



Key Stage 1 Lesson Plan – How to Have a Happy Pet

Main welfare aims

The main aim of this activity is to encourage children to think about their own needs and to realise that pet animals have the same needs. Because most pets can't get what they need themselves, pet owners have a responsibility to provide everything for them.

Curriculum links

Science Programme of Study

- Pupils should understand how to take care of animals
- Pupils should become familiar with the common names of some fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals, including those that are kept as pets.
- Pupils need to identify that most living things live in habitats to which they are suited and describe how different habitats provide for the basic needs of different kinds of animals
- Pupils need to find out about and describe the basic needs of animals, including humans, for survival

PSHE links with personal responsibility and living in the wider world

Resources needed

[‘Happy, Healthy New Dog’ worksheet](#)

[‘Happy, Healthy Rabbits’ worksheet](#)

[‘Happy, Healthy Gerbils’ worksheet](#)

Reference books on pets or access to the Internet, if you would like to give the children the opportunity of finding out more information on the pets themselves.

Extra information on how to care for these pets can be found at: www.bluecross.org.uk/pet-advice



Starter (20 minutes)

- Ask the children what they really need to make them feel happy and healthy.
- List them on the board as they make a suggestion.
- When the list is complete, ask the children if there's anything on the list that might be a want rather than a need. Rub out any wants so you are just left with needs. You shouldn't need much more than: food and water, shelter/home, family/company, medicine/doctors, perhaps playing or fun.
- Put up the picture of the rabbit next to their list and go through each of the things that they have suggested they need. Would a rabbit need them too?
- Do the same with a gerbil and then a dog. (N.B. when it comes to 'company', rabbits do need company of their own as do gerbils. Dogs need company, but not necessarily of their own kind – they're usually happier with human company.)
- What you should find is that all of our basic needs are the same. If you wish, you might like to say that this is because humans are just very clever animals, so that is why we have the same basic needs as our pet.

Main (20-25 minutes)

- Explain that even though we all have the same basic needs, because we are different animals we need slightly different food and homes and ways of playing.
- Show the class the dog 'Happy Healthy' worksheet and explain that they will need to think of some of the things you would need to buy for a dog so he could be happy and healthy. Try and think back to what they need and then think how that pet gets those things – does he have different food/place to sleep/ toys to play with/ things to keep him safe? Draw a picture in each box of what the pet would need and write the word(s) underneath.
- Those working quickly could also try and do the same for the rabbits and the gerbils.

Plenary (10-15 minutes)

- Look at some of the pictures of the things they have drawn for a dog. Who had similar things?
- If some children have worked on the rabbits' needs and the gerbils' as well, compare these with the dog. They should have all the same needs catered for, but where they live and what they eat will be quite different.
- Remind the children that they can get a lot of the things they need themselves: if they need a glass of water they can get one or if they are hungry they can ask someone for something to eat. Pet animals can't ask, and if they are caged they most definitely can't get anything for themselves, so it's really important that they make sure that their pet animals always have everything that they need to be happy and healthy. That's the responsibility of being a pet owner.

Differentiation

Children could be set into mixed ability groups to design a poster on how to care for different animals. This would include some written points and drawn or printed off pictures of some of the things that that particular pet needs.



A new dog

In each circle, draw an item that you would need to buy for Dooby the dog to help keep him happy and healthy.



Seven empty circles arranged in a pattern, intended for drawing items needed for the dog.

Name



A new rabbit

In each circle, draw an item that you would need to buy for Reggie the rabbit to help keep him happy and healthy.



Seven empty circles arranged in a pattern, intended for drawing items needed for the rabbit.

Name



A new gerbil

In each circle, draw an item that you would need to buy for George the gerbil to help keep him happy and healthy.



Seven empty circles arranged in a grid-like pattern, intended for drawing items needed for a gerbil.

Name