



WHO IS A PERSON?



Scan to review worksheet

Expemo code:
1A5X-X1L8-9J6A

1

Warm up

Look at the photos and discuss the questions in pairs or groups.



1. How many people can you see in the photos?
2. How many *legal persons* can you see?
3. What rights do you think the elephant has? Are there laws about keeping wild animals in your country?
4. What rights do you think McDonald's and the people on the elephant share?
5. What rights, if any, do you think the river in the photo has?



2

Focus on vocabulary**Part A: Match the vocabulary to the definitions.**

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. <u>corporation</u> (n) | a. begin something or become involved in something |
| 2. <u>enter into</u> (phr. v) | b. without official permission |
| 3. <u>ancestors</u> (n) | c. cancel officially so that it is no longer legally acceptable |
| 4. <u>live on</u> (phr. v) | d. continue to exist |
| 5. <u>landscape</u> (n) | e. the possibility of trouble, danger or disaster |
| 6. <u>threat</u> (n) | f. something that makes someone believe something is true or correct |
| 7. <u>unauthorised</u> (adj.) | g. people in your family who lived a long time ago |
| 8. <u>revoke</u> (v) | h. everything you can see when you look out at a large area of land |
| 9. <u>convincing</u> (adj.) | i. a company that has a special legal status |

Part B Now complete the following sentences with a word from Part A.

1. Woods, fields and streams are typical of the English _____.
2. His _____ came from Ireland, but neither he nor his parents have visited the country.
3. If you _____ an agreement with someone, you need to honour that agreement, or you may be sued.
4. She works for a _____ that has offices in several countries with over a thousand employees.
5. Any _____ use of my intellectual property is not acceptable, and I will contact my legal advisor if you do not stop using it.
6. Although she is no longer working for the company, the results of her good work _____.
7. The court found his argument _____, so they ruled in his favour.
8. They are allowed to use our intellectual property at the moment, but if we are not happy with the way it is used, we will _____ that permission.
9. The _____ of legal action may be enough for her to fulfil her obligations under the contract.



3 Listening

You are going to listen to the podcast called "Understanding the law". Listen and choose the main idea of the interview. *The main idea is...*

1. ... to define and give examples of what it means to be a *legal person*
2. ... to explain why corporations have rights, powers and duties under the law
3. ... to talk about the difference between a *legal person* and a *human person*



Listen to the interview again and choose the correct answer. There are five points.

1. A person under the law...
 - a. is a human being with rights, responsibilities, and duties.
 - b. is not usually a human being but is a corporation with rights and duties.
 - c. can be human or non-human, but both have legal rights and duties.
 - d. cannot enter into contracts unless they are human or a corporation.
2. *Adidas, Apple* and *Volkswagen*...
 - a. cannot have legal person status because they are corporations.
 - b. are corporations that have legal person status.
 - c. can only enter into contracts with other corporations.
 - d. have only some of the rights and duties of legal persons.
3. The Whanganui River...
 - a. can enter into contracts.
 - b. is going to become a legal person.
 - c. must be represented by a legal person.
 - d. had its legal person status revoked.
4. Rivers in Bangladesh...
 - a. do not have legal person status.
 - b. are corporations so they have legal person status.
 - c. represent the ancestors of the people.
 - d. have legal rights that rivers in India do not have.



5. The legal expert thinks...
- there is a good argument for animals receiving legal person status since some rivers have it.
 - animals are never going to receive legal person status anywhere in the world.
 - only elephants should have legal person status because they are intelligent.
 - animals should have their legal person status revoked.

4

Grammar: participle adjectives

Read the sentences. How do the underlined adjectives differ in meaning?

The lawyers presented a convincing argument for granting legal person status to the river, and the majority of judges accepted the argument. However, one judge was not convinced that the majority was correct, so he did not join their opinion.

Grammar: verb forms

1) The adjective ending in **-ed** describes how a person felt.

2) The adjective ending in **-ing** describes a thing that causes the feeling.

3) Participle adjectives are made from **verb forms**.

4) Participle adjectives ending in **-ed** usually **describe people**, but those ending in **-ing** usually describe **non-human things**, including ideas and opinions.





Choose the correct participle adjectives to complete the sentences.

1. The jury seemed **bored / boring**, so the lawyer tried to make her argument more **interested / interesting** to them.
2. Many people who are in favour of animal rights think that zoos are **depressed / depressing** places.
3. Everyone was **surprised / surprising** when the judge ruled in favour of the defendant.
4. Some people found his argument **confused / confusing**, so he had to repeat it several times.
5. It was a **disappointed / disappointing** verdict, and the trial was **exhausted / exhausting**. I don't plan to appeal.

5

Legal vocabulary

Part A: Complete the chart with the correct forms for the different parts of speech.

verb	noun	adjective
enquire	(1)	X
(2)	X	obtainable
(3)	hesitation	(4)
implicate	(5)	implicated
(6)	campaign	X
deliberate	(7)	(8)

Part B Read and complete the sentences with words from the table above.

1. His client is in charge of a _____ to give animals the same rights as people.
2. Information about what is required to form a corporation is _____ on the government website.
3. The authorities will make an official _____ into the cause of the accident.
4. The _____ of recognising a river as a legal person is that the river can receive damages if it is harmed.
5. After three days of _____, the jury reached a decision.
6. She was _____ to accept him as a client because she was not sure she could win his case.



6 Reading: understanding author's opinion

You are going to read an article about legal issues. First scan the first two paragraphs of the article on page seven. What do you think the text is about?

Choose the sentence that best describes your prediction.

1. Some people would like animals to have the same rights as people.
2. Animals are treated as property, and this should continue.
3. When animals are treated badly in zoos, they should be released.
4. People should be treated differently than animals because people are more intelligent.

7 Vocabulary

Scan the article again and find words or phrases which mean the same as the following.

1. _____ a legal document from a court telling somebody to do or not to do something (n, para. 2)
2. _____ bringing someone before the court to determine if it is legal to keep them from being free (n, para. 2)
3. _____ a person who protects or is responsible for someone or something (n, para. 2)
4. _____ kept someone and without allowing them to leave (v, para. 2)
5. _____ groups in which animals or plants are put into based on their ability to reproduce (n, para. 3)
6. _____ the rights that every person in a society has, for example to be treated equally, to be able to vote, work, etc. whatever their sex, race or religion (n, para. 3)
7. _____ related to the science or practice of farming (adj., para. 6)
8. _____ actions that upset the normal state that something is in (n, para. 7)





Making Happy the elephant happy

Legal personhood

1. Happy the elephant's age is unknown. In 1971, she was caught in the wild and sold to a zoo in California. Over time, Happy was separated from her family, and since 2006, has lived alone in the Bronx Zoo in New York. Although she is cared for, experts suggest her living conditions could significantly increase her risk of depression, bone disease and other physical and mental illnesses.
2. A team of lawyers requested a writ of habeas corpus for Happy. This writ orders the guardian of an individual who is being held to make that individual available before the court in order to make an enquiry concerning the individual's holding. In New York state, where Happy lives, a writ of habeas corpus may be obtained by any "person" who is being held, but Happy's claim has been denied because Happy is an elephant.
3. If Happy had been human, the courts wouldn't have hesitated to find in her favour, and people would consider this justified. But do we actually have reason to think any differently because she is an elephant? Does justice require different things for different species in the same situation? Or, as the Nonhuman Rights Project, a civil rights association campaigning for animal legal rights in the US, has argued, a subject's species is not relevant when considering justice and legal rights.
4. If the Nonhuman Rights Project is correct here, then the courts need to recognise Happy as a legal person to hear her case. This is necessary because, according to a legal principle created hundreds of years ago but which is still with us today, someone, or something, needs to be recognised as a "legal person" in order to be able to claim legal rights, and this is a status currently denied to non-human animals in the United States.
5. Legal person status shouldn't be confused with the ordinary meaning of what it means to be a "person". Non-living things, such as corporations or even ships, have long been recognised as legal persons worldwide. The argument is that since non-living things have had their legal person status recognised in the past, there should be no problem with recognising a highly intelligent being such as an elephant as a legal person.
6. However, this recognition for an elephant would be a legal shift with huge implications for animal rights. If animals are granted legal person status, then agricultural practices might need to change significantly. One New York Court refused to enter into the discussion and issued a statement saying that protecting other species under laws designed for humans is a matter for lawmakers, not the courts.
7. In other words, extending legal person status needs to be fully thought through and decided by elected officials, not declared by the courts. In deciding this, the appeals court agreed with several cases from across the US that reached the same conclusion, from the whales and dolphins denied compensation for disturbances caused by the activities of the US navy, to the monkey who was not entitled to copyright protection for a selfie it took.
8. Letting politicians instead of judges deliberate the recognition of new legal persons might seem sensible. This is what happened in New Zealand when parliament voted to recognise a river and a forest as legal persons, but the United States Congress and other lawmakers in the United States are usually reluctant to recognise new categories of legal persons unless they are forced to do so.

Sources: *bxtimes.com*, *theconversation.com*,





8 Reading comprehension

Read the article and decide if the sentences are true (T) or false (F). Explain your choices.

1. Happy's guardians are not taking care of her.

2. The guardians of Happy are also her lawyers.

3. Happy does not have legal person status because she is an animal.

4. According to the article, animals do not have civil rights in the United States.

5. Under the law, a requirement for legal person status is intelligence.

6. According to the article, farmers are probably interested in whether Happy the elephant will be granted legal person status.

7. The courts have not treated all animals in the same way because it has granted rights to some but not others.

8. Lawmakers in New Zealand and the United States differ in their willingness to expand the category of legal person status.





9 Talking point: debate

Work in A/B groups or pairs and discuss the two topics. Give reasoning and write down your arguments.

1
Animals should be treated as property.

2
Different treatment of pets and farm animals is justified.



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10 Optional activity / Homework

Write a paragraph (300 words). Ensure that you check your grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

Take a position on whether legal person status should be expanded to animals. Give examples to support your opinion.