



Where help becomes hope.

I Want to Pet that Dog!

Suggested Grade Levels: K-3

Subject: Language Arts

Character: Respect – Safety with Pets

Materials and technology to be used:

- “How to Safely Greet a Dog” illustration template - **x1 per student**
- Coloring utensils – **x enough for each student**
- Realistic, stuffed dog with collar and leash (or students may pretend to be the dog) – **x1 for whole group or multiple dogs if utilizing small groups**
- Animals Have Feelings Too by Karen Lee Stevens – **x1**

Objective(s):

To aid students in understanding how to be safe around animals and to respect their feelings (primary focus on dogs and their feelings).

Anticipatory Set/Hook:

Have students gather on the floor or in an area with excess space. Ask: “Do animals have some of the same feelings that people do? Have you ever seen a dog or cat feeling happy, sad, scared, or excited?” Give a personal teacher example. “Think of some times when you felt these feelings also.” Have students discuss with a partner. Do not have students share with the whole group currently.

Lesson Beginning:

1. Have a discussion with the students about the following questions:

-What if you see a dog or cat in your neighborhood without a person – is it okay to pet it?
Explain that you should never go near an animal that is running loose.

-What could happen? *The animal could be lost or homeless and may bite because it is scared or hurt. Some dogs have had negative experiences with children before and now they may be afraid of kids.*

-Is there a way to help this animal without going near it? *Yes! Ask an adult to try to help this animal and/or call the Nebraska Humane Society.*

Middle of Lesson:

1. Ask students to discuss the following questions with a neighbor, and then call on two students to share with the whole group:

-“What if you see a stranger walking a dog – is it okay to pet it?” - *If this person is a stranger, then it is not safe to approach them. Ask a parent or trusted adult if it is okay to talk to this person.*

-“What if you see a person that you know walking a dog – is it okay to pet it?” - *If you know the person, always ask your parent or trusted adult first, but it may be okay to approach them. If so, follow certain steps to safely meet and greet the dog:*

Ask your adult ...Ask the owner...Ask the dog.... Pet in an appropriate place

2. Invite a Humane Educator to your classroom to elaborate on these four steps for safely meeting and greeting dogs. The lesson will include a 30 min to an hour interactive presentation. Contact the **Nebraska Humane Society’s Education Department** at **402.444.7800 ext 2214** for more information or to schedule a program.
3. After your presentation from NHS, (if needed) have students continue to practice safely meeting and greeting a realistic stuffed dog(s) either in your classroom or outside (students can also act out the dog).
 - Increase student engagement by: utilizing small group practice, randomly drawing select student names from a dog bed or treat jar, all students who are wearing orange get to demonstrate the steps, etc..

End of Lesson:

1. Have students illustrate the four steps to safely meeting and greeting dogs by using the “How to Safely Greet a Dog” illustration template that is included.

Closure:

Remind students about the importance of respecting animals’ feelings: “How should you act around any animal?” Calm and quiet. Loud voices and fast movements may scare any animal, humans are very scary. Pet any animal very gently and speak to it softly. Ask students to think about the question that was asked at the very beginning of the lesson, “Do animals have some of the same feelings that people have?” Have any answers changed now that students are more aware of the importance of following certain steps to safely meet a dog? Why or why not?

Extension:

Read "Animals Have Feelings Too" by Karen Lee Stevens.

How to Safely Greet a Dog.....

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4

BEFORE completing the steps above, ask yourself these questions. If you answer “no” to any of them, DO NOT PET - WALK AWAY.

- Am I with an adult?
- Is the dog with an adult owner?
- Does the dog have a leash and collar (or harness) on?
- Am I in a safe place?



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