

Caring for pets

Learning objectives

- Learn the factors involved in obtaining and caring for a pet and relate this to their own experiences.
- Work effectively in pairs and groups, discussing and presenting information, and contributing ideas.
- Weigh up key factors from information they have obtained, before making a choice. Give reasons for their choice.
- Use sources of non-fiction text for research purposes, and make relevant notes for future use.
- Refer to notes they have made from their research, to create simple information texts which combine words and images.
- Present simple data in a chart.
- Use a table to present information.
- Present information creatively in a variety of ways.

This week's essentials

- Days 1 and 2: pet care and information leaflets; books about different pets; pictures of different people and families and their homes, to match with suitable pets for activity 3; pictures of different types of pet; A3 paper; glue; paints; coloured pens.
- Days 3-5: pens; pencils; notebooks; coloured pens; A3 paper; internet and library access; card, paper and stapler to make booklets.

Children love pets, so this will be a hugely popular topic. During the week children will engage in a variety of activities and tasks which will help them to understand the needs and life processes of animals, and how similar they are to our own.

Days 1 and 2

Introduction

To launch this week of pet-themed activities ask children to name all the pets that they own. List these different pets, and the numbers of children that have them, on the Smartboard. Ask them what they enjoy about owning a pet. Is there anything that they dislike? Encourage them to bring in a photograph of their pet. Those who do not have a pet should bring a picture of a pet they would like to own.

Activity 1

Tell the children to use the information on the Smartboard to design a graph showing the number of children in their class who own each type of pet. Encourage them to be creative, using different colours or drawing a pet symbol for each different pet.

Activity 2

Ask the children to think of some benefits and drawbacks of



comparisons. For example, a dog needs exercising daily, their bark might deter burglars, and they are playful. Cats will exercise themselves, but do not scare burglars – however they can also be playful.

Then ask the children to think of factors such as space, care, food, exercise or cost that should be considered before getting a pet. List these on the Smartboard.

Organise the children into mixed ability pairs and give each pair a picture of a different pet, including those not owned by any of the children. Ask them to select information from the leaflets and books which would be useful for somebody to know before buying that particular pet. Remind them to refer to the key words on the Smartboard to help them to select appropriate information. Now ask them to create a poster for this potential pet purchaser, pointing out important factors for consideration.

Activity 3

Display pictures of a wide range of different people and families with their homes; for example an elderly man in a cottage, a family with a large house and garden, a business woman, or a wheelchair user in a bungalow. Ask each pair to consider the needs of the pet you gave them, and to choose which they think would be the best owner. Afterwards, let them present their poster to the class and say which owner they have chosen for the pet and why. Do the rest of the class agree with their choice? If not let them make other suggestions, giving their reasons.

Talking points

What other needs do pets have? Encourage the children to think of factors such as time, love, affection, grooming, training. How do these vary for different types of pet? For

Activity 4

Let children take turns to show their photograph and give a short talk about their pet. Children without their own pets can show the picture of the pet they would like to own and give their reasons. Encourage the other children to ask questions, based on the factors they have learned about the care and ownership of pets.

Day 3

Activity

Today children are going to be investigating animal body parts and researching their uses. Ask the children to draw a picture of their own pet and mark the body parts. Make sure they include details such as tail, fur, scales, feathers, fins, claws and whiskers. Write difficult words on the Smartboard for them to copy. Encourage them to compare animal and human body parts and to notice the similarities and differences.

Now let them take turns to say animal body parts that are different from humans'. Write these on the Smartboard. Find out if they know what any of these body parts are used for and tell them that they are going to do some research. Encourage them to think of ways to make sure the information they collect is accurate. Help them to decide how they are going to gather and record the information. Make sure they have pens, notebooks, pencils, or access to ICT so that they can do this. Then organise them into small groups and give each group a pet's body part to research. Send them off to use the library and internet to find out as much as they can. Finally, ask each group to prepare and give a presentation on their findings, making sure each child contributes.

Talking points

Have the children noticed their pets using specific body parts? Can they tell when their pet is happy, sad, frightened or angry?

Day 4

Introduction

To start, ask the children what happens when their pet is unwell? Do they know the name for a pet doctor? (Veterinary surgeon.)

Ask them to think of things that might cause harm to pets. Make suggestions to help them, such as over or underfeeding, lack of water, the wrong food, dogs being left in cars on hot days, other animals or creatures, pesticides, broken glass or poisonous plants.

Activity 1

Organise the children into groups and ask them to discuss reasons for these situations and to suggest ways to avoid them. On the Smartboard, create a table with two columns and a row for each possible danger to pets. List these in the first column. Tell children to copy the table and in the second column to write suggestions or picture diagrams to show how to avoid or prevent each listed danger.

Activity 2

Ask each group to choose one of these dangers and create a poster or perform a sketch to warn people about them.

Day 5

Introduction

Hopefully the children will now know much more about the effort involved in pet care. Today they are going to think about all the activities involved in caring for their own pet. Ask them to think of everything that they or their family members have to do in order to care for the pet, and let them take turns to tell you about this.

Activity

Before they begin, model a sentence about caring for a pet. In mixed ability pairs ask them to write a different sentence. Now ask them to see if they can think of a diagram to show the information in their sentence. Tell them that they are to imagine that their pet is going to stay at a friend's home for the week. The friend has not cared for a pet before. The children must write an instruction booklet, using words and diagrams, to explain how to care for their pet. Make sure the booklet includes instructions for different times of the day, and a list of equipment, food and drink that their pet will need. Encourage them to refer to the pet leaflets and their notes to help them with layout and content.

Talking points

Do some pets take more care than others? Which are the easiest to care for? Which take the most effort? What are the similarities between the needs of animals and that of humans? What are the differences?

Further activities

- Arrange a talk by someone from the RSPCA, or a pet charity such as the PDSA.
- Consider getting a class pet and involve the class in deciding on an appropriate pet and also how to share the care responsibilities.

5to7

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