

## What is a Pet?

**Suggested Grade Levels:** K-3

**Subject:** Language Arts/Science

**Character:** Responsibility

**Materials and technology to be used:**

- Stuffed dog, cat, and rabbit (or you may use photos of these animals instead) – **x1 of each**
- Variety of animal books for research – **x enough for each student**
- Tablets or other internet access – **x enough for each student**
- Small poster boards – **x1 per small group**
- “Pet Posters Photos and Labels” – **x2**
- Markers - **x enough for each student**
- Writing utensils - **x enough for each student**
- Notebook paper - **x enough for each student**

**Objective(s):**

Students will understand what a pet is and what pets need from people.

**Anticipatory Set/Hook:**

Have students sit in a circle on the floor. In the middle of the circle place a realistic looking stuffed dog, cat, and rabbit. Point to the stuffed animals and ask students, “What are those?” This will prompt a sort of guessing game. Students may give a variety of answers such as: “toys,” “animals,” “stuffed animals,” “a dog,” etc. Wait until you hear the guess of “pets,” and high-five that student! Guide students to this answer if needed. Share with students that today they will be learning about what a pet is, and what a pet needs from humans. Ask students to give a thumbs up if they have pets at home.

**Lesson Beginning:**

1. Begin the lesson with a discussion. Ask the students the questions below:
2. “What is a pet?” Discuss. Make a list of different kinds of pets on the board. Ask students why we call all these animals “pets.” Gather further definitions from a few different students. *Pets are domesticated animals that live in our homes. They need humans to help take care of them and to love them.*
3. “How is a pet different from a wild animal?” Have students turn and talk with a partner. Call on four students to share their ideas with the whole group.

4. "Why do pets need people to take care of them? What do pets need from people?" *Pets are domesticated animals that live in captivity (our homes). They are not able to get food or water for themselves and so they rely on our care to live. They need food, water, shelter, exercise, love, medical care, proper identification (ID tags/microchip for dogs and cats), etc.*
5. Ask the students that have pets to describe how they care for their pets and what those pets are.
6. "Can a pet be your friend?" Have students turn and talk with a partner, and then ask for examples. "Can a pet be a part of your family?" Turn and talk. *Absolutely! They **should** be!*
7. "What can happen if we do not take good care of our pets?" Call on select students to share their serious thoughts with the whole group. *You may wish to add that sometimes **Animal Control Officers at NHS** must take animals away from their owners/homes if the owners are being mean to the animals and/or are not taking proper care of them. We **never** want to take an animal away from its home, but sometimes we must if it is what is best/safest for the animal.*

#### Middle of Lesson:

1. Create "Pet Posters":
  - Split students up into 6 different "pet" groups – **Dogs, Cats, Critters, Birds, Reptiles/Amphibian/Fish, and Farm Animals**
  - Place the corresponding pet photos from the "Pet Posters Photos and Labels" around the room in different locations and ask students to move to their assigned "pet" group.
2. Provide each group with a small poster board that contains their group's pet photo and label at the top (or have the groups cut these out and glue it themselves). There should be plenty of blank space underneath the photo and label for students to make a list. You may wish to add lines to the poster boards to guide younger students handwriting.
3. Using books, tablets, and/or computers have students research their category of pets and come up with a list of things that each pet needs to live a happy and healthy life.
  - "**PebbleGo**" is a great, kid-friendly research app for tablets.
  - You may wish to have stacks of corresponding animal books at each group's meeting location ahead of time.
  - You may also wish to assign one student in each group as the "recorder" who will write down the facts, OR, have each student be responsible for writing or drawing a certain number of facts, each.
4. If there is extra time, encourage students to color and decorate their poster.

5. Have each group share their poster with the class and teach their classmates about the general needs of their category of pets.

**End of Lesson:**

1. Ask students: "What kinds of things do you like about these pets?" Share with a neighbor.
2. Write the following questions on the board. Ask students to answer these questions in a journal or notebook, to be turned in: "Should everyone have a pet? Why or why not?" "Even if you do not have a pet, should you still be nice to animals?" Younger students may wish to answer verbally.

**Closure:**

1. Provide students with 1 minute to reflect on what they learned from this lesson. Ask for two volunteers to share their take-aways with the class.
2. Have students bring in photos of their pets to share with the class the following day (not required). Send an email to parents to notify them. If students do not have their own pet(s) at home, they may bring in a photo of their *dream pet* that they wish to own in the future. Allow time in school for students to print photos, if needed. Make sure to stress that if students do not wish to own pets, that is completely okay, too.

# **Pet Posters**

**Photos and Labels**



NEBRASKA  
HUMANE  
SOCIETY

**Where help becomes hope.**

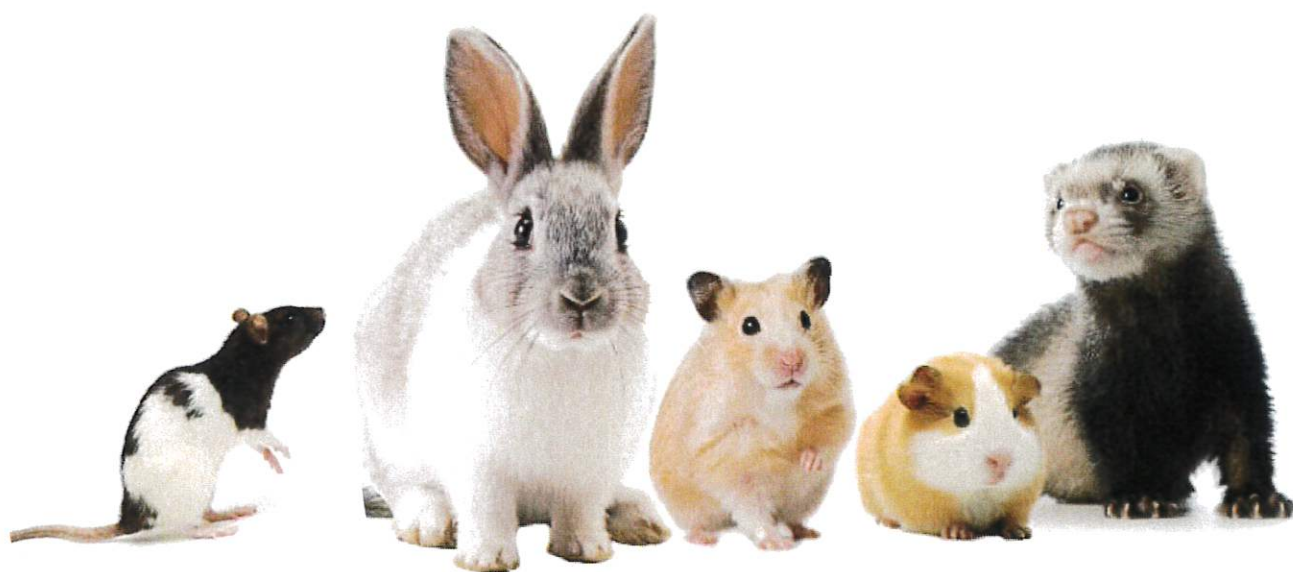




**Dogs**



**Cats**

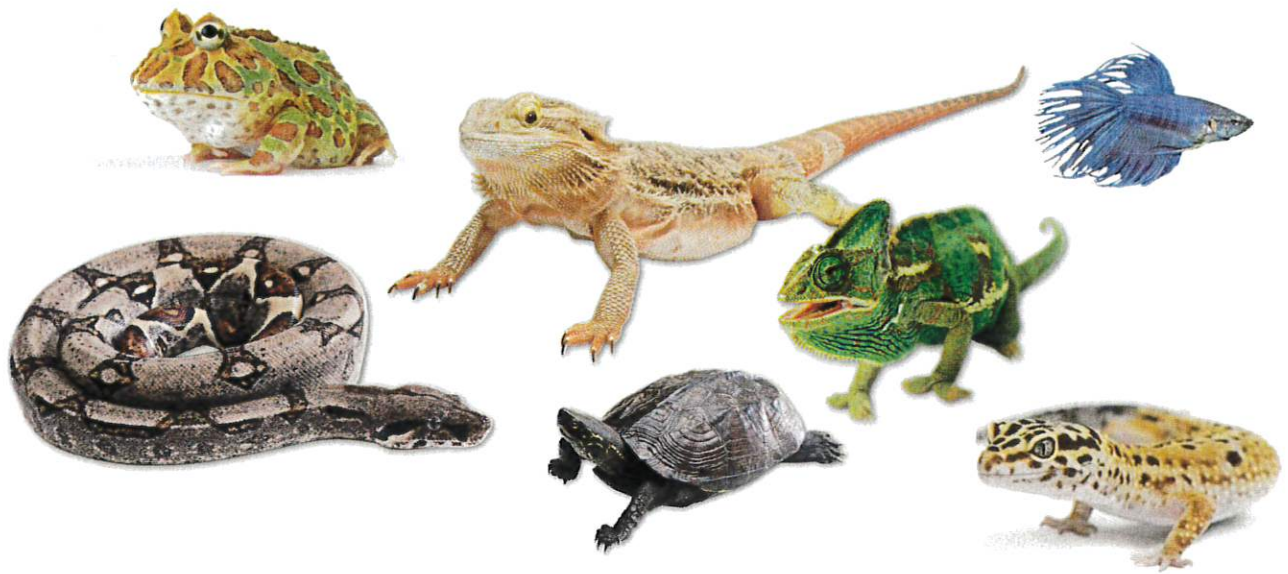


# Critters



**Birds**





# **Reptiles, Amphibians and Fish**



# Farm Animals