



Should people continue to eat meat?

GETTING ORIENTED

The weekly passage addresses issues related to eating meat. Here is some information that might be helpful to students less familiar with the topic.

Greenhouse Gases

Greenhouse gases include water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and ozone. These gases are emitted or released into the atmosphere as a result of human activity and through natural systems. These gases are usually converted or changed into another chemical compound and absorbed into the atmosphere. Every year since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution (approximately 1820), more of these greenhouse gases have remained, or stayed, in the atmosphere. This is because we have more machines in the industrial world, more cars on the freeways, and more airplanes in the sky. Scientists believe that the increase of these gases is what has caused the temperature to increase all over the world.



History of Vegetarianism

The earliest records of vegetarianism, or eating a diet without meat, come from India and Greece in the 6th century BC. In India, the diet was connected with nonviolence toward animals. It was called ahimsa. Philosophers and some religious groups promoted, or made people aware, of this practice. In Greece, vegetarianism was practiced for medical purposes. People believed it was good for your health. The first Vegetarian Society started in England in 1847. Many countries followed this example. The popularity of vegetarianism has grown steadily since that time.



Cattle and Other Livestock

Ruminant animals are animals that have hooves. Common ruminant animals are cattle, goats, buffalo, and sheep. These animals are unique or different because they have digestive systems that convert unusable plant material such as grass into nutritious food. This process, however, also produces methane, one of the greenhouse gases that causes climate change. America breeds more cattle for human consumption than any other country in the world.





Should people continue to eat meat?

EVIDENCE AND PERSPECTIVES

	<i>Some may have this view:</i>	<i>But others may think:</i>
Cattle Ranchers	Most cattle ranchers will want people to continue eating meat so they can earn a living and support themselves and their family. They are aware that cattle emit methane, and many ranchers do everything they can to improve their processes to reduce the quantity of methane emitted by their cattle.	Some cattle ranchers may be concerned about the health issues that arise from eating meat. Even though their business may be to sell beef for consumption, they might not want to eat it themselves or may want to eat less.
General public	Members of the general public may think that people should continue to eat meat. Meat has a lot of protein, which is an important part of a healthy diet. In addition, many people like the taste of meat, so they will want to continue eating it. Also, meat is an important part of the culture for many Americans. They may celebrate major holidays with traditional meat dishes.	Other members of the general public may feel that people should not eat meat because of the environmental implications. Many of the animals that people like to eat produce methane, which causes climate change. People may also like animals and may worry about any violence or pain inflicted on animals that will be eaten.

Additional Information

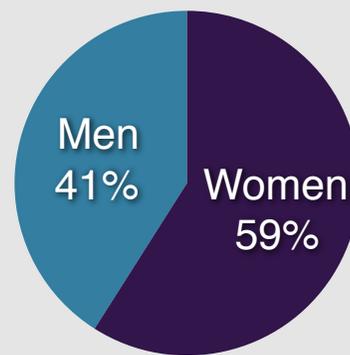
- ☑ In the United States, cattle emit 5.5 million metric tons of methane per year, which makes up 20% of U.S. methane emissions.
- ☑ Globally, livestock such as cattle, sheep, goats, and buffalo produce 80 million metric tons of methane annually. This is 28% of global methane.
- ☑ Improving the productivity and efficiency of livestock production is the best way to reduce emissions.
- ☑ Some vegetarians are ovo vegetarians. This means they eat eggs but not other dairy products.
- ☑ Veganism excludes all animal flesh and animal products, including milk, honey, and eggs and may also exclude any products tested on animals or any clothing made from animals.
- ☑ In some parts of the world, vegetarianism isn't a choice. Since meat costs more than, for example, beans and rice, some people aren't able to make meat a part of their diet.
- ☑ In 2008, a study showed that 7.3 million Americans were vegetarians and another 22.8 million follow a vegetarian-inclined diet.
- ☑ 59% of vegetarians in America are women, whereas 41% are men.

Cattle Ranching in America
www.workingranches.com/

Vegetarianism
www.vegetariantimes.com/

Greenhouse Gases
<https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions>

How Livestock Harms the Environment
<http://www.fao.org/newsroom/en/news/2006/1000448/index.html>



Vegetarians in the United States



Should people continue to eat meat?

ANNOTATIONS FOR TEACHERS

Features of Academic Text: *Nominalization*

A nominalization is a noun or noun phrase that is used to describe a complex process or concept. It typically follows a textbook explanation and is used as a compact way of referring to this bigger idea, as the writer elaborates on the topic.

For example:

“There is a movement in this country to replace the traditional diet of beef and pork with one that consists of fruits and vegetables. Vegetarianism is growing in popularity, even among middle and high school students and schools.”

Vegetarianism is a nominalization for the “movement to replace the traditional diet of beef and pork with one that consists of fruits and vegetables.”

While the writers of Word Generation tried to avoid nominalizations in these passages, it is important for teachers to be aware of them.

After reading the book *Charlotte’s Web*, 10-year-old Alia made a big decision. She decided she would not eat meat anymore. She did not want animals to be killed for food. Her story is not unique. Lately many children are choosing to be vegetarian.

Vegetarians do not eat any beef, pork, chicken, fish, or other meats. Some vegetarians choose their meat-free diet for health reasons. Some choose this diet because of their concern for animals, and others because of their concern for the environment.

Meat consumption has been linked to health problems such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and increased rates of diabetes and heart disease. By replacing meat with beans and nuts, vegetarians eat a diet lower in saturated fat and higher in fiber than meat eaters.

Nonetheless, eating meat is an **efficient** way for people to get enough protein, iron, and vitamin B12, since it contains all of these nutrients. In contrast, vegetarians have to plan their meals carefully to get all their nutrients.

Some people say that meat doesn’t just taste good; it is also part of the American way of life. A roasted turkey is **symbolic** of Thanksgiving. Hamburgers and hot dogs are traditional foods for Fourth of July barbecues. Beef chili, barbecued ribs, and southern fried chicken are all classic American foods. For some Americans, eliminating meat would be like giving up an essential part of our culture and traditions.

Could the American tradition of eating meat be hurting the earth? Raising animals and transporting meat creates almost one-fifth of the earth’s greenhouse gases. This is more than the greenhouse gases produced by cars, trucks, trains, and airplanes combined. In addition, almost

half of the water used in the U.S. goes to raising livestock.

Most of the beef produced domestically is eaten by Americans. However, **exports** are also increasing as more countries **integrate** meat into their daily diets. As a result, the meat industry is thriving. Reducing meat consumption could damage an important **domestic** industry, hurting the economy and taking away precious jobs.

Some people choose another option. “Flexitarians” are vegetarians who eat meat occasionally. Flexitarians believe that a diet should be mostly plant-based, but that meat and fish can be healthy and responsible choices if consumed in moderation.

With all of the benefits of **vegetarianism**, should people continue to eat meat? Are **tradition** and industry more important than the environment and health benefits?



Should people continue to eat meat?

GENERATING WORDS

Cognates

Many words in Spanish, French, English, Italian, and other languages sound the same. Ask friends from different countries how they pronounce the word “Google” or “internet” in their home language. You may be surprised that they sound very similar. Languages that use the same alphabet, like English and Spanish, will have words that are spelled similarly as well. These words are called **cognates**. All five of this week’s focus words are cognates in English, Spanish, and French. See if someone in your class can help find the missing word.

English	Spanish	French
export	exportar	exporter
symbolic	simbólico	symbolique
domestic	domestico	domestique
integrate	integrar	intégrer
efficient	_____	efficace

Many of the Word Generation focus words that you have learned have cognates in Spanish and French. Below are a few of the Spanish or French translations of these words. Even if you do not know Spanish or French, see if you can figure out the English word.

English	Spanish	French
_____	consecuencia	conséquence
_____	voluntario	volontaire
_____	régimen	régime
_____	suspicas	souçonneux
_____	compatible	compatible

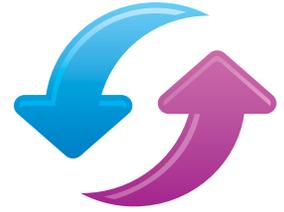
BEWARE OF FALSE COGNATES!

There are some words that sound and/or are spelled the same in more than one language but have different meanings. For example:

The word **exit** in English means **a way out of a place**, but **éxito** in Spanish means **success**.
 Would it make sense to say,
 “Could you direct me to **success** to get out of this building?”
 Probably not!

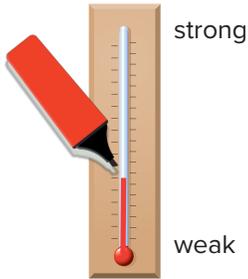
FALSE COGNATES





Should people continue to eat meat?

DEVELOPING DISCUSSIONS



People should not eat meat.

<i>better for the environment</i>	<i>good for your health</i>	<i>better for animals</i>

People should eat as much meat as they want.

<i>it is part of our culture or way of life</i>	<i>it supports cattle ranchers and other jobs</i>	<i>it tastes good</i>



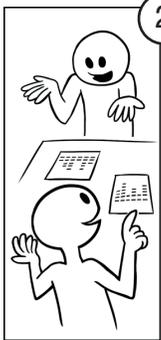
1

Step One: Look at the reasons for both sides of the issue. Think about which reasons you believe are strong and which are weak. Color in the meter above each reason. Think about why you labeled the strongest and weakest reasons as you did. Be ready to explain to your partner. Think about how you can use the focus words: *export, symbolic, domestic, integrate, and efficient.*



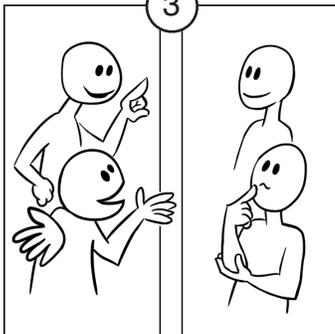
2

Step Two: Explain your meter to your partner and have them explain theirs, using the phrases in the box to the right. Why did you choose a strong or weak rating? Ask your partner questions if you need more explanation. Challenge your partner if your ratings are different. As a pair, be prepared to argue that one of the issues has stronger reasons.



3

Step Three: As a pair, explain to another pair of students in the class which side you think has better reasons.



Words and phrases:

- The strongest reason for eating meat is _____.
- The strongest reason for not eating meat is _____.
- This is the strongest reason because _____.
- The article provides evidence for this when it says _____.
- This is the weakest reason due to _____.
- That sounds like a good reason, but what is the evidence for _____?
- Is there data to support _____?
- I agree that it's the strongest. Can you think of any more evidence?
- That's important, but do you think it outweighs _____.
- I didn't think of that. Can you say more?
- We decided that _____ has stronger reasons. For example, _____.
- Which side do you think has the best reasons?
- Can you think of any reasons that are not included here?