

## CWSF 2019 - Fredericton, New Brunswick



### Jessica Walker

#### Does Knowledge Increase Empathy and Compassion?

**Challenge:** Discovery

**Category:** Junior

**Region:** Manitoba Schools Science Symposium

**City:** Winnipeg, MB

**School:** Linden Meadows School

**Abstract:** My project studied levels of empathy/compassion in students prior to six-weeks of education with experts on topics relating to animal-welfare and the environment. After six-weeks of education, a follow-up survey found student levels of empathy/compassion did increase, supporting my hypothesis. This knowledge is important as our world population grows and the need for empathy/compassion towards people, animals and the environment becomes more critical than ever.

### Biography

As an 8th grade student, I am passionate about leadership, human rights, animal welfare and enjoy hobbies. To demonstrate leadership, I participate on the Leadership Team, Yearbook Committee, and Student Voice at the Divisional level. In terms of Human Rights, I am a UNESCO ambassador, have explored Reconciliation at the Human Rights Museum as a school representative, participated in Imagine a Canada for Reconciliation, and created a T-shirt for Orange Shirt Day. I am passionate about animal welfare and volunteer for local pet shelters. My recent goal was to educate students about the suffering of animals in intensive farming which was the inspiration for my project. My principal says I am a boundary pusher which is a quality she admires-responsible, committed, and kind. In my free time, I love to dance, and play the flute. I live on an acreage, which allows me to enjoy nature, my horses, and animals. I do competitive horseback riding and cart driving. I am currently working on a horse-therapy program for indigenous girls to develop strong leadership skills, self-worth and confidence. I would love to further my research with other ages and would encourage students thinking of participating in research to find a supportive mentor.

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