

BETTER PROTECTION FOR ANIMALS IN SOUTH KOREA

Aug 22, 2021

WARM-UP TASK • *With your partner(s), brainstorm a list of the most common pets in your country. Then discuss these questions:*

Which pet is easiest to look after? Which of them is the most expensive to raise?

VOCABULARY • *Match the following vocabulary words with a description. Use a dictionary if you need to.*

Cruelty	a) treating someone badly, including with physical violence
Abusive	b) the ability to feel things
Bury	c) an informed guess, an approximate count
Being	d) to put something in the ground and cover it
Sentience	e) actions that cause suffering
Estimated	f) being left alone
Abandonment	g) a living thing

The way the law sees animals is set to change in South Korea. Until now, they have been considered objects and the possessions of their owners. Although there are laws against animal cruelty, it has been difficult to use them against abusive animal owners until now. For example, in 2018, when a man in the southern city of Busan was annoyed by his pet dog, he made his kids bury it alive. The Pomeranian dog was almost dead by the time it was rescued. The man, however, escaped punishment under the current law.

When the new law is passed, which is expected in September, animals will be considered 'beings' with a right to protection and better treatment. South Korea will join 32 other countries in recognizing animal sentience - the first country in Asia to do so.

There are an estimated 6 million pet dogs and 2.4 million pet cats in South Korea. As pet ownership has increased over recent years, so has the number of cases of animal abuse (914 in 2019) and abandonment (130,401 in 2020). Supporters of the new law hope it will improve the way animals are treated. Another possible outcome of the law may be life insurance packages for pets.



A Pomeranian dog

Sources: news.yahoo.com, koreatimes.co.kr, wikipedia.org
For source links, see the article on ESLNewsStories.com

ACTIVITY • Fill in the different forms for the vocabulary from the article. Use a dictionary if you need to.

VERB	ADJECTIVE	NOUN
consider		
		possession
x		cruelty
	abusive	
bury		
x		sentience
	estimated	
		abandonment

DISCUSSION • Discuss the following questions with your partner or group. Try to speak in sentences and ask follow-up questions.

1. Do you have a pet? If so, please talk about it. If you don't have a pet, would you like to have one? What kind?
2. Some people consider their pet to be a member of their family. Can you understand this way of thinking?
3. Do animals have feelings and thoughts like humans do? What, if anything, is different about their thoughts and feelings?
4. What do you think about cruelty to animals?
5. How should people that hurt animals be punished?
6. What is the best thing to do if a pet is annoying you?
7. Why do some people abandon their pets?
8. In your opinion, is the new law in South Korea necessary or unnecessary?
9. What is the difference between pets and other 'things' that people 'own'?
10. Would you consider getting life insurance for a pet? How much would you be willing to pay?

Activity answers: considered, consideration, possess, possessive, cruel, abuse, abuse, buried, burial, sentient, estimate, estimation, abandon, abandoned