

**Elizabeth Hunt**

**No Animal Should be Harmed**

“I’m sorry,” my teacher began, “but according to Pennsylvania Legislature’s Senate Bill 727, an ‘animal’ is defined as ‘any living organism of the kingdom Animalia in the phylum Chordata.’ “Therefore,” he continued, “a fly is an ‘animal’ and I am going to have to ask you to conduct these experiments.” I stared at him in disbelief. I could not comprehend in what way a fly was not an animal. I explained to him that I would not do something that conflicted with my beliefs and that I would not experiment with flies or work with materials from Carolina Biological Supply Company. He proceeded to make an appointment with my mother to discuss why I would no longer be able to remain in his course. He was going to have me taken out of A. P. Biology II in the middle of the year.

After several lengthy talks with me and one with my mother, my teacher realized that my beliefs were sincere and how important they were to me. He decided to allow me to stay in class. Together, he and I worked out ways for me to conduct the separate studies that would allow me to obtain the same information as the other students. I made a presentation on mushroom flies to the class and talked with my classmates about their experimental results, benefiting both the rest of the class and me. Later in the year, I devised an experiment using potato catalase as opposed to catalase obtained from chicken liver and recorded my procedure so that it could be repeated by others. I set a precedent for future students who choose not to work with animal parts. I communicated very well with my teacher and we were able to work out compromises suitable to both of us.