they live to a great age.

Discussion

Discuss these questions in pairs or small groups:

1. Do animals really 'face the prospect' of a premature death?
2. Are they ever aware that they are destined to be eaten?
3. What do you think would happen to sheep, cows etc. if:
 - a. the number of vegetarians increased dramatically?
 - b. everyone was vegetarian?
4. How well are food animals treated in your country?
5. Are you happy with the way they are treated?
6. Do you think it is hypocritical to treat animals well and then kill them and eat them?
7. Do you think it is really 'necessary' or 'natural' to eat meat?