



Understanding Animal Shelters

Activity Overview and Objective

Students will be able to understand the role that animal shelters play in society in helping animals; Identify ways to avoid problems that lead to pet being surrendered; Produce written advertisements for animals that need homes.

Connections to Standards

Michigan Standards in English Language Arts

Reading: Foundational Skills:

RF 3.3, 4.3, 5.3: Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words

RF3.4, 4.4, 5.4: Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.

Writing:

W3.1, 4.1, 5.1: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.

W3.2, 4.2, 5.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

W3.3, 4.3, 5.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

W3.4, 4.4, 5.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Speaking & Listening:

SL3.1, 4.1, 5.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grade level topics and texts.

SL3.3, 4.3, 5.3: Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail (3). Identify reasons and evidence to support particular points (4). Summarize the points and explain how each is supported by reasons and evidence (5).

Language:

L3.1, 4.1, 5.1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L3.2, 4.2, 5.2: Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

L3.3, 4.3, 5.3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

L3.4, 4.4, 5.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning word and phrases based on grade-level content.

Michigan Science Standards

3-LS4-3: Construct an argument with evidence that in a particular habitat some organisms can survive well, some survive less well, and some cannot survive at all.

Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations in Social Studies

Geography, G5: Environment & Society

Lesson Overview

Activities

Choose the activities that best match the interest and needs of your students.

- 🔗 Discuss Why We Need Animal Shelters
- 🔗 Watch Video
- 🔗 Discuss Surrendering Pets to a Shelter
- 🔗 Discuss Solutions to Unwanted Pets
- 🔗 Make a List of Pet Care Tips
- 🔗 Create an Advertisement for an Animal Awaiting Adoption

Materials

Chart Paper, Markers

“What is an Animal Shelter”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_CIC1OXI2u0

(Go to YouTube.com and search for this title, then click on the link by TeachingHumane from 2013.)

“Help These Animals Find Homes” worksheet

Community Connection

- ◆ Host a drive to collect animal supplies in your classroom (or school!) to donate to a local animal shelter. To help the Michigan Humane Society, please visit: www.michiganhumane.org/donate/ways-give/ and click on “Wish List” for a current list of items needed.
- ◆ Invite a speaker from a local humane society to your classroom



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UNDERSTANDING ANIMAL SHELTERS, LESSON 1

Procedure

- Ask students what an animal shelter is. Discuss why we need animal shelters.**
Explain that if students encounter loose animals outside, they should ask an adult to call the local animal shelter or animal control facility. They should *never* approach or touch an animal they do not know.
- Watch the video** called "What is an Animal Shelter?"
- Now that students can **visualize an animal shelter**, **ask** them where they think all the animals that fill the shelter come from. **Discuss reasons why** people might give up their pets to a shelter. **Create a list** on the board or chart paper of these reasons.
 - ☞ The National Council on Pet Population Study and Policy published the following list, which represents the top 10 reasons people give for relinquishing their pets.
 - I'm moving.
 - My landlord doesn't allow pets.
 - I have too many pets.
 - Pet care costs too much.
 - I'm having personal problems.
 - My home isn't big enough.
 - I can't find homes for a whole litter of puppies or kittens.
 - I don't have enough time for a pet.
 - My pet misbehaves.
 - The animal doesn't get along with my other pets.
 - Add these to your list if they have not already been identified.
- As a class, **brainstorm ways that each of the above problems could have been solved or avoided.** Here are some examples, with the problems from the above list that they address.
 - ☞ Don't allow your pets to have babies. Have them spayed or neutered. (*c, d, f, g, i*)
 - ☞ Don't adopt a pet unless you can care for the animal properly for its whole life. Caring for a pet takes time, space, money, patience, and love. (*all*)
 - ☞ See a veterinarian. (*c, i*)



Understanding Animal Shelters

Procedure

6. After the animals have been surrendered to a shelter, they need a new home! **Students will brainstorm pet care tips** that are important for new pet owners to understand before making the decision to adopt a new pet. Some examples are below:
 - a. Cats are safest when kept indoors.
 - b. Most rabbits do not like to be picked up or held.
 - c. Dogs should always wear a collar with an ID tag.
 - d. All animals need healthy food and clean water daily.
 - e. Small mammals need hay daily as part of their diet.
 - f. All animals need exercise and play every day.
 - g. Dogs should not be kept outdoors all day or night.
 - h. Small animals need fresh fruits or vegetables.
 - i. All animals should be seen by veterinarians at least yearly.
 - j. Milk is NOT good for cats (or other pets, unless nursing), and will usually make pets sick.
 - k. Older animals can make great pets. They are generally calmer and better trained than young pets.
7. Students will **create advertisements** for animals to be adopted. Distribute "Help Us Find Homes!" worksheet. Students will **choose pictures of the animals they would like to write about**. Decide on how many pets students should choose, based on their grade and ability levels (generally between 1-3 animals is best.) Students will **use positive adjectives and creative language to describe** the animals and include at least two pet care tips to encourage responsible ownership.
 - ☞ For bigger impact, use pictures of pets available for adoption NOW, visit <http://www.michiganhumane.org/adoption/> and use pictures of your favorite animals to write about real pets that need to be adopted.
 - ☞ Students may also create posters that will better showcase their animals.
 - ☞ Display these in your school to encourage families to adopt a shelter animal!