

The Forest Council's Dilemma

Learning objective: To explore moral questions, personal values, and the concept of collective responsibility.

Read the story of the Forest Council carefully. Consider how the characters weigh different values before answering the questions below. Use full sentences and clear reasoning.

In the heart of the ancient wood, Leo the lion convened the Forest Council to address a difficult dilemma. A severe drought had dried the central stream, and the remaining water was trapped behind a fallen log. Kit the fox discovered that moving the log would allow the water to reach the thirsty animals downstream, but it would simultaneously flood the peaceful burrow of a family of rabbits.

Leo listened as the animals debated. Max the monkey argued that the greatest good for the greatest number should prevail, suggesting they move the log immediately. However, Ellie the elephant, known for her deep empathy, reminded them that the rabbits had lived in that burrow for generations and had done nothing to deserve losing their home. The council faced a moral crossroads: should they prioritise the survival of the many, or protect the rights of the few? There was no easy solution. The air was thick with the weight of the decision, and every choice carried heavy consequences for their neighbours. They had to balance the need for resources with the virtue of compassion, striving for a resolution that honoured both fairness and duty.

Word bank: dilemma · consequences · integrity · collective · justice · responsibility · perspective

1. What specific event caused the water to stop flowing to the rest of the forest? (2 marks)

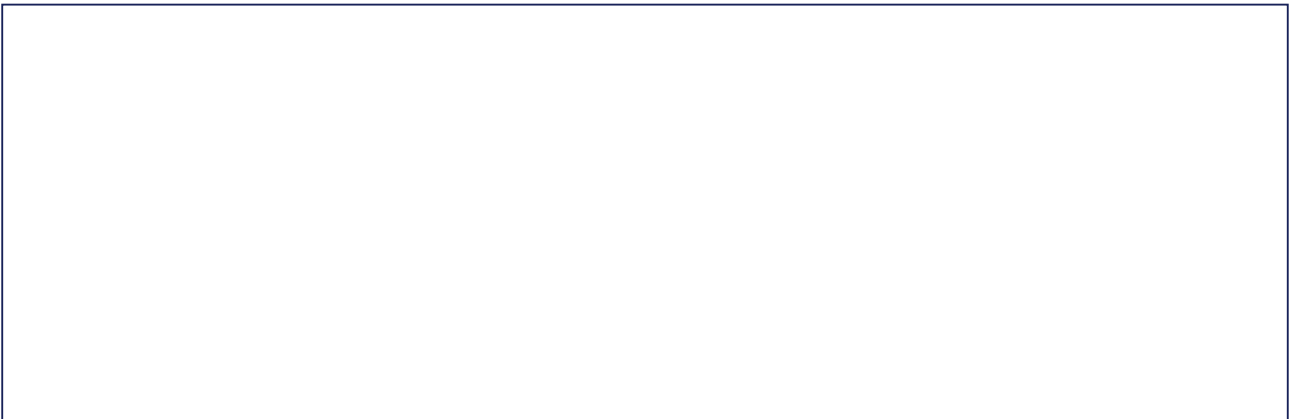
2. According to the passage, who is concerned about the rabbits' long history in their burrow? (2 marks)

3. Why might Max the monkey's suggestion be considered controversial by the other animals? (3 marks)

4. Explain why the council finds this decision so difficult to make. Use evidence from the text to support your ideas. (4 marks)

5. If you were a member of the Forest Council, what decision would you make and how would you justify it to the animals affected? Justify your answer. (5 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene showing the Forest Council meeting, with Leo the lion leading the discussion. Include the fallen log near the stream and the rabbits' burrow nearby to illustrate the moral dilemma.



Extension challenge: Write a short paragraph explaining what might happen if the council decides to move the log. Then, write a second paragraph describing a creative, alternative solution that could save the water supply without flooding the rabbit burrow. Compare and contrast the two potential outcomes.