

## Activity 19: Writing Prompt—Cloning

Cloning human beings has been a hot topic of debate over the last few decades. This debate became even more heated after the first adult animal was cloned, producing Dolly the sheep. Everyone asked, "Are humans next?"

Those who are in favor of human cloning argue that cloning could work miracles and improve people's lives. Infertile couples wishing to have a baby could increase their chances of pregnancy; diseases like Alzheimer's and cancer could be cured by using stem cells harvested from cloned human embryos; or it may even be possible to clone a loved one that has been lost to us. Those who oppose human cloning fear the ethical and moral questions that will have to be answered, and how the technology will be used.

In the article you read, entitled "Here Kitty-kitty-kitty-kitty," many of the arguments for and against the cloning of animals were posed. In class, different perspectives on the issue of both reproductive and therapeutic cloning were discussed.

Imagine that a bill has just come up in the U.S. Senate that would allow the use of taxpayer money to fund both therapeutic and reproductive cloning research of all animals including humans. Write a letter to your senator expressing your approval or disapproval of this subject. Explain your reasons using current research or articles to support your views, and let your senator know how you would like her to vote, should a vote arise on the subject. You should cite evidence from the article(s) you read, from what you have learned about genetics (particularly your knowledge of how genes are influenced by environment), and from your own personal experiences.

You should use the format on the next page to construct your letter. Make at least four arguments to support your position. At least one of the arguments should be a response to statement from someone on the opposite side of the issue from you. For example, if you are against cloning, you might write, "Those who support cloning say..., but this argument is wrong because..." Here are some general questions you may want to think about as you write your letter:

- Are you for or against both types of cloning, therapeutic and reproductive? What are your reasons?
- Do you think we should allow research in one type but not the other?
- How might these technologies be used?
- Does cloning really make an exact copy of a person?
- Would allowing one type of cloning lead to allowing the other type?

## Directions for Writing Supporting Evidence

1. Think about strategies and questions to address the audience of the essay.
  - a. Consider what most people know and think about the topic of your paper.
  - b. If you intend to change the opinions of the readers, including the senator, consider your persuasive techniques, both logical and emotional. Discuss with classmates some techniques you have considered using in your writing.
  - c. How much do you think the senator and his or her staff know about cloning?
  - d. Why should they care about it?
  - e. What concerns would they have about your plan? Does it cost money? Would it violate anyone's privacy?
  - f. What kinds of persuasion do you think you will need to help them understand your point of view?
  - g. Which would be the best evidence?

### Sample Letter Format:

Date

Senator's Full Name  
United States Senate  
Washington DC, 20510

Dear Senator Last Name,

In the first paragraph, you should identify yourself and the reason you are writing the letter.

The following paragraphs should explain how you want them to vote and why. In these paragraphs you will explain your four arguments using evidence from the article, from what you have learned about genetics and cloning, and from your own personal experiences and/ or ideas. There should be about one paragraph per argument. However, you may write more.

In the conclusion, restate how you want your senator to vote on the bill, and summarize your overall position in one or two sentences.

Sincerely,  
Your Name