



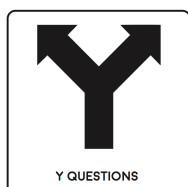
## Is Fur Ever Fair?

*Possums are endangered in Australia, but in New Zealand they are invasive, competing for resources with endemic species and eating the eggs and chicks of kiwis and other birds. The sale of possum-fur articles helps to support trapping and shooting to keep their numbers down.*



Get pupils stood into a circle and play **'Philosophers Fruit Salad'** (p. 10) and invite them to make choices about animals, such as "Swap places with someone if you prefer cats to dogs", or something even more ridiculous, like "Swap places with someone if you would think a horse would be better builder than a cow".

To edge the pupils closer to the overall Y-Question, close with questions that are related to fur, but not about fur, for example: "Swap places if you think sheep like their wool coats!"



We've made two short videos for stimuli: in the first, a possum-fur puppet asks first if it's OK to make puppets out of real fur...! Find it at: <https://vimeo.com/208264880>

Apologies for the half-baked Australian accent!



If there's a consensus (which is perhaps more likely on this question than others), consider introducing this twist through the second video: <https://vimeo.com/208268635>

The stimulus is presented in a light-hearted way, but ecological integrity is a serious issue. "Invasive" is rather a weasel word since it is humans who have transplanted these animals - but should we try to restore the original balance of species? Other approaches include traps that tourists can sponsor, and dropping poison from the air, which is controversial. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1080\\_usage\\_in\\_New\\_Zealand](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1080_usage_in_New_Zealand))

If people think fur is generally a bad idea, but is OK in these special circumstances, larger questions arise. If something is wrong, when is it right to do something that would normally be wrong to put it right? When does the background change the rightness or wrongness of an action?

### NEXT STEPS

Off the back of the 'What if we're invaders?' question, It might be interesting to explore questions surrounding the food chain. Should humans intervene in the food chain if we see something going on that we don't like? Does it matter if we had caused the 'going on'?

Have we already intervened in the food chain by eating meat?