After thinking about your reading, discussion, and analysis of Rifkin’s article and the letters in response to it, what do you personally think about Rifkin’s point? Do you think it is true, as Rifkin says, that “many of our fellow creatures are more like us than we had ever imagined”? Do you think we need to change the way we treat the animals around us? Or do you think Rifkin is wrong? Write a letter expressing your viewpoint to the editor of the newspaper.

Learning Target:

I. Your letter should:

1. **Be Focused** – Focus on the issues (see below) raised in the op-ed article.

   **What are the Issues?**
   - Sense of mortality
   - Capacity for emotions/feelings/suffering/pain/loss/joy
   - Intellectual capacity to learn and produce language/tools
   - Nature of animal research and whether it has value or necessity
   - Alternatives to animal research
   - Extension of rights to all animals

2. **Include Effective Word Choice** – Choose words to efficiently make clear points. Vary your vocabulary to avoid repetition.

3. **Incorporate Quotes** – Quote key words and phrases from the article to support assertions.

4. **Use Rhetorical Devices** – Provide convincing support that includes logical, emotional, and/or ethical appeal.

5. **Demonstrate a Command of Conventions** – Correctly punctuated, capitalized, and proofread your letter.

II. **Effective Verbs for Introducing Quotations** – Use a variety of verbs for a more effective paper.

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<th>Making a claim:</th>
<th>Questioning or disagreeing:</th>
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<th>Making recommendations:</th>
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Use stronger verbs than just said, states, or writes!
Dear Editor,

Jeremy Rifkin in his Editorial column, “A Change of Heart about Animals, published in September 1, 2003 addresses the topic of animal rights and behavior. He argues that animals should be treated and viewed with more respect since animals are closely related to humans. Rifkin supports this claim by introducing the idea that animals feel the same feelings that humans feel, then presents evidence that proves animal behavior to be like humans. He questions our perceptions of animals, and finally challenges his readers to expand their perception and empathy to our fellow creatures. Rifkin’s purpose is to illustrate the way animal behavior is similar to human behavior in order to persuade his audience to reevaluate their perception of animals and more than that, treat them better.

Rifkin brilliantly uses pathos to persuade his audience that animals should be perceived and treated better. Knowing that this is a very sensitive topic that most Americans can relate to, Rifkin uses an emotional appeal to reach his audience’s ears and heart. Rifkin starts using this strategy by writing, “…our fellow creatures are more like us than we ever imagined” (2), as he introduces the topic. In order to spark emotion from his readers, Rifkin defines that humans and animals are the same, which enables readers to relate to animals as if they were peers. When describing the study of pigs, he notes that pigs “crave attention” and “are easily depressed if isolated” (4). Having many choices of different animal studies, Rifkin chose this study of pig behavior at Purdue University because he knows that every human has craved attention at least once in his or her lifetime, and most people can either relate to or have heard of a case of depression among humans.

He also illustrates a study done at Oxford University, reporting that “…two birds named Betty and Abel were given a choice between using two tools… to snag a piece of meat from inside a tube” (7). Rifkin chose this study as useful evidence that his readers can relate to animals as peers. Not only does he use an animal that most can associate with, but Rifkin also adds the names of the birds: Betty and Abel, humanizing them. He employs this same tactic with, “…Koko, the 300-pound gorilla… who was taught sign language” (8). Again, we are on a first name basis with the animal. By individualizing the animals we think less of them as a species, and more of them as individual beings that matter. This is a perfect example of how to use pathos to appeal to an audience.

Rifkin ends the article by filling an entire paragraph with questions about human treatment to animals, starting with, “So what does all of this portend for the way we treat our fellow creatures?” (15). Rifkin uses the pathos strategy not only with the personal questions, but also by the way he chooses his wording in his questions. He addresses the readers as “we”, and by doing so, he includes himself in these convictions. While challenging his audience in his closure, he finishes by navigating us to, “…deepen our empathy to include the broader community of creatures with whom we share the Earth” (17). As if the challenge was not emotional enough, Rifkin uses pathos to remind us readers that animals are our fellow creatures, explaining that both animals and humans are equal residents on this land called Earth.

Sincerely,
Stu Dent

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**GRADING RUBRIC**

**MLA Formatting:** Typed, 12pt. font, Correctly formatted letter, Double-spaced, Indented Paragraphs, Proper Heading, Parenthetical Citations

**Focus:** Tightly focused on the issues raised in the op-ed article

**Word Choice:** Uses a variety of words to efficiently make clear points. Avoids repetition.

**Quotes:** Quotes key words and phrases from the article to support assertions.

**Rhetorical Devices:** Provides convincing support that includes logical, emotional, and/or ethical appeal.

**Conventions:** Spelling, Punctuation, Capitalization, Quotation marks around article title, No repetitions of “key” word/phrases, No missing words, Consistent Verb Tense

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Total /48
**IV. Textual Evidence** – Choose two claims (passages) from the article you strongly agree or disagree with.

1. **Direct Quotation:** Write each passage down as a correctly punctuated direct quotation.

   **Example:** Jeremy Rifkin asserts, “Studies on pigs’ social behavior funded by McDonald’s at Purdue University, for example, have found that they crave affection and are easily depressed if isolated or denied playtime with each other” (15).

   **Direct QUOTATION #1:**

   **Direct QUOTATION #2:**

2. **Opinion:** Respond to each idea expressed in the passages by agreeing or disagreeing with it and explaining why.

   **Example:** Pigs, like humans, need to be loved, cared for, and shown attention to thrive. Rifkin uses this evidence as a form of pathos, a way to appeal to our emotions. Pointing out connections between humans and animals is Rifkin’s way of persuading us to believe that “our fellow creatures are more like us than we had ever imagined” (2).

**Templates for Explaining Quotations**

You should develop the habit of following each quotation with an explanation. Templates for this include:

- **Basically, X is warning that ________**.  
  **X’s point is that ________**.

- **In other words, X believes that ________**.  
  **The essence of X’s argument is that ________**.

- **In making this comment, X urges us to ________**.

**OPINION of Direct Quotation #1:**

**OPINION of Direct Quotation #2:**
I. Introduction: Start off your letter by stating, “In (Title of Op-Ed Piece), (Writer of Op-Ed Piece) says (Quote or Paraphrase from Op-Ed).” Then, incorporate a concise summary of the issues and major ideas from the article. Finally, take a stance. Establish your point of view (Thesis Statement) and the issues you want to address. Use strong action verbs in present tense.

Dear Editor:

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II. Body Paragraph #1: Focus on one particular issue or idea from the article (Direct Quotation #1). Discuss the arguments and your informed opinion regarding the debate on those points (Opinion #1).

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III. **Body Paragraph #2**: Focus on a second issue or idea from the article (Direct Quotation #2). Discuss the arguments and your informed opinion regarding the debate on those points (Opinion #2).
IV. Conclusion: Make a strong final point or advocate a course of action for the reader.

Sincerely,