



WHO GAINS AND WHO LOSES

A THREE-MINUTE PLAY BY PAUL BODIN.

Revised by fifth graders Audrey McCarthy & Jasmine Klein

For more info on how to use this play for an enquiry, have a look at Pete's blog at the following link: <https://www.philosophy-foundation.org/blog/dialogues-in-philosophy-with-children> (<https://www.philosophy-foundation.org/blog/dialogues-in-philosophy-with-children>).

(Note: CAFO is pronounced "ka" as in cat, "fo" as in focus. Player 1 can begin the scene holding a copy of Charlotte's Web if he or she wishes.)

P1 = Player 1; P2 = Player 2

WHO GAINS AND WHO LOSES

P1 Hi _____. I just finished reading Charlotte's Web for the second time.

P2 I never read the book but I saw the movie. I like Charlotte 'cause she saved Wilbur's life.

P1 Yep, Wilbur could have become somebody's pork sandwich.

P2 Actually, I love pork. Bacon especially. BLTs are awesome.

P1 My grandmother used to eat BLTs. But she doesn't anymore.

P2 Why is that?

P1 Because she and my grandpa don't like living near a CAFO.

P2 A what?

P1 A CAFO. The letters C - A - F - O, they stand for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation. Basically it's a huge pig farm.

P2 I've heard the term CAFO but I never knew what it meant until now. But why don't your grandparents like living near one?

P1 Well, the first thing you notice when you visit their farm is a terrible smell. Imagine sitting in a room full of rotten eggs and garbage.

P2 Really?

P1 Yeah, that's what it smells like everywhere you go.

P2 So if you're walking to school, or playing baseball in the park, that's what it will smell like?

P1 Yes.

P2 Disgusting.

P1 The smell isn't the worst thing about living near a CAFO. Imagine thousands of pigs, all crowded together in one place.

P2 That's a lot of pig poop.

P1 Exactly. They make so much poop that the pig farmers can't always contain it. Sometimes it leaches into the ground and contaminates the soil and rivers.

P2 What does that mean for the people living nearby?

P1 It means their drinking water is unsafe. People living near a CAFO pump their water out of the ground from wells. Pig waste causes their water to be filled with pathogens [pronounced path-o-jenz].

P2 What are those?

P1 A pathogen is a virus or bacteria that causes people to get sick. And they do get sick. They get diarrhea ...

P2 Oh my gosh. More poop.

P1 Very funny. It gets worse. People vomit and they get skin rashes. Babies suffer the worst.

P2 Wow. What I don't understand is why giant pig farms even exist. Why don't all pigs get raised on small family farms like the one in Charlotte's Web?

P1 Because CAFOs make more money for the people who own them. Think of it: It costs less to raise thousands of pigs on one big farm than it does to raise fewer pigs on lots of little farms.

P2 But family farms could make enough room for pigs to wallow in the mud and move around.

P1 Now you're thinking like a pig. But the owners of a CAFO aren't thinking like pigs. They want to make a profit.

P2 What's wrong with that? Making money is a good thing, right?

P1 Sure it is. It's good for the owners of a CAFO. It's good for all of the people who invest money in the company.

P2 I guess some people gain and some people lose.

P1 I think you're right. When you sell a lot of pork made from a lot of pigs, the price of bacon is cheaper for those BLTs.

P2 That's a gain for families on tight budgets.

P1 And the CAFO creates jobs in the town where my grandparents live. And it pays taxes that go to support local schools, fire and police.

P2 Okay, so we know who gains from a giant pig farm. But who loses?

P1 Everyone who lives in my grandparent's town loses.

P2 I get it. They lose out on water that's safe to drink, air that's safe to breathe, rivers and soil that are unpolluted ...

P1 ... and they lose out on good health.

P2 That's a lot of important stuff to lose just so that the owners of a giant pig farm can make their profits.

P1 It all comes down to, would you rather have clean air and good drinking water... or cheap pork?

Paul Bodin's notes on how to run the session are included in a PDF document below. There are some ideas for questions contained inside a document which you can download by clicking the 'resource' document below, or have a look at the blog by Pete (mentioned above) for some ideas on how to construct your own TPF style task questions.