



Foundation Stage Lesson Ideas

These have been split into 'Teacher led Initial Input', 'Adult led group activities' and 'Independent Learning and Play'. Not all suggested activities need to be followed, although doing at least one of the 'Teacher Led Whole Class Activities' is a good starting point.

Main welfare aims

To develop their understanding of pets and their needs and the responsibilities of looking after their pets.

Resources needed

[Mother and baby images](#)

[Songs to sing about pets](#)

[Who lives where images](#)

[Pet objects images](#)

Curriculum links

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design



Teacher Led Whole Class Activities

- Have a bag prepared with approximately six objects to do with different pets. Explain that you are going to pull out some clues to their next topic one by one and the children need to guess what their next topic is going to be about. They can't shout out – they have to keep it secret until all the objects have been pulled out, because they may change their mind as they see more clues. Start with something quite hard that they may not recognise, like a poop scoop or an empty packet of worming tablets, and then make the clues easier as you go on. Many objects for pets actually have pictures of the animals they are for on them, so keep a couple of objects like that for last, and ensure that you have a variety of objects for different pets so they will guess 'Pets' rather than 'Dogs' or 'Cats'.
NB If you do not have any pet objects that you can use, please download and print off our ['Pet Objects'](#) pictures instead.
- Speaking and Listening time. With a partner, they can tell their partner about one pet that they have, or a pet they know that belongs to someone else. They have two minutes to tell their partner everything they can think of about the chosen pet. After the two minutes are up, ask the listening partners to tell you about their partner's pet. They then swap, the speaker becoming the listener, and the exercise is repeated.
- Have a 'Pet for a Week'. Bring in a hutch and all the equipment needed for a pet rabbit, but actually bring in a cuddly toy rabbit. On the first day, explain that the rabbit is lonely, as rabbits really need the company of another rabbit. Produce another toy cuddly rabbit to be his friend. Then create a rota of jobs to be done for the rabbits every day so that they are being looked after. Advice on what they will need can be found on the [Blue Cross website](#), but some ideas could include – grooming, feeding, cleaning, making sure the rabbits get some time out of their hutch and in a run, putting them back again, checking they are healthy etc.

Adult Led Activities

- Print out the mother and baby pictures from here [Link to mother and baby sheet] and cut up. Keep the 'mother' pictures, but place the baby pictures on another table with some objects that those pets will need. Give the group one mother picture at a time, and ask them to find their baby on the other table, and also three objects that you might need to look after that pet. As the objects come back, discuss why the pet might need that object and check the understanding of the babies' names of each animal.
- Teach the groups one or more of the [songs listed](#). They are to the tune of: 'I'm a Little Teapot'. Talk about the songs and what the words mean. Are there some messages in there about looking after these pets?
- This activity is a good one to use if you cannot bring in a hutch or another type of cage for the teacher led activity above. You will need a good amount of boxes, paper, plastic bottles, etc. on hand.
 - » Decide in a small group which sort of animal they are going to create a home for – needs to be an animal normally kept in a hutch or cage.
 - » Think about what that animal needs. Does it need a food bowl, water, bedding, toys, a cosy place to sleep, a hutch or cage? How could they make a pretend one of these?
 - » Help the children create their own home for their 'pet'. The pet could be 'looked after' by this group of children for the rest of the week.
NB: You may need to remind the children that this is a pretend one as a real gerbil or hamster would just gnaw through cardboard and escape quite quickly!
- Using a toy cuddly dog, the adult pretends that dog is theirs. Children role play asking if they can stroke the dog. Show the children how to let a dog sniff their hand before gently stroking the dog's side or back. Ask the children if they know of any rules around dogs. The rules that they definitely need to remember are:
 - » Never to run up to dogs
 - » Not to put their faces right up close to a dog's face – dogs don't like it
 - » To leave dogs alone while eating
 - » To leave dogs alone while sleeping
 - » Not to hang around a dogs neck or cuddle
- Ask the children if they know of nice ways to stroke or play with a dog? For more advice [visit the Blue Cross website](#).

Independent Learning and Play

- Set up a vets practice in the home corner. You will need cuddly toys to be the patients, a 'doctor's kit', a table, but also include things like food for different animals, blankets, beds, a hutch, bedding etc so that the animals that 'need to stay overnight' can be looked after.
- Leave out the '[Who Lives Where?](#)' pictures for the children to match the home to the animal.
- In the home corner, introduce a pet dog or cat cuddly toy. Ensure they have everything that the pet will need, and that they know that the dog will need a walk and training, and encourage the children to train the dog using treats. They need to remember to feed the pets in their games and make sure that they have a nice quiet place to sleep.





Songs to Sing About Pets

These songs are all to be sung to the tune of 'I'm a little teapot'.

After teaching them to the children, check their understanding of the words.

Are there any messages there about looking after their pets well?

I'm a Little Puppy

I'm a little puppy, short and sweet
I learn the rules if you feed me treats
When I'm getting tired hear me speak
Leave me be and let me sleep

I'm a Little Bunny

I'm a little bunny, soft and round
I like to jump and run around
Let me out of my hutch and on the ground
Don't forget that I'm around

I'm a Syrian Hamster

I'm a Syrian Hamster, small and fat
Keep me safe, away from the cat
Let me run in tunnels, I like that
I live alone, don't like to chat





