



**Canadian Federation of Humane Societies
La Fédération des sociétés canadiennes
d'assistance aux animaux**

TEACHERS' NOTES
ANIMALS AND US AND ANIMALS, EH? ISSUES 1 THROUGH 7

ISSUE 1 (FALL/WINTER 1999)

Harness Training for Cats. The CFHS has a *Happy Indoor Cats* fact sheet. Also, check with your local SPCA for additional information.

Confused about Coyotes. This activity is taken from the BC SPCA web site at www.sPCA.bc.ca.

Under the Big Top. For more information about the problem with circuses, order the *Circus Information Package* for the CFHS.

A Wolf in the House. The BC SPCA has produced a dog bite prevention program called *Bite Free*. Check with your local SPCA or check out the Dog Bite Safety Program at the Dogs and Kids website at www.dogsandkids.ca.

ISSUE 2 (SPRING 2000)

Know Before You Go. The beginning of responsible pet ownership is learning about animals. Class projects could include bulletin board displays, writing pet care books, teaching a pet care lesson to younger grades, making posters, interviewing veterinarians and other professionals.

Legal Beagles. You can find extensive background at the CFHS website: <http://www.cfhs.ca/legislation/>.

Test Your Ewe-Q. Many of us forget about farm animals when we talk about animals. Have students research common farm animals from the point of view of their behaviour and individuality rather than as sources of food.

A Pig in the Bedroom. This article can serve as a jumping off point for a unit on the peculiarities of the English language and where different words and expressions come from.

Strange But True and **Cats and People**. After reading the article on cats, discuss why cat breeds are all similar. Have students research different breeds of dogs and cats and the problems of certain breeds in preparation for a debate on “designer dogs and cats.”

When a Pet Dies. The loss of a pet is often a child’s first experience with death. It’s important to realize that grief over a companion animal is just as real as grief over the loss of any other family member.

Busy as a Beaver. Why is the beaver Canada’s national animal? History aside, what makes the beaver a good symbol for Canadians? This article can also serve as a discussion starter on the conflict of interest that can arise between humans and wildlife. How do we coexist with nature?

Give Bugs a Break. Someone named Bradley Millar said “Teaching a child not to step on a caterpillar is as important for the child as it is for the caterpillar.” Every day insects provide us with opportunities to demonstrate the concepts of caring, non-violence and respect for life or their opposites.

Your Turn. Use this as a writing exercise.

ISSUE 3 (WINTER 2000)

What do you Want for Christmas. While the idea of a cute puppy or kitten under the Christmas tree may be appealing, it’s actually a very poor idea for several reasons. Adding a new pet to the family should be a carefully considered decision involving all family members. The best time to actually bring a pet into the house also needs careful consideration. Holiday turmoil is not it.

- Students plan a Christmas gift basket for a prospective pet owner that could go under the tree instead of a pet.
- Students research the number of pets offered in classified ads and sold from pet stores around Christmas time. After Christmas, they again check the classifieds and also shelter statistics to see what happens to Christmas animals.
- Student representative interviews the Shelter Manager of your local humane society to find out how students can help prevent holiday animals, the class follows through on project (possible ideas: letters to the editor, posters, design gift certificates).

Turkey Talk. Modern confinement raising of livestock often prevents the animals from performing natural behaviours. Divide the class into groups to investigate wild turkeys, domestic turkeys and turkey farming.

- Debate: Should wildlife be reintroduced for hunting?
- Language: Why are turkeys called turkeys, or in French, *dindon*?

Make a list of all the expressions using "turkey." What does each mean? Does the meaning have anything to do with turkeys? Where the meaning is derogatory, what would be a better phrase that doesn't insult turkeys?

Like Cats and Dogs. Have students observe their own dogs and cats taking notes and videoing if possible then make a dictionary of dog or cat language. Refer to books such as Stanley Coren's *How to Speak Dog* for help.

Two's a Herd. If you live in a rural area, do the same with horses. Refer to books such as *The Horse's Mind* by Lucy Rees. Discuss the following: Which domestic animals are herd animals? Which are pack animals? Are any domestic animals naturally solitary? What are people?

Take a Close Look. This selection is adapted from a series of children's journals by Linda Rae.

Frog Facts. A Thousand Friends of Frogs, a website at <http://cgee.hamline.edu/frogs/resources/internet.html> lists a lot of curriculum and fun sites.

How Old is Old. Let students figure out how old they will be when their dog or cat is old. Have students write a composition looking into the future. Where will they be? What will they be doing? Who will be looking after the pet?

Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer – Not. On a serious note, use this article as a springboard for a research project on reindeer, comparing inuit of Canada with sami and nanet of northern Europe or the process of domestication. On the lighter side, students find out about the real animal behind other fictional creations. For example, what are Dalmatians really like?

Leaping Logo. Collect labels from food and other products that claim to be animal-friendly. What do the various logos mean (eg. Dolphin, nature, etc.).

Your Turn. Use this as a writing exercise.

UP for Animals. Have students turn this into a poster for the bulletin board.

ISSUE 4 (SPRING 2001)

Space Age ID. Have students investigate how microchips work. For a list of websites about microchips, go to <http://members.aol.com/Tester/Desp/ID-microchip.html>.

The Great Indoors. Build a cat tree as a class project and auction or raffle it with the proceeds going to your local animal shelter. You can find

instructions on the CFHS website under 'Animal Info.' For more information about keeping cats indoors, see the *Happy Indoor Cat Factsheet* available on the website.

Wildlife in the Backyard. Have students keep a log for one week of all the wildlife they see (include birds, insects, amphibians, etc.). Make a bulletin board display with pictures and information about urban wildlife. For more information about dealing with problems caused by urban wildlife, see the *Urban Wildlife* factsheet series available from the CFHS. Go to www.cfhs.ca and select 'Animal Info.'

What's Wild, What's Not. Have students investigate the role of domestic animals in the settling of Canada. You can also have students debate the questions at the end of the article.

Pocket Pets. After students compose their phrases, discuss which ones are true to the characteristics of the animals described. Which ones are complimentary? Derogatory? Have students choose a "pocket pet" and research its characteristics and needs. Write a care guide for each little animal.

Do You Really Want to Go to the Circus. Since circuses are ostensibly performed for children, this is one animal-related issue in which children can have a real impact. For background information, see the *Circus Information Kit* and the video *The Plight of Performing Animals*, both available from the CFHS.

- Have students research lions, tigers, elephants or bears and compare their lives in the wild with life in a circus.
- Have students research the history of the circus and how it has evolved through the ages.
- Have students research the use of animals in entertainment. What types of entertainment are no longer allowed in Canada (eg. Bear-baiting, dog fighting)? What types are still allowed by shouldn't be?

If a circus with animals is coming to your area, children can write letters to the editor of the local paper, make posters, conduct an educational campaign within the school, and write letters to the circus sponsors.

Tanner. This true story illustrates many of the common attitudes that humane societies have to work against every day. Discuss the following: perceived greater value of purebreds, pets as disposable when inconvenient to keep, and not being realistic about a pet's requirements before getting it.

ISSUE 5 (FALL 2001)

Living Lawnmowers. What makes sheep particularly suitable for this job? Why do they work better than cattle or horses?

Dogs to the Rescue. Two sites with detailed information on the selection, training and work of SAR dogs are the *Search and Rescue Society of British Columbia* (<http://www.sarbc.org/sarbc/homepage.html>) and the *Search and Rescue Association of Alberta* (<http://sardaa.ca>). For information on how search and rescue operations of all types are coordinated in Canada, visit the federal government's *National Search and Rescue Secretariat* (<http://www.nss.gc.ca>). This site also contains links to organizations.

It's Official. There are so many activities that can be done with this article. Students can research the characteristics of each bird. Why would people have chosen that particular bird? You can also:

- Divide the class into groups. Each takes a different domestic animal and prepares a case for that animal being the official animal of your province.
- Have students examine different provincial coats of arms. What do the different symbols mean?
- Ask students to collect coins, paper money and stamps with animals on them and make a list of all of the animals represented. Why these animals? What do they represent?
- Have students research the raven in native Canadian mythology.

It all raises two important questions: First, what is a symbol? And, second, why do animals feature so strongly as national symbols?

Mutts for Me. Possible debate and discussion topics: Mutts versus purebreds; the ethics of breeding animals with specific characteristics which may actually be harmful; and, solving pet overpopulation.

10 Ways to Help Animals. Have the class brainstorm additions to the list. You can also make other lists of 10: Ten characteristics of a responsible pet owner; 10 things your pet wants you to know; 10 kind deeds; and/or, 10 activities you can do with your dog.

RCMP Musical Ride. You can have students explore the history of the RCMP and the role of horses and/or research the use of horses in Canada. If you live in Ottawa, you can arrange a field trip to the RCMP Musical Ride Centre. Finally, you can participate in the RCMP Musical Ride's *Say Neigh to Drugs* program for children and pre-teens.

ISSUE 7 (FALL 2003)

Back Home at Last. What was Gus doing for the six years he was missing? Have students write a story. You can also ask the class to:

- Look in the Lost and Found ads of your local newspaper or on internet sites such as the PetLynx one (www.petlynx.com). How many of the animals described have identification?
- Find out how microchips work. Three firms offering microchips in Canada are:
 - *Pethealth* (www.24petwatch.com),
 - *EIDAP* (www.eidap.com), and
 - *Microchip4Solutions* (www.microchipsolutions.com).
- Conduct a short survey to find out how many dogs and cats wear identification and what kind. Show the results on a graph.
- Make a chart showing the advantages and disadvantages of different types of ID: collar and tag, tattoo, and microchip. What would be the perfect identification system?
- Create posters showing how to prevent pets from getting lost and how to increase their chances of being returned when they are found.

Finally, you could have students to create a public relations campaign to convince people to ID their pets. This could include, for example, writing letters to the editor asking pet owners to make sure their pets wear ID.

Harry Potter and the Owls. Research and write reports on the owl species mentioned in Harry Potter. Are any aspects of owl behaviour described accurately in the series? Why did J.K. Rowling choose to use owls? Investigate owls in myth and legend. The site www.owlpages.com is a good place to start.

Dogs Can Bite. Children under the age of ten are the most likely victims of dog bites. In the majority of cases, the dog is not a stray but a dog the child knows. Making sure children know how to behave around dogs can avoid most of these unfortunate incidents. It's important to teach children to be respectful of dogs without causing them to be afraid, and to remember that the benefits of dogs far outweigh the risks. The website www.dogsandkids.ca is a good Internet resource for this topic.

- Research dog body language in the library and on the Internet, and then create a dog language dictionary.
- You can have students who have dogs to observe them for a week. How does the dog ask to go outside? For a walk? Students can also listen for different barks in different situations and make a presentation or website on their dog's communication.
- Brainstorm all the different ways to avoid being bitten by a dog.
- Students can make a dog safety poster for the kindergarten class.
- The "Your Turn" exercise can be done as a class assignment.

- A debate can be organized with the topic: Dogs should be banned from cities.

Finally, this is a good opportunity to make contact with your local SPCA or humane society. They will likely know a dog behaviour expert who can come and speak to your class.

Just in Case. Discuss the importance of including pets in emergency plans. If you have a classroom pet, make sure he or she is included in fire and lockdown drills.

Dream Career: Canadian National Park Warden. Brainstorm a list of all the different careers that help animals. Students can each choose a career and write a report on it. You can learn more about Canada's national park system at www.pc.gc.ca. Debate resolution: People caught feeding wildlife should be banned from parks.

Break the Code. Why do "neutered pets make the best friends"? Invite a representative from your local humane society to give a talk on the importance of spaying and neutering.

Bison Bubbles. Divide the class into pairs standing on opposite sides of the classroom facing each other. The students on one side of the room stand still while the students on the other side slowly approach their partners, looking them in the eye the whole time. The stationary students call "stop" as soon as they feel uncomfortable. Once all the moving students have been stopped, look at the line they have formed. Is it straight? Repeat the exercise with roles reversed. Discussion: Why didn't the line of moving students end up straight? How did you feel as the person got close to you? Would it have made any difference if they weren't staring you in the eye? If the other person were your best friend? Discuss the concept of personal space for people and animals, its relationship to good manners, cultural differences, etc. Discuss zones in terms of dogs and dog bites.



The CFHS is a national organization which represents over 100 member humane societies and speaks collectively for more than 400,000 individuals. The CFHS is a charitable organization committed to ending the suffering of animals by working with the public, government, industry, the scientific community, educators and the media on both national and local levels toward this goal. (Web site: www.cfhs.ca)
