

Protecting our Tomorrows: A Teacher's Role in Promoting Child Safety and Animal Welfare



**HUMANE SOCIETY
INTERNATIONAL**

Lesson Plans for Teachers

Lesson Idea 1: Animal Care for a Day

Objective: Students will be able to identify appropriate behaviors and actions towards their classroom 'pet' both in the classroom and in their home environments.

Materials Needed:

- Stuffed Animal or Toy (to be adopted pet)
- Paper and Writing Materials (for small group activity)
- Notebooks

Preparations:

Teachers should make an 'animal' for their classroom (for this lesson, we use a dog). The animal can be a picture drawn on paper. It can be any animal familiar to the students.

Teachers should prepare a home 'work book'. This should resemble a journal. The paper inside should be ample enough for each students to describe their activities and add a picture.

I. Opening Activity

Charades: Teacher creates a list of daily basic needs for life to be recreated by the students. Write these actions, along with an image and place them on papers. Some example actions could be, "Eat Breakfast", "Play", "Hugs from Mom/Dad/Carer".

In a large group, ask for students to come up and act out whatever was on the card for the rest of the group. Have the other students try to guess the action. Create a list of things that we need every day to be healthy and happy on a large flip chart or blackboard. If there are some that the children suggest on their own, we can add them.

Then introduce the group to your friend 'Rosie' (or whatever you choose to name your stuffed animal, puppet etc.) who has recently come to live with you and the class. Use the puppet (toy or picture) to show emotions of fear and sadness, happiness etc. Give the puppet its own voice and ask it questions to model the type of thinking you want students to emulate. For example, if "Rosie" is feeling shy and won't come close to me, I might say, "you look like you are feeling a bit shy. Would you like me to give you some space for a little while? "

Conclude you story by saying, "We are all really happy to have Rosie with us today. Now class, it's your turn to take care of your own pet for the day. Are you ready?!"

II. Body

Divide the students into smaller groups. Each group will get their own "pet for the day". Their job is to create a schedule for their pet that would give them the 'best day'. They should also be encouraged to name their pet and maybe give it a personality/story. Divide up the jobs among all the children in the

group. One student will handle food/water. One will be in charge of exercise, one for grooming etc. Give them a platform for reporting-through pictures or writing. For very young students, make sure there is a teacher or supervisor to guide conversation. I would ask them to think about our charades game and remind them that these are the same things that animals need each day to be happy and healthy.

Closure: Students will be responsible for their pets for the entire school day. Allow time during the day for the groups to take care of their animals. They may need some reminders to follow their schedule. For example, maybe there will be a 'dog walk time' at lunch! At the end of the day, meet together as a large group and allow each group to introduce their 'pet' to the rest of the class. Allow for discussion about experiences. Ask some prompting questions, "What was the best part of caring for a pet?" "What was the most difficult part?"

Conclude by saying, "You all did a super job taking care of your pets today. I like the way you worked together!"

Lesson Idea 2: Dog Body Language

Objective: Students will be able to practice 'reading' dog body language and relate them to people body language

Materials Needed: Dog Body Language Picture Cards (or picture of dog on blackboard/paper)

Preparations: None

Body:

Teachers will ask students to think about all the different things they can feel. Write the responses on the board. Then ask a student to come up and 'show' the class how they are feeling without using any words. Do this several times: angry, happy, excited, afraid etc. Have the rest of the class guess what the student is 'showing' them. Teachers should then explain to students that this is called 'body language'.

Explain to students that animals show how they are feeling through body language too. Show them the picture of a dog looking happy or playful (relaxed mouth, play bow etc.) Show them the picture, but don't tell them the emotion. Ask them to guess. Then ask why they think what they do. Then explain why the dog is showing that he is happy or playful (point out the mouth, ears, tail and chest).

Do this for multiple examples: fear, aggression, submission etc. Ask students when it would be a good idea to stay away from a dog and why.

Closure: Ask students what they learned about dogs today. Re-explain that people and animals talk through using their bodies and 'body language'. Remind students to pay attention to what the dog is 'saying' with his body so they can be safe.

Lesson Idea 3: Dog Bite Prevention

Objective: Students will be able to recall what to do when they encounter a dog to avoid a dog bite

Materials: Paper

Preparations:

Teachers will draw a 'map' on the board or paper. The map will be a path that goes between two points (for example, home and school). Draw a human character at one end of the path. Along the path there will be at least 5 dogs.

Teachers should have a list of behaviors/actions written down that will be read to the student.

Body:

Ask students to take out a piece of paper. Have them write YES on one side and NO on the other. Explain to students that they are going to help someone get home from school. Move the character along the path until they come to the first dog. Read out one of the behaviors from your list. For example: *You see a dog that is sleeping next to some puppies. Should you pet it?* Select one student to hold up their answer YES or NO. If they answer correctly, they 'character' can move forward. **Make sure to explain WHY or WHY NOT: Dogs are very protective of their babies.** If they answer incorrectly, ask another question until they answer correctly. Then move on to the next dog and another student. Continue the game until most students have had a turn.

Closure:

Ask students if they have ever encountered a dog on their way to school. Ask them to explain what they saw and what they did. Have them explain if they would do anything differently now that they know some better ways to act with a dog. Explain that acting in the right way can help keep them safe (and avoid dog bites)

Example Behavior Statements:

Should you approach a dog with puppies?

Should you run away from a dog?

Should you tease a dog?

Should you ever hit a dog with your hand, rock or stick?

Should you play with your pet dog?

Should you ask a grown up before you touch a dog you don't know?

Lesson Idea 4: Safety First: Show me what to do!

Objective: Students will demonstrate what to do when they encounter a dog .

Materials: List of behaviors from 'map' lesson

Body:

Explain to students that today they are going to practice being safe around dogs. Talk briefly about all the things they have learned about animals and dogs so far (they need care like us, they 'talk ' through body language and there are things you should and should not do around dogs.

Then ask for a volunteer to come to the front. Give the student an example of dog encounter. For example, **"You are walking with a friend and dog comes running towards you. What do you do? "** The student should act out 'being a tree'. If this is unfamiliar, demonstrate 'being a tree' and explain why this works. Continue this until all students have had a turn.

Other examples:

1. You see a dog tied up where you are walking. He looks very friendly and cute. You want to pet him. What should you do?
2. A dog you have seen before is walking towards you. You don't like this dog and you have seen other children throw rocks at him before. What should you do?
3. You see a dog who is eating his food. You know this dog and he is usually friendly. You want to say hello to him. What should you do?

Conclusion: Congratulate students on all of the things that they have learned. Encourage them to share what they have learned with their family and friends.