



IFAW

International Fund for Animal Welfare

**Animal Action
Education**

Middle Level - Grades 6-8

Cats, Dogs, and Us



Objectives

The lessons in this programme meet learning objectives in social studies, language arts, and science. Among other programme goals, students will learn social studies and life science concepts, practise critical reading and comprehension strategies, and engage in role-play activities to encourage empathy for cats and dogs.

Numerous studies have found that environmental education programmes like ours improve critical thinking skills, motivate students to become more engaged, and promote academic achievement, including better performance on standardized tests.

There's also documented evidence that integrating humane education into the classroom can lead to reductions in school violence and bullying, while supporting moral development and instilling a sense of responsibility for others, both animals and people.

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Companion Video

The educational video for this programme runs for approximately 18 minutes. Find it online or request a free DVD at www.ifaw.org/cats-dogs-and-us.

Online Library

IFAW's education library with free resources on a variety of animals and conservation themes: www.ifaw.org/lessons.

Animal Action Education

Each year, the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) launches a new thematic education programme focusing on animals and the environment. Free educational materials are locally adapted for free distribution in a dozen languages and dialects—including Braille—and more than 18 countries, reaching some 5,000,000 young people worldwide each year. For more information about IFAW and the Animal Action Education program, visit www.ifaw.org. You can also e-mail info@ifaw.org or call 1-800-932-4329.



How to Use This Program

Cats, Dogs, and Us aims to educate students about the characteristics of cats and dogs, the unique relationships cats and dogs have with people in communities around the world, and the important responsibility people have in caring for the needs of cats and dogs.

Lessons reinforce and extend concepts covered in the video and Student Magazine. Suggestions for adapting the lessons for younger or less able students or extending the lesson for older or more advanced students are provided. Depending on the lessons and activities you choose, you may teach one or two lessons as stand-alone activities or the program may be taught as a one- or two-week unit. Here is one possible approach::

1. Introduce Topic and Develop Content Knowledge Video (view it online or request a free DVD at www.ifaw.org/cats-dogs-and-us), Lessons 1 and 2, Worksheets 1 and 2

A. Video Viewing: View the video with a class to build background and tap into students' prior knowledge about cats and dogs. Students may use Worksheet 1 to help them focus on important information as they watch the video. Following the viewing, students may discuss their ideas in groups.

B. Read the Student Magazine: Use suggestions from Lesson 2 to prepare students to read the Student Magazine. During reading, students may also use Worksheet 2 to record information about key vocabulary, questions they have, and interesting facts.

2. Conduct Lesson Activities Teaching Guide: Lessons 3–6, Worksheets 3–5, and Fictional News Article

Use the lessons to support and expand on concepts discussed in the Student Magazine. Lesson 3 focuses on the scientific concept of adaptation and on how cats have adapted to their environments over time. Lesson 4 presents activities that support the topics of dog and cat communication and develop empathy towards cats and dogs. Lesson 5 guides students to categorize the needs of dogs, cats, and people, and provides an activity for observing a dog and looking for signs of neglect. Lesson 6 provides a news article and an opportunity for students to debate a city's plans for dealing with their population of roaming dogs.

3. Extend Learning and Take Action Teaching Guide: Lessons; *Take Action* Leaflet

Use appropriate extension activities within the lessons as homework or extra projects to reinforce learning.

Suggestions for responsible individual and group action on cat and dog issues can be found in the supplemental *Take Action* flyer. Bring parents on board for the *Stand Up for Cats and Dogs Pledge*. **For more information, see our *Take Action* flyer at: www.ifaw.org/cats-dogs-and-us.**

4. Tell Us What You Think Send us your feedback so we can continue to improve and enhance our program and resources. **Visit www.ifaw.org/teacher-feedback.**

Ground Rules Activity

Prior to discussions that may involve strong views or feelings, many teachers and students like to develop ground rules within their classrooms to promote positive listening, respect, and sensitivity to different points of view.

Ask the class to pair up and answer the following question: "How do people behave toward me that makes me feel confident and comfortable to talk with them about things that really matter to me?"

Ask the pairs to move into groups of six and share their ideas. Have them make a list of the behaviors that all six can understand and agree with. These may include:

1. They listen to me.
2. They don't laugh.
3. They don't shout what I say to other people.

Gather the whole class and ask each group to report their list—one behavior at a time. Check for understanding and agreement with the whole class. Only write down those behaviors that everybody accepts and understands.

Steer the group toward identifying clearly observable behaviors rather than broad concepts. Display the list as a means to encourage individuals to take responsibility for their actions within the group.



Lesson 1: Viewing the Video

Instructional Time:
60 minutes

Overview Students will gain background information to prepare them for reading the Student Magazine *Cats, Dogs, and Us*. Students will appreciate the complexity of viewpoints about cats and dogs and recognize variations in how cats and dogs live with people across cultures and throughout history.

Learning Outcomes Students will: Follow rules for collegial discussions; Demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives; Analyze connections between cats and dogs and humans; Identify physical traits of cats and dogs; Recognize the consequences of the absence of cats and dogs to communities and society.

Warm-up: What's Your View?

This activity will help students understand that people have different perspectives on the relationship between people and cats and dogs.

1. As this activity may evoke strong feelings, review the Ground Rules Activity on the first page before beginning.
2. Hang up one of the following signs in each corner of the classroom: **Strongly Agree; Agree; Strongly Disagree; Disagree.**
3. Read the first Viewpoint Statement below. Ask students to move to the corner of the room marked with the sign that best represents their response to the statement.
4. Ask students to discuss their response with the other students in their corner. Explain that students may change their minds and move to a different corner based on their discussions.
5. Record the number of students in each corner. Continue with the next Viewpoint Statement.
6. After students have responded to each Viewpoint Statement, bring the group together and ask them what they have learned from each other. What surprised them?

Viewpoint Statements

- Dogs and cats help people and communities.
- Dogs and cats don't always need people to take care of them.
- A dog that bites could be scared.
- Dogs should never be allowed to roam free.

Before/During Viewing the Video

1. Tell students they are going to watch a video about dogs and cats and their relationship with humans. Give each student a copy of **Worksheet 1**. Explain that the worksheet will help them focus on important information in the video.

Adapting the Activity

(for younger/less-able students)

- Display the chart from **Worksheet 1** and complete it as a whole group during a second viewing of the video. Stop at key places in the video to discuss the guiding questions. Record any questions students have.

2. Read through the guiding questions with students and allow them to predict what they think the answers are. Tell students to keep the questions in mind as they watch the video and to write any questions they have on the second part of the worksheet.
3. Show the video. Stop it at any point if you want to highlight information or get students' responses.

After Viewing the Video

1. Discuss the guiding questions. If there is disagreement about the responses, replay sections of the video and have students check their answers.
2. Ask students to share questions they wrote while watching the video. Discuss the questions with the group and remind students to look for answers as they read the Student Magazine (Lesson 2).
3. Review the Viewpoint Statements from the warm-up activity. Count up the number of students that now agree or disagree with each statement and record the results. Discuss with students whether their responses have changed and why.
4. Invite students to create an advertisement for the video. Encourage students to determine what topic they think is most important or interesting and to feature it in the advertisement. (They may review the guiding questions to help them.) Tell students to make their ads inviting by including elements such as graphics, a movie rating, and quotes from "reviewers" or the stars of the show—dogs and cats.

Extending the Activity

(for older/more advanced students)

- Encourage small groups of students to research a question that they have after viewing the video. Students may look for information in a library or online. Ask the groups to share their findings with the class.
- Have students view the video again after reading the Student Magazine. Encourage students to compare how the information is presented in each medium. Do a Think-Pair-Share activity in which students discuss how the elements in the video, such as music, visuals, and interviews, affected their understanding or emotions.



Lesson 2: Reading the Student Magazine

Instructional Time:
Two 45-minute
sessions

Overview Students will understand the special relationship people have with cats and dogs, develop vocabulary associated with cats and dogs, and engage in the reading skill of asking and answering questions while citing evidence from the text.

Learning Outcomes Students will: Define essential vocabulary about dogs and cats; Ask questions, discuss, and share information about dogs and cats; Describe connections between cats and dogs and humans.

Before/During Reading

1. Ask students to preview *Cats, Dogs, and Us*, looking at headings, photographs, and captions. Ask partners to discuss the following questions. Then discuss them with the whole group.
 - *What does the word domestication mean to you? How is this word related to cats and dogs?*
 - *What do you think the words roaming, owned, community, and feral mean when we talk about cats and dogs?*
 - *What responsibilities do you think people have towards cats and dogs?*
2. Read aloud each glossary word and its definition. Ask students to decide which words they think they know well and which words require more clarification.
3. Give students **Worksheet 2** and have them record the words they would like to learn more about. Point out that students can look for the glossary words in bold type as they read. Tell students they should also record any other words they encounter in their reading that they would like to discuss with the group.
4. Tell students to use the sections “Questions from My Reading” and “Interesting Facts” to record their questions and comments as they read. Ask students to read the text.

Reading the Text: Some students may not be able to read the text without support. You can read the text aloud with them as they echo read. Or you could have students read the text with a partner. You may also want to divide the reading of the Student Magazine over two days.

Adapting the Activity

(for younger/less able students)

- Have students compare and contrast domestic animals and wild animals. *How are they alike? How are they different? How are their needs met?* Have each student write the name of an animal on a note card and draw a picture of it. With students, sort the cards into groups: domestic or wild. (Note that domestic animals may sometimes become feral.) Have students explain their reasoning.

After Reading

Discuss the text with students. You may want to divide them into small groups to ensure participation of readers who need more support.

1. Ask students to share questions they had while reading and discuss these as a group. Encourage students to look for places in the text that provide information about the questions. Keep a list of questions that may require students to do further research to find the answers.
2. Discuss vocabulary words that students have written on their worksheet. Ask students to find the words in the text, read aloud the sentences in which the words are found, and then discuss the meanings.
3. Discuss the text section by section, having students decide on the most important points of each section. Have students reread the text to look for answers to the questions below. Encourage them to refer to the text to support their ideas. Record their responses on a chart.
 - (p. 1) *Why are cats and dogs called domesticated animals? What does this mean for people? What does it mean for the animals?*
 - (p. 2) *What are the different ways dogs and cats live in communities? Why do you think it is important to understand the different ways they live?*
 - (pp. 3–5) *What are the most important points about cats?*
 - (pp. 6–7) *What are the most important points about dogs?*
 - (p. 8) *What can you learn about dogs from this page? Why is it important?*
 - (pp. 9–13) *What are the most important points in each section?*

Extending the Activity

(for older/more advanced students)

- Have students compare and contrast people’s relationship to cats and dogs with our relationship to other animals, both domestic and wild.
- Invite students to research cats and/or dogs in a country or region of the world. Encourage students to find out about the history of cats and/or dogs in the area, how they are viewed in the culture, and how they live with people. Have students create a poster to show their findings.



Lesson 3: Animal Adaptations

Instructional Time:
45 minutes

Overview Students will understand the science concept of how animals have adapted to their environment over time. Students will predict how traits could evolve further to adapt to a particular environment.

Learning Outcomes Students will: Define and identify animal adaptations; Identify physical traits of cats; Describe adaptive functions served by physical traits of cats; Build curiosity about cats.

Introduce Adaptations

1. Review page 3 of the Student Magazine with students. Introduce the term *adaptation*. Explain to students that an adaptation is a physical or behavioral characteristic that helps an animal survive in its particular environment. *Animals have different adaptations that help them move, get food or water, stay warm or cool, care for their young, or stay safe from predators in the environment in which they live. For example, a tiger's striped fur is an adaptation that provides camouflage. The stripes allow the tiger to blend in with tall grass and sneak up on prey.*
2. Invite students to do a Think-Pair-Share activity in which they think of an animal and one of its adaptations. Students talk about their ideas with a partner and then share them with the whole group. Chart students' responses.

Discuss How Animals Become Adapted

1. Tell students that animals become adapted to their environment over hundreds and thousands of generations. Explain that domestic cats are descended from wild cats that survived by hunting. *Imagine that many thousands of years ago, some cats had pads on their paws that allowed them to walk quietly and other cats did not. Which group of cats would be better hunters?* Discuss with students that the cats with quiet paws are more likely to catch their food

and survive, while the other cats would more likely starve. *If the survivors have offspring, are their offspring more likely or less likely to have quiet paws (and therefore be better hunters) like their parents?*

2. Guide students to understand that after many generations, most of the cats' paws will have the physical traits that make them good hunters (soft, silent paw pads). Explain that the cats have *adapted* to their particular environment.

NOTE: Students may have the misconception that the cats developed quieter paws during their lifetime and that they transmitted this "acquired" trait to their offspring. However, animals cannot transmit an acquired physical trait. Instead, a trait is *selected* over many generations because cats with this trait will more likely survive and reproduce.

Analyze Physical Adaptations of Cats

1. Have students complete **Worksheet 3**. Tell the students to list some physical traits of cats and write how those traits help a cat survive. Then, have students think about their own environment and how each trait could evolve further to better adapt to their environment. Tell students there are no right or wrong answers for this question. The goal is to have students expand their thinking beyond the text.
2. Conclude with a reminder that even though domestic cats have adaptations that make them good hunters, they are no longer wild animals, and they need people to provide for their needs.

Adapting the Activity

(for younger/less-able students)

Role-Play: Demonstrate the process of adaptation by asking students to role-play a mouse being stalked by two groups of cats, one with quiet paws and the other with noisy paws. Have the "mouse" cover his or her eyes. Tell the mouse to say "freeze" when he or she hears a cat. Have a "cat" with noisy paws approach the "mouse." After the "mouse" hears that "cat" and says "freeze," the "cat" stops moving. Repeat with a "cat" with quiet paws. Compare how close the two "cats" got to the "mouse," and then continue with other pairs. Discuss which group of cats would be more likely to eat, survive, and reproduce: the cats with the quiet paws or the ones with noisy paws?

Extending the Activity (for older/more advanced students)

Natural Selection: Have students build a "tree" showing several generations of cats and the effects of natural selection over time. Create about 15 green cards to represent cats with silent paws, 2 red cards for cats with noisy paws, and about 7 yellow cards for cats with paws that are in between. Make a horizontal line with 2 cards of each color. Assume that the cats with noisy paws (red cards) are not very successful at hunting, starve, and have no offspring. The others get all the preys, and have one, two, or three kittens. Lay out cards representing the new generation consisting of only green and yellow cards. Assume that, at the next generation, the green cards get all the prey and have kittens, while the yellow cards have no offspring. In two generations, the silent paws have prevailed. Explain to students that, in the real world, the categories are not as clear-cut, and that natural selection occurs over hundreds and thousands of generations.



Lesson 4: Communication and Empathy

Instructional Time:
45 minutes

Overview Students will analyze how dogs and cats communicate. Students will develop the social skill of empathy by learning how to identify nonverbal cues of dogs and cats and how to appreciate the animals' perspective. Students will engage in critical discussion, role-play, and observation activities.

Lesson Outcomes Students will: Identify behaviors of dogs and cats; Identify misinformation about cats; Analyze the impact of respectful behavior toward dogs and cats; Indicate awareness of, and identify with, the “feelings” of cats and dogs; Be willing to consider the natural behaviors and needs of cats and dogs.

Warm-up: Guess What I’m Saying!

1. Play a nonverbal game of “telephone.” Think of a message that a dog or cat might want to send, such as “I’m hot and I want to find some shade.” Communicate the message to a student, using only gestures.
2. Have students pass the message along to each other, using only gestures. Continue until the message reaches the last student. Ask the last student to say aloud what he or she thinks the message is.
3. Discuss how it felt to communicate nonverbally. Ask students: *How do you think dogs and cats feel when they are trying to communicate with us and we don’t understand?* Explain to your students that when they understand and experience the feelings of others they are empathizing.

Understanding Dogs

1. Have students turn to page 8 of the Student Magazine. Discuss the body language in each illustration. What might each body part be saying? Which body parts might go together?
2. Have pairs of students look at the dog photographs. *Do you recognize any of the same body language from the illustrations? Do the combinations of body parts in each picture clearly signal*

Adapting the Activity

(for younger/less-able students)

- To demonstrate how body language can convey feelings, ask students to show all the different ways they can walk—fast, with a spring in their step, dragging their feet, sauntering, and so on. Then ask individual students to show a “happy” walk, an “angry” walk, a “fearful” walk, and so on. You may also have the whole group guess what emotion the walker is demonstrating.
- Invite students to role-play scenarios in which one student plays a dog and the other plays the dog’s caretaker. For example, during a walk, a dog is tired and wants to lie down. The owner wants to keep walking. After each role-play have students in the audience suggest words to describe how the dog was feeling. As appropriate, discuss the dog’s body language and how the caretaker responded.

what the dog is saying? Why? Is it possible to have mixed signals (for example, where the tail seems to be saying something very different from the ears?) Discuss as a whole group.

3. Discuss why it’s important for people to understand what a dog is saying through body language. *If you saw a dog that looked like [identify photo] what would you do? Why? Why is it important to consider the situation the dog is in when determining what the dog is trying to communicate?*

Understanding Cats

1. Review the last paragraphs on pages 4 and 5 in the Student Magazine. Guide students to identify what purring communicates and how cats show affection.
2. Read the cat myths/reality sidebar on page 5 with students. Discuss the myths with students:
 - *How do the myths affect how people treat cats?*
 - *What can we do to help people learn that the myths are not true?*
3. Ask students if they know other myths about cats. Guide students to find out more information about the myths, how they came to be, and what the reality is. To extend the activity, have small groups of students create posters dispelling one or more myths about cats.

- Invite students to draw a picture of a dog using its body language to signal how it is feeling. Have students refer to the illustrations in “What Are You Saying?” on page 8.

Extending the Activity

(for older/more advanced students)

- Have students observe an animal at home or, with their parent’s or guardian’s permission, in their community. Tell students to note the situation the animal is in, how the animal is behaving, and what they think the animal is feeling. Have students report on their observations to the whole group.
- Invite students to write a diary entry or “online” posting from a dog’s or cat’s point of view, telling about the dog’s or cat’s feelings throughout a day. Some scenarios students may write about include: a dog was left tied up all day while its owner was away; a roaming dog is looking for something to eat; a cat feels lonely because people believe it is unlucky.



Lesson 5: Animal Investigator

Instructional Time:
45 minutes

Overview Students will understand the social studies concept of *needs* and that people must provide for the needs of dogs (and cats). Students will observe a dog's living situation and learn how to recognize signs of neglect.

Learning Outcomes Students will: Define *need*, and identify the physical, social, and behavioral needs that must be met for dogs and cats to thrive; Analyze human behavior that helps or harms dogs and cats; Identify how to take responsibility for the welfare of dogs; Evaluate evidence of neglect based on the needs of dogs.

Discussing Physical and Behavioral Needs

(all ages/abilities)

1. Explain that a *need* is something a living being must have to survive. Tell students that even though dogs and cats look different from us, we need many of the same things.
2. Create a two-column chart. Label the columns *We Need* and *Dogs/Cats Need*. Lead a discussion about what students need to lead a healthy, happy life (food, water, exercise, friends, and medical care). Then guide students to compare their needs with the needs of dogs and cats. Record the students' ideas on the chart. **Option:** Use props, such as a water bottle, toys, photos of friends playing (both dogs and people), and so on.
3. Ask students who provides for dogs' and cats' needs.
Why can't dogs and cats just provide for themselves?

Animal Investigation (all ages/abilities)

1. Explain to students that if a dog or cat is not being taken care of, a local Animal Investigator may step in to help. Read the scenario below. Tell students they will be Animal Investigators and will look for evidence to support what the owner says or what the caller says. Students may work as a whole group or in small groups.

A woman has called authorities to report that a dog living in her neighborhood is not being taken care of. The dog, named Bud, lives in a backyard next door to the caller. Bud's owner says that she looks after Bud properly. She says he always has water and that she feeds him twice a day. Bud is not allowed inside of her house, but he has his own doghouse. An Animal Investigator will come to see Bud and assess the situation.

2. Show students **Drawing 1** (the environment and dog) from **Worksheets 4–5**. Explain that when they first arrive at Bud's backyard, they should look at the whole situation and describe all the details about the dog and the environment he lives in. Prompt students with questions such as:
 - *What does Bud look like? What is he doing?*
 - *What is his living situation like? Is he tied? Is he tangled up?*
 - *What does the area around Bud look like?*

- *Why do you think the neighbor reported Bud's situation?*
3. Show students **Drawing 2** (body condition). Ask students to look at Bud and assess his condition overall.
 - *What is Bud's body language communicating?*
 - *Does he look well fed? How can you tell?*
 - *Does his collar fit properly?* (Students may conclude that a loose collar once fit, but the dog has lost weight.)
 4. Show students **Drawing 3** (food). Ask students to look for any signs that Bud is being fed twice a day, as the owner has said.
 - *What do you notice about the bowl?*
 - *Can Bud reach his bowl?*
 - *Has there been food in the bowl recently?*
 5. Show students **Drawing 4** (water). Ask students to look for evidence regarding whether Bud always has water.
 - *Can Bud reach the water bucket? Is it right side up?*
 - *Does it look like it has held water recently?*
 6. Show students **Drawing 5** (shelter). Explain that shelter can be different things, but it needs to protect the animal from rain, snow, wind, the hot sun, and so on. Ask students to assess whether Bud has adequate shelter.
 - *Can Bud reach his shelter?*
 - *Does it protect him from the weather? Explain.*
 - *Does it have bedding inside such as straw or dry blankets?*
 7. Show students **Drawing 2** again (health/veterinary). Tell students to look for signs of sickness or discomfort.
 - *Do you notice any signs that Bud is sick or hurt?*
 - *Are his eyes weeping or crusty?*
 - *Do you notice any new wounds? Do you see scabs?*
 8. Show students **Drawings 1 and 2** again (friends/exercise).
 - *What can you tell by looking at the rope?*
 - *Do you see evidence that Bud gets to spend time with/be near other people or run and play with other dogs? Explain.*
 9. Have students determine whether all the evidence supports the owner's claim that Bud is being cared for or the caller's claim that he is not. You may choose to have students write up their findings in a report, either as a whole group, in pairs, or individually. Remind students to list reasons and evidence to support their arguments.
 - *If Bud is not being cared for, what can be done to help him?*

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Lesson 6: Too Many Dogs?

Instructional Time:
Two 45-minute
sessions

Overview Through critical reading and discussion, students will examine different perspectives regarding a city's response to its population of free-roaming dogs. Students will develop speaking and listening skills through engaging in a debate.

Learning Outcomes Students will: Define essential vocabulary related to community issues with roaming dogs; Compare and contrast multiple points of view on the same topic; Cite evidence in the text to support analysis; Examine the consequences of the absence of dogs to the community; Express empathy and compassion for dogs.

Key Vocabulary:

rehoming	dog overpopulation	nuisance
stressed	roaming dogs	community caretakers

1. Introduce the fictional news article “City Debates Plan for Street Dogs.” Point out that the first paragraph of a news article usually gives the most important information. It often answers the questions: *who, what, when, where, why,* and *how*. Read aloud the first paragraph with students.
2. Ask students to recall what categories of dogs might be included in the group “street dogs.” Have them refer to page 2 of the Student Magazine if needed.
3. Draw a vertical line on the board. At the top of the line, write “Street dogs are a serious problem and should be removed.” At the bottom of the line, write “Street dogs are not a problem and should be left alone.” Point out that the line represents two extremes about what to do about street dogs. Ask students to mark on the line where they fall in their thinking about the street dogs. Invite several students to explain why they placed their marks where they did.
4. Have students read the full news article. After reading, review any difficult terms and discuss the major points with students using the key vocabulary. Prompt students with the following questions, and have them point to evidence in the article to support their answers:
 - *How has the city dealt with the perceived problem of too many street dogs?*
5. Have students participate in a debate about the city's response to the roaming dogs. Have students with similar points of view work together. Or assign students roles, for example: citizens who feel the street dogs are a problem and should be removed; citizens who feel that caretakers, adoption, and neutering will address the issues; citizens who welcome and care for the dogs. Some students can argue from the dogs' points of view, for example: a dog in the shelter, a street dog that receives care, and a street dog that does not.
6. Ask groups to consider the following questions:
 - *Is the problem really “too many” dogs? Why or why not?*
 - *Do you consider the issue a dog problem or a people problem? Why?*
 - *Would the city be better off without the roaming dogs? Why or why not?*
 - *What plan would you support? Why?*
7. Tell the groups to list reasons and evidence to support their arguments. Emphasize that good debaters find the main arguments for the other side as well as for their own. Students can refer to the news article, pages 12–13 of the Student Magazine, and their own experiences as they prepare.
8. Invite the groups to debate the questions. If time allows, have students swap roles so that they can experience debating from another point of view. This will help them appreciate the complexity of the issues.

Adapting the Activity

(for younger/less-able students)

- Instead of engaging in a debate, ask students to respond to this statement before and after reading and discussing the news article: *Thirty thousand roaming dogs are too many for one city.*
- Have pairs create a word map for one of the key vocabulary words. The word map would include the definition, any synonyms or antonyms, a drawing, and a sentence using the word. Pairs can present their word maps to the whole group.
- Invite students to role-play a conversation between a street dog

and a dog in the shelter about their lives and what they would like the city to do.

Extending the Activity

(for older/more advanced students)

- Have students write their reaction to the news article. Students may “post” their comments on the board. Ask students to read the comments and respond to each one with a “like” or a “thumbs down.”

Worksheet 1: Viewing Guide

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: As you view the video, listen for information that helps answer the guiding questions. Write any other questions you have.

Think about these guiding questions.

- How do dogs and cats help people?
- What are some different ways cats and dogs live with people?
- What special physical traits do cats and dogs have?
- What responsibilities do people have toward dogs and cats? Why?
- How do cats and dogs communicate?
- How would the lives of people be different without cats and dogs?

Write questions that you have while viewing.

Worksheet 2: Reading Guide

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: As you read the Student Magazine, jot down words that you would like to know more about. Write questions that you have about cats and dogs, and then write facts that you would like to remember.

Difficult/Interesting Words

Questions from My Reading

Interesting Facts

Worksheet 3: Cat Adaptations

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: List some physical traits that cats have. Then write how the trait helped them survive in their environment. Use the information on page 3 of the Student Magazine to help you.

Next, think about the environment where you live. Is it hot or cold? Is it rainy or dry? Does it have lots of trees? Imagine how each trait could evolve further to better adapt to your environment. Record your ideas in the last column.

Physical trait Cats have...	Why was this trait selected over time? How did it help cats survive?	How could this trait evolve to better adapt to your environment?

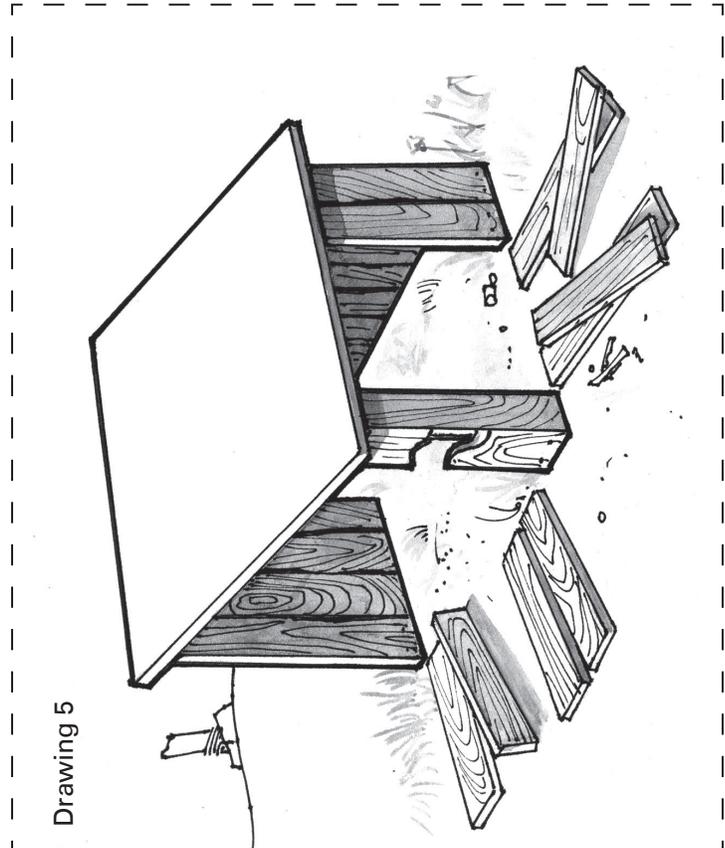
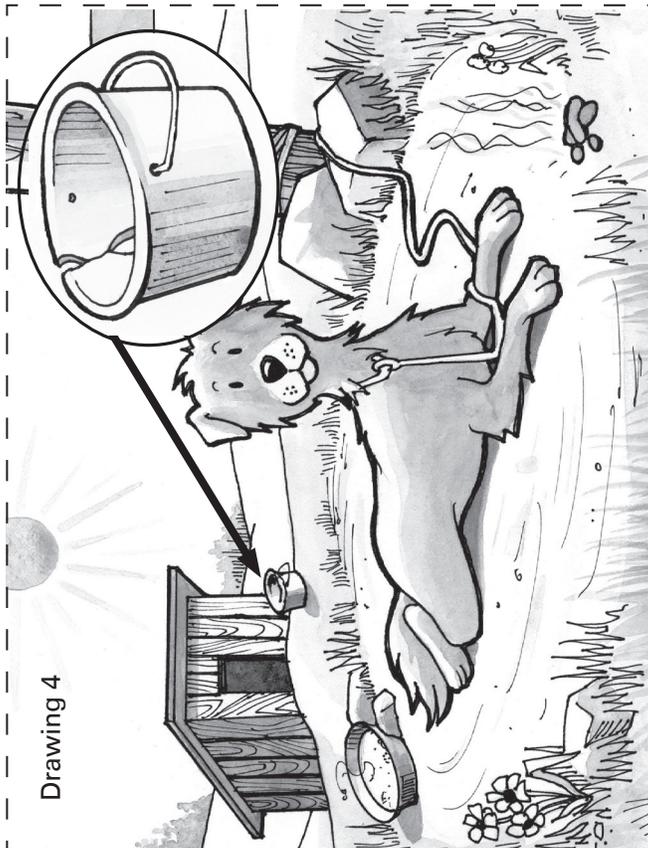
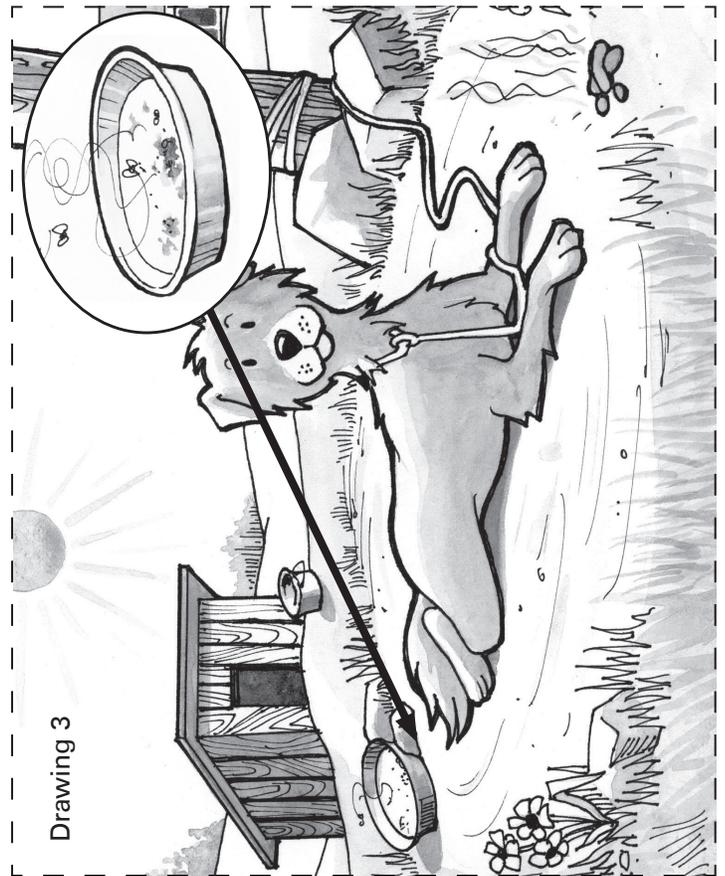
Worksheet 4: Animal Investigator



Drawing 1

Worksheet 5: Animal Investigator

Teacher Note: Be sure that students view the drawings one at a time as described in Lesson 5. This allows students to first assess the whole situation, and then look closely at details.



The New Jersey Journal



Feral cats like these can be found in every town in New Jersey.

New Jersey towns work to get feral cats under control

Many New Jersey residents are asking their local government to tackle the problem posed by growing populations of feral cats living in dozens of colonies throughout the state.

Unlike strays that have been lost or abandoned by their owners, feral cats have never been domesticated. This means that they have never lived in people's homes.

Feral cats live outdoors, usually together in colonies, and are attracted to areas where they can find dumpsters, garbage cans and other sources of food, including occasional handouts from people.

There are an estimated 50 million feral cats in America, with hundreds

of thousands living in New Jersey. Many are the offspring of cats that have been abandoned in parks or open spaces by their one time owners.

One cat can have many litters of kittens greatly increasing the size of the colony. Because feral cats are born and raised with little human contact, they are usually fearful of people and are not suitable for adoption.

Large numbers of feral cats suffer due to hunger, injuries and disease, which can be spread to other animals in the community.

Some people worry about the health and plight of feral cats and their impact on wildlife. Others

consider feral cats a nuisance or health threat and simply want them removed.

In New Jersey, 58 towns have laws against killing feral cats and more than 150 towns support some type of "Trap-Neuter-Release" (TNR) program where feral cats are captured, spayed/neutered so that they won't have any more kittens, vaccinated, and then released back to the area from which they were captured.

"TNR helps eliminate many townships' concerns because the result is less cat noise, fighting, injuries, rabies exposure and additional feral kittens," says Robyn Smith of the New Jersey Animal Welfare Society. "Residents are happier, and cats are safer and healthier," said Smith.

Instead of using TNR, some municipalities have outlawed feeding feral cats, arguing that the cats won't hang around if there's no food. People who put down food for stray and feral cats are advised to stop, and are fined if the feeding continues.

However, animal welfare advocates consider this inhumane and ineffective since the cats still reproduce, and more emerge to replace those that don't survive.

Other municipalities have the animals trapped and "relocated" to colonies in other towns.

The question remains: What should be done to solve the feral cat problem in New Jersey?

Cats, Dogs, and Us

Cats and dogs have been part of human communities around the world for thousands of years. Because they are part of our daily lives, they may seem ordinary compared to wild animals. In fact, cats and dogs are some of the most extraordinary animals on Earth. They have many fascinating characteristics, including a long and complex history with humans. Today, there are hundreds of millions of cats and dogs living on every continent except Antarctica!

Around the world, cats and dogs live alongside people in many different ways, reflecting different cultures, ways of life, and traditions of communities. Some cats and dogs live inside homes, while others live outside. Some are free to come and go, and in many communities they roam free.



Dogs and cats are both **domesticated animals**. They have lived with humans so closely and for so long that they are physically and behaviorally different from their wild ancestors. Evidence shows that cats lived with humans as long as 9,000 years ago. Dogs have an even longer relationship with people. They were the very first animals to be domesticated, and have been living alongside humans for at least 12,000 to 15,000 years. Ever since, people have been selectively breeding dogs to develop the specific behaviors, abilities, and body types that fit with the jobs and roles desired by their human communities. The result is hundreds of different dog breeds.

The Deal of Domestication

Domestication wasn't just something people did to animals. Archaeologists and biologists agree that dogs and cats chose to live with us as much as we chose to live with them. Domestication resulted in a kind of deal between people and animals—a deal in which each partner helps the other. Because of their close bonds and daily relationship with people, cats and dogs are sometimes known as **companion animals**.

Cats and dogs help humans in many different ways. Cats hunt small animals so people value them for keeping rodent populations under control on ships, in barns, and near food supplies. Dogs herd sheep, guard people's property, pull sleds, and more. To some, cats and dogs are companions providing company, play, and unconditional affection not found anywhere else.



For thousands of years, they have added to the richness and character of our communities and cultures. Today, they can teach people how to be kind and care for other beings. Research shows that people who practice kindness towards animals grow to practice kindness towards everyone.

At the same time, cats and dogs depend on humans for care and protection. This means meeting their physical and social needs, and giving them opportunities to express their natural behaviors. When the domestication deal is upheld, each partner—human and animal—benefits from the other. Healthy, happy cats and dogs help keep people and communities healthy and happy, too.



Dogs and Cats in Our Communities

Around the world, dogs and cats live with people in many different ways. Some cats and dogs live inside homes, while others live outside. Some have owners but are free to come and go as they please. In many communities, countless cats and dogs roam free.

No matter where they live or how they live, cats and dogs depend on people to care for them in some way. Even **free-roaming** dogs that find shelter in doorways and eat garbage off the street are relying indirectly on people to survive.

Here are some of the different ways we live with cats and dogs.

Roaming

A roaming cat or dog is not under a person's direct control or restricted by a fence or other barrier. Some roaming animals do not have owners or guardians. However, in many countries the majority of roaming dogs and cats have owners but are allowed to roam on public property for all or part of the day. For example, a farmer may want to maintain a small group, or colony, of roaming cats for rodent control. The term *stray* usually refers to a roaming dog or cat with no owner and no one taking care of the animal.



Roaming Sunshine

In Bali, a dog named Sunshine roams the beaches freely, which concerned local tourists who thought she was a stray. But Sunshine has a guardian, Ibu, who owns a kiosk on the beach. Although IFAW needed to help provide the dog with veterinary care, Ibu takes good care of Sunshine and provides this free-roaming dog with lots of love.

Owned

When someone says, "That's my dog," the person is saying that the dog belongs to him or her in some way. Dogs and cats like this are considered owned. Ownership varies widely and can range from loose ownership, such as occasionally feeding a dog or cat that roams freely in the streets, to caring for a dog or cat in your home. Some cats are never allowed outside, but these indoor-only cats are common in just a few parts of the world, like North America. Sometimes, more than one person takes care of a cat or dog, which is then considered "community-owned."

Feral

When dogs and cats are born and raised on their own without socializing with humans, they are called **feral**. They can be found all over the world, living everywhere from big cities to rural areas and forests. They live in places where they have access to food and shelter, which often means they will live close to people. However, feral dogs and cats are wary of people and don't want to interact with them.

Feral animals can live full, healthy lives outdoors if people help look out for them by providing the food and vet care they may need.



The Incredible Cat

Cats are amazing animals. People have celebrated cats in art, culture, and history for as long as human civilization has existed. Ancient Egyptians worshipped cats and even made them into mummies. Cats were revered in Norse mythology and prized as hunters and companions on Viking ships. Cats were a favorite of the Islamic Prophet Muhammad, a symbol of liberty in ancient Rome, and a sign of good luck in many countries, such as Japan and Russia.

For all their varied roles in human society, domestic cats haven't changed much from their wild ancestors in appearance and behavior. Like their **feline** cousins the leopards, tigers, and jaguars, domestic cats are still built for prowling their **territory** and solitary hunting. This is partly because people have not changed cats through breeding as much as they have dogs. In spite of the similarities with their wild cat cousins, domestic cats, just like dogs, rely on people to care for them.



Spine

A cat's spine is long and flexible, perfect for leaping and pouncing. It also allows a cat to curl into a circle to sleep.

Ears

Sensitive ears can move around to detect the direction of sounds. A cat's hearing is four times as sensitive as a person's. They can detect the faintest high-pitched squeaks of a mouse or the rustle of movement.

Eyes

Cats can hunt at dusk or at night, as well as during the day. A special reflective layer helps cats see in the dark. It also makes their eyes appear to "glow" when a light shines on them.

Tail

A cat's tail has muscles all the way down its length, letting it bend from base to tip. Cats use their tails to balance on narrow branches, ledges, and doors. They also use tails to communicate.

Fur

A cat's fur can be long or short, curly or sleek, and a range of colors.

Legs

Cats can run faster than humans, and they are champion jumpers. They can leap both high and long, covering six times their own body length. That's like a human jumping the length of a bus!

Claws

Cats have hooked claws that grip tight, which helps them climb trees, poles, fences, and even some walls. When not in use, they partially retract inside the cat's paws. This keeps the claws from wearing down and growing dull on the ground.

Whiskers

Whiskers sense movement, which helps cats "see" in the dark. They also help cats judge the width of narrow spaces. Cats even have short whiskers on the backs of their legs.

Tongue

A cat's tongue is scratchy because it's lined with tiny hooks—called papillae—that help them clean themselves and hold on to prey.



Paws

Cats have soft, silent paw pads that help them sneak up on their prey.





Cats spend a lot of time grooming their entire bodies by licking their fur—and that of their friends.

Cat Behavior

A cat's behavior is a lot like a cat's body: it's descended from their wild ancestors.

Usually when you see a house cat, she will be taking a catnap or lying around quietly. Well-fed and sheltered cats can rest up to twenty hours a day. This gives them the energy for the fast bursts of movement that were historically required for hunting.

Free-roaming cats that are not cared for directly by humans don't have the luxury of all that sleeping. They may spend most of their time trying to find food and shelter, raise kittens (if they are not **spayed**), and find mates (if they are not **neutered**).

Sometimes, you won't see a cat at all. Cats enjoy having a safe place to hide. They often like to be up high, where they can observe everything around them. This is also part of the ancient hunting lifestyle. A predator that stays hidden is more likely to catch prey.

Cats spend a lot of time **grooming** their entire bodies by licking their fur. This helps regulate their body temperature and hide their scent. They will lick their paws and rub them on the parts they cannot reach, such as their faces. They almost always wash after a meal to keep the smell of food off their bodies. Cats are also very particular about burying their waste, which is another way to hide their scent. So it's natural that cats will use a litter box if they cannot go outside where there is soft ground.

One of the most distinctive cat behaviors is purring, which is a type of vocalization that is common to most wild cat species, such as lions and tigers. However, not all purrs sound the same. In domestic cats, purring is most noticeable when a mother is nursing her kittens or when humans provide social contact such as petting, stroking, or feeding. But purring is not just an expression of pleasure or a means of communication with their young. Cats also purr when they are in



stressful situations, such as during a visit to the **veterinarian** or when recovering from an injury. Some scientists suggest this is because cats purr in a regular pattern and sound frequency that promotes healthy bones and healing.

Many well-known cat traits may come from their desert ancestors. Cats love sunshine and warmth, and they often hate getting wet. Their kidneys help conserve water by concentrating their urine, which also makes it smell extra strong.

Cats naturally keep a territory. They mark their boundaries by clawing and scent-marking, or spraying urine.

Cats have the reputation for being loners, but some cats enjoy sharing their territory with other animals. They will spend time with and show affection toward familiar cats, dogs, and humans. Cats show affection by rubbing and head-bumping, rolling on their backs, grooming one another, and play wrestling. Some signs of affection are less obvious. One sign humans may miss is a long, slow blink that means “I like you!” Next time you get in a staring contest with a cat, slowly and gently close your eyes—she might say “I like you” back!



A woman receives an affectionate greeting from a cat rescued by the IFAW-supported LuckyCats shelter in Beijing, China. IFAW is a leading organization in animal rescue and public education in China, where cat and dog ownership has only recently become widespread. IFAW is also lobbying for national laws to protect animals from mistreatment and cruelty.

A cat’s mysterious nature has led to some unusual myths. But are they true?



MYTH

REALITY

Cats have nine lives.	Cats are tough, and can survive without food or water in emergencies. They also hide when stressed, so it might seem like a cat disappears and then “comes back to life.” But cats have just one life, so take good care of them!
Cats always land on their feet.	Cats are good jumpers with great balance. They can often twist in the air to land upright. This is called the “righting reflex.” But cats can also be injured or killed in high falls.
Cats are associated with witches.	Cats are regular animals; they have no magic powers.
Black cats are evil or bad luck.	There is no truth to this at all! Like all cats, black cats are wonderful workers or companions.



The Outstanding Dog

Humans have bred dogs to come in an amazing variety of shapes and sizes, from small and dainty to midsize and stocky to towering and elegant. But all these types of dogs came from one ancestor—the wolf. In fact, dogs and wolves are so closely related that scientists consider them the same species. No matter what they look like on the outside, dogs have many of the same traits as their wild ancestors.

How did wary wild wolves become people-loving dogs? Wolf domestication was a two-way deal. In some places, ancient wolves realized that human

campfires often meant food was nearby, so some wolves made their homes near humans.

Wolves and humans are both team hunters, and they both realized that working together made them more effective. Those wolves that were less afraid of humans, stayed near human camps and passed on this quality to their pups. Over many generations, these animals became tamer, eventually becoming dogs.

Dogs are great communicators. They “talk” through their body language, the sounds they make, their sense of smell, and their

Fur

As with many mammals, fur keeps dogs warm if they live in cold areas, and helps keep them cool and protect them from the sun in hot areas. Dogs shed fur when the seasons change from cold to hot.

Body

Domesticated dogs have the largest range of body types and sizes of any mammal, ranging from about 1 pound (0.5 kg) to about 220 pounds (100 kg) in weight.

Tail

Dogs use their tails for communication and balance. How a dog holds and moves his tail tells other dogs, and you, a lot about how he is feeling.

Head

Some features of dog breeds, such as the shape of the skull, can be so different from one another that it may look like they come from completely different mammal species. For example, the skull of a collie is as different from the skull of a Pekingese as a cat skull is from a walrus skull.

Ears

Dogs have excellent hearing and can hear higher sounds than humans can hear, which helps them locate where a sound is coming from. Dog ears come in many different shapes and sizes; some stand up and some are folded.

Nose

Dogs are famous for their sense of smell. They can smell 10,000 times better than humans and can tell individuals apart just by their scent. Dogs find food, friends, and mates using their sense of smell.

Mouth

Dogs pant when they are hot or excited. Because they don't have sweat glands, they can't sweat through their skin like we do to cool off. Dogs do sweat through their paw pads, but circulating air through their bodies by panting is the main way that dogs cool down.

Legs

Dogs were originally built to go the distance, and they could walk or jog for many miles at a time. Breeding has given many dogs shorter legs to suit other purposes such as burrowing into a den to catch prey.



actions. When a dog meets a new dog or person, she uses her sense of smell first. The dog sniffs the new arrival, whether human or animal, to get as much information as possible. When dogs meet, sniffing each other's rear end is like a human handshake. It's how they greet and get to know each other.

Communicating with a dog is a two-way street. Dogs are reading your body language and tone of voice all the time. You need to watch and listen to them too. A dog that is feeling confident may come right up to you, hold her head and ears high, and look you in the eye. A nervous dog might hold his head down, avoid eye contact, and look away. A dog that is feeling playful may bow down and stretch out her front legs or run and leap with joy.

Dogs have many different personalities and behaviors. No dog acts the same way all the time in all circumstances. How they behave can depend on their breed; their age; who they are interacting with (familiar dog, new person); where they are (at home, in a cage, in an open field); or how they're feeling (sick, hurt). It can also depend on their environment. A dog may feel comfortable if you happen to meet her in a familiar area, but the same dog may get upset if you get close to her pups or favorite bone.

Pay close attention to what a dog is trying to tell you with his body language. If you don't understand when a dog tries to tell you he is scared, hurting, or nervous, he may become **aggressive** or even bite. That doesn't mean he is a bad or mean dog. The dog is behaving that way because he's frightened or defending his territory. Dogs usually give signs that they feel threatened long before they bite. Their ears go back, their hair stands on end, and they bare their teeth and growl. Basically, this animal



Work Wanted

Wolves were domesticated in more than one time and place. One location of domestication was likely the Arctic. Today in some remote Canadian communities, dogs still have the thick fur that allows them to work and to thrive in such a harsh environment. But in other northern communities, dogs are less of a working partner today than they were in the past. Without a job, they have lost much of their value. With little or no access to animal medical services or guidance on dog care for the community, dogs often suffer as a result. IFAW works with these communities to strengthen the human end of the "deal" for all dogs so that humans and dogs can live in harmony.

is telling you that you are making him uncomfortable, so you should leave him alone.

Like cats, dogs establish their territory by marking with urine and feces. They always make sure to stop and sniff the marks of other dogs to see who's in the neighborhood. They can tell the size, age, and gender of another dog just by smell. Dogs are

always interested in who is coming in and out of their territory. Some dogs will feel more protective of this space than others because they are territorial or insecure. They will guard their home territory and protect their "pack" by barking at people or other dogs they believe to be intruders. A protective mother will let you know when she is not comfortable with you being near her pups.



A man brings all his dogs to IFAW's Mdzananda animal clinic. This clinic provides the only daily primary veterinary health care service to more than 1 million people who live on the Cape Flats outside Cape Town, South Africa.

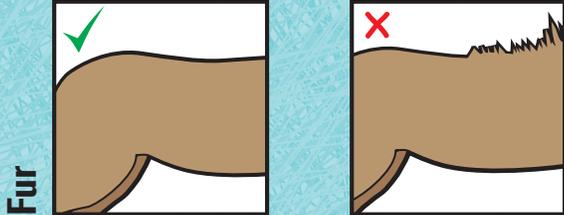
What Are You Saying?

You can tell what a dog is trying to communicate by its body language. Look at the dog's tail, fur, ears, mouth, eyes, and posture.

Just chilling.



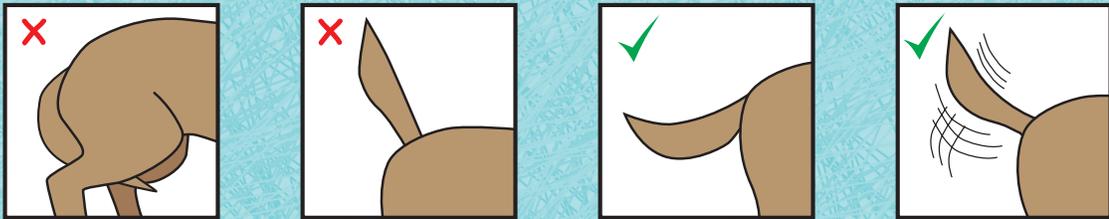
✓ Safe to approach
 ✗ Not safe to approach



Nice to meet you!



Tails



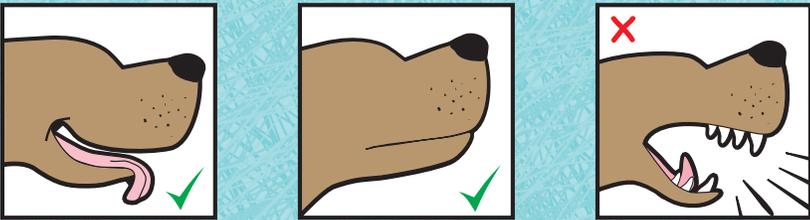
Ears & Eyes



Back off!



Mouth



Let's play!



I'm nervous.



Taking Care of Cats and Dogs

Since the earliest days of domestication, cats and dogs have helped humans in many ways. Herding dogs round up livestock. Sled dogs haul enormous amounts of weight across vast and frozen lands. Watchdogs and guard dogs keep intruders out of our homes and businesses.

Cats first began living with people to hunt unwanted rodents and snakes that fed on crops and stored food. Some cats still do this job. In cities, cats may hunt rats, mice, and cockroaches.

In some places, dogs help people with disabilities lead independent lives. Guide dogs lead people who are blind. Medical alert dogs sense when people with epilepsy or other disorders are in medical danger and help them get to a safe place. Therapy dogs and cats work in hospitals and nursing homes, comforting sick people. The companionship of an animal reduces stress, lowers blood pressure, relieves depression, and encourages people to exercise.

Dogs sometimes work with people in dangerous situations. Police dogs help officers capture suspects, find missing people, and sniff out drugs, explosives, and other illegal products, including smuggled wildlife. Dogs have joined the military from ancient civilizations to the present day, serving as sentries, scouts, messengers, and in many other roles. Search-and-rescue dogs help find victims in places ravaged by

natural disasters. These brave working dogs have another benefit that doesn't require training. They provide comfort for the stressed humans they work with. Even when animals don't live closely with humans, they still enrich our communities. Dogs and cats help people learn compassion and caring. They teach us how to **empathize** with a being who is different from us. They add variety to every culture they touch.

Cats and dogs help make people and communities healthier and happier. How do we make animals healthy and happy, too? What should we provide to hold up our end of the deal?



Moses became an orphan as a young boy in South Africa. IFAW workers met Moses when he was living alone in a dump, searching for food and shelter every day. Even though he was hungry and cold, he took care of 20 or more dogs at the dump. They protected him and were his friends. IFAW gave the dogs the medical care they needed. IFAW provided Moses with food, clothing, medical care, and school tuition. Moses shows us that even in terrible circumstances, dogs and people can help each other.



A search dog helps rescuers look for survivors in the Jinhua Township of Sichuan Province, China, after a devastating earthquake in 2008. Following the quake, IFAW rescue teams provided six tons of animal food and supplies for animals and their owners.

Caring for Cats & Dogs

Like people, cats and dogs need water, food, shelter, exercise, companionship, and medical care. All cats and dogs depend on people to provide for these physical needs:

Water

Cats and dogs need clean water every day no matter where they live or whether the temperature is hot or cold.

Food

Animals don't just need enough food—they need the right kind. Cats are carnivores and need high-protein foods made of meat. Dogs are omnivores that eat both plants and animals. In many communities around the world, cats and dogs eat the same diet as their owners.

Shelter

All dogs and cats need a safe haven where they can rest, hide, and be protected from the weather and predators. In hot areas, the shelter should be in the shade. Free-roaming dogs and cats may find shelter in abandoned buildings, in drains or culverts, and even in dens on the outskirts of town.



Dogs and cats need a good dose of exercise and playtime every day.

Exercise

Dogs need exercise, such as walking, running, and playing, every day. Cats also need exercise, which usually takes the form of hunting play.

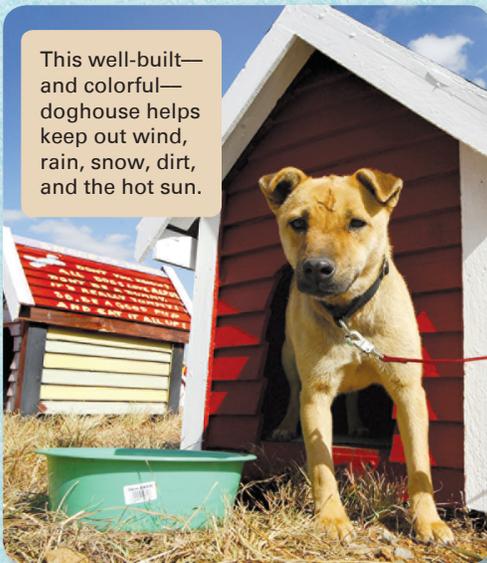
Veterinary Care

What do you do when you feel sick? You probably tell an adult who can help you. Animals can't speak, and many try to hide feelings of sickness and pain. If an animal is sick, it may need to see a veterinarian for medical care. Even when an animal is healthy, vets provide checkups and **vaccinations** that prevent illnesses, such as rabies. Vaccinations prevent diseases from spreading to other animals and even to people in the community.

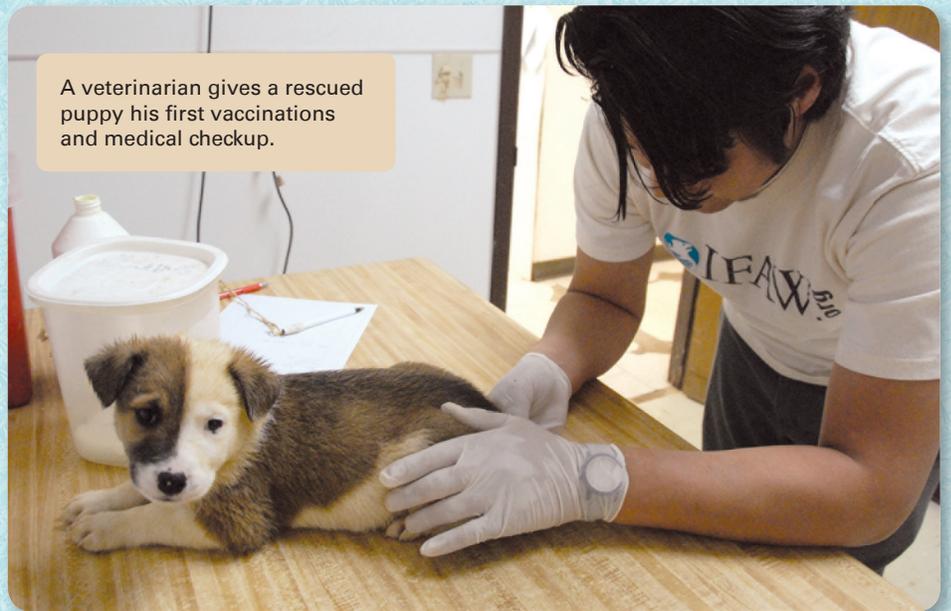
Express Natural Behavior

If you had plenty of food, water, shelter, and medical care, but were not free to spend time with friends or get outside to play, you would not be happy. The same is true for animals. Cats and dogs need to express their natural behavior.

Dogs need to bond with their "team" to be happy. Dogs need time with other dogs to socialize, play, and learn acceptable behaviors. Some dogs seek out human affection and attention. They need time with us to understand what we want and for us to understand what they are communicating.



This well-built—and colorful—doghouse helps keep out wind, rain, snow, dirt, and the hot sun.



A veterinarian gives a rescued puppy his first vaccinations and medical checkup.

Cats bond with people in many different ways. Some cats will snuggle in your lap. Others might enjoy being near you, but prefer not to be touched. Others may hide any time a human comes close. For social cats, bonding with people is very important. But even if a cat or dog doesn't want the same kind of attention that we want, they still depend on us.

Sometimes people don't like certain cat and dog behaviors—but that doesn't mean the cats and dogs aren't behaving normally. When cats scratch or scent-mark furniture, they are sharpening their claws and marking their territory. Dogs naturally bark, dig, jump up, and chase because they are excited by the things they hear and see. They may chase cars if they are outside or chew furniture if they are bored or lonely inside.

Many of these problems can be solved by providing a safe way for the animal to meet his needs, which may mean changing the way that people behave instead of changing the cat or the dog. This may mean providing cats with a scratching post or giving a dog more exercise and attention, space to dig, and opportunities to play with other dogs.

Sometimes, people take extreme measures to prevent what they think of as "bad" behavior. Cats get de-clawed, which cuts off part of their paws up to the first knuckle. De-clawed cats have trouble climbing, hunting, and defending themselves. Some dogs are "de-barked." Their vocal cords are surgically cut. De-barking can leave scar tissue that causes breathing problems and inhibits a dog's ability to communicate naturally and effectively. Because these surgeries hurt the animals, it's best to find other ways to deal with the behaviors people dislike.



Community Action in Bali

Many places don't have vets. People can't get help when their animal is sick. Others can't afford a vet or don't have a way to get their animal to a vet. On the island of Bali in Indonesia, many people have trouble accessing medical care for their animals and are not even aware that it is important to provide this care. It is tough for them to prevent unwanted litters.

IFAW has partnered with the Bali Animal Welfare Organization to educate and engage *banjars* (a community unit in Bali, similar to a neighborhood) in developing tailored community action plans to solve dog and cat health, safety, and **welfare** problems. The project also provides essential veterinary services. IFAW's support is helping hundreds of dogs every year transform from parasite-riddled, hungry, and hairless creatures to healthy, happy animals with owners who have a better understanding of how to meet their needs.



A "Soup Kitchen" for Pets

Hungry animals are everywhere. In Germany, some people have trouble affording food for their dogs and cats. That's why IFAW partnered with Tiertafel, a "soup kitchen" for pets.

Holding Up Our End of the Deal

Animals provide humans with friendship, work, and loyalty; humans provide animals with physical care and a chance to express their natural behavior, including getting the attention they need. Those are the two sides of the “deal” of domestication. Unfortunately, we humans don’t always meet our end of the deal.

Some people don’t understand what animals need and may cause them to suffer without realizing it. They may abandon pets in the wild, thinking they have “set them free.” They may try to care for too many pets, overcrowding them in unsuitable living quarters and putting them at risk of disease and **neglect**. Some people may think of animals as objects that do not need much attention beyond food and water.

Other people don’t have access to adequate care. They may not be able to afford food for a dog or cat. They may live too far from a vet to get treatment for a sick animal. In disadvantaged communities, animals can suffer from poverty just like people.

A few people are intentionally cruel. They may deliberately threaten or physically harm animals. Some people breed animals in filthy, overcrowded conditions and sell the puppies or kittens for money. They force dogs to brutally fight each other for gambling. They breed and keep greyhounds solely to race them and bet on the outcome. Some people even raise cats and dogs to kill them for food or fur.

When people don’t hold up their end of the deal, the entire community suffers. Neglected animals may be fearful, noisy, or hungry. They can become a health and safety concern or nuisance—real or perceived—as they struggle to survive. Animals whose medical needs aren’t met can spread disease. The animal population grows very quickly, outpacing the community’s ability to care for them.



Hurting Animals Hurts Us, Too

How can people be cruel to animals? People harm other beings when they don’t feel empathy for them, or understand how they feel. They may lash out in anger or frustration without stopping to consider what they are doing. These people may have been victims of **cruelty** themselves. People who live with cruelty and violence become desensitized to the pain; it gets harder and harder for them to feel empathy. Violence toward animals can be the first step to violence toward other people.



When people are having problems with the dogs or cats in their community they often believe there are too many—an “overpopulation” of animals. But how many dogs and cats are too many? Every community is different. Ten roaming dogs that get into garbage may be “too many” dogs in one community, but another community may have 30 roaming dogs that don’t get into garbage. These dogs may not be considered a problem at all. And in some places, roaming dogs may be appreciated for keeping other unwanted animals away.

“Too many” animals really means that dogs and cats are doing things that people don’t want or like. People may be concerned about the spread of disease, bites, or behaviors such as barking, getting into garbage, or peeing and pooping in public places. People may also feel concerned about animals that are clearly suffering from lack of adequate care.



Friendly street dogs mingle in Playa del Carmen, Mexico, where IFAW is educating the community about responsible pet ownership.

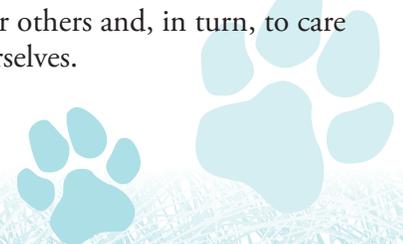
When dogs or cats are unwanted or causing problems for a community, people may think the answer is to simply reduce the number of animals. But the problem is not “too many” animals; it’s how people feel about what the animals are doing. Usually, the best response is to change how people care for the animals.

For example, some communities fear that free-roaming dogs will spread rabies. People may think they have to

kill the dogs to prevent the disease. But killing the dogs will not fix the problem, especially if the dogs that remain do not get proper care. Instead the dogs can be vaccinated against the disease.

If a community truly has more animals than people who can care for them, spaying and neutering can be a helpful approach. However, spaying and neutering won’t reduce the number of animals overnight, and it will not change all unwanted behaviors. In addition to spaying and neutering, the community must take other steps to address the problem, such as providing vaccinations or educating people about how to care for the animals.

When we made the deal of domestication, cats and dogs learned to depend on us and became an important part of our lives. That is why we have to take our side of the deal seriously and take care of them. When humans and animals live together, we are part of a single, interdependent community that enriches everyone’s lives. When we learn to care for animals, we learn to care for others and, in turn, to care for ourselves.



In the United States, IFAW recently helped rescue 176 dogs, including 10 puppies, from a puppy mill in Arkansas. A puppy mill, sometimes known as a puppy farm, is a large-scale dog breeding business where making money is more important than the health and well-being of the animals.

Glossary

aggressive: ready to attack

companion animals: pet animals that have been socialized and are able to form close bonds with humans

cruelty: deliberate infliction of pain or suffering

domesticated animals: animals that have been changed physically and mentally, especially by generations of breeding, to be dependent on and live closely with humans

empathize: to understand and experience the feelings of others

feline: relating to cats

feral: a domesticated animal that survives in a wild state and is often too poorly socialized and fearful of humans to be handled or placed in a home

free-roaming: not under a person's direct control or restricted by a physical barrier

grooming: cleaning and neatening

neglect: to pay little or no attention to; to disregard; or to fail to care for properly

neutered: had a surgical procedure that prevents male animals from breeding

spayed: had a surgical procedure that prevents female animals from breeding

territory: the area an animal considers its home

vaccinations: medications that prevent disease

veterinarian (vet): a medical doctor for animals

welfare: the state of physical and mental well-being