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WHAT DOES A HUMANE WORLD LOOK LIKE?

Grades: 2 through 6

Time: 15-30 minutes

Materials: Paper, including long craft paper, if desired; markers and other art materials

Relevant Subjects: Social Studies, Language Arts, and Art

Relevant Information: This is an excellent activity to use as an introduction to an exploration of humane issues.

1. Ask students: “What do you imagine a humane world looks like?”
2. Have them brainstorm what “humane” means.
3. Have students create a mural of images of what they imagine a humane world looks like. They can create a picture on their own and add it to a larger whole-class mural, or they can all work on the same long piece of paper.

Alternative: Instead of creating a mural, you could have students each create his/her own picture on a giant pre-cut puzzle piece that fits together with other puzzle pieces; or, perhaps, have them do their mural in a globe shape, using a giant round object as their base.

4. Ask students to compare the images on their mural with how the world actually is. You may wish to have students create a list of words that are represented by the mural, and another list of words that represents how the world (as they see it) actually is. What similarities are there? What differences?

Extensions:

1. Have students choose a mural/picture that is not theirs and describe it in writing (most appropriate for younger students).

2. Have students choose something from the world that “actually is” that could be better, and ask them to brainstorm ways they could take action to make that element become a more humane one.

Alternative: Have older students also brainstorm ways their class could take action to make that element a more humane one in their own community, and to develop a plan for making that happen.

Activity by Jordan Simons, Karen Patterson & Laura Babb (IHE Students)