

## TEACHERS ACTIVITIES



### Theme:

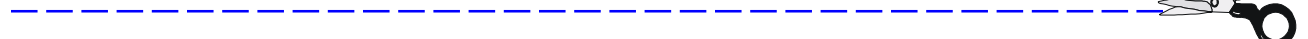
Pet ownership requires commitment and responsibility, but the reward is a loyal companion that enriches one's life.

### Topics For Discussion:

Discuss the format of the book as a collection of stories that are a part of longer works. If possible, have copies of the original books available for students to read.



Ask students why they think people want to have pets. In what ways do pets affect the lives of their owners?



Anyone who has owned a pet likely has many stories to tell. Set aside a few minutes every day—first thing in the morning or just before going home—and invite students to share stories about their pets. They may also wish to bring pictures to show. Encourage students to ask questions of the speaker. For students who do not have pets, invite them to tell about a “wish pet” and why they would choose that pet. Those individuals might have pictures they have drawn or magazine pictures to show.

### Curriculum Extension Activities:

Organize students into small cooperative groups to debate the question, “What is the best pet?” Assign a common pet to each group (e.g., cat, dog, bird, turtle, rabbit, hamster/gerbil/guinea pig, fish). Have the students prepare a persuasive “argument” in support of their group’s animal. They might illustrate their points in a variety of ways, using a poster, a chart, a survey, testimonials, a radio or TV “broadcast,” or other creative ideas they may have.

Display a "Mystery Pet" of the day. Have each student write three clues that describe a pet and scramble the letters in the clues. For example, 1. evlsi ni rwtæ, 2. msiws, 3. ahs nfsi. Have them write the clues on one half of a sheet of paper folded like a greeting card, so that they can lift the flap to reveal what's inside. On the inside, have them draw their mystery pet. (The example is "fish.") Select one of the mystery pets to post each day on the board. Give students time to figure out the clues without looking at the picture. Allow the person who created the mystery pet to lead the discussion in figuring it out.



Invite students to become architects and create the perfect home for a pet (e.g., a spectacular doghouse, the ideal bird cage, a magnificent aquarium, etc.). Allow them to choose the pet and have them design a house that their particular pet would love! Encourage them to think about the types of luxuries their pet would enjoy and how they would decorate the home. Have students draw both an outside view and inside "floor plan" of the house. Display their creations on a bulletin board.



People usually do the choosing when it comes to pets instead of the other way around. Ask the students to take the viewpoint of a dog or cat and write an advertisement for the perfect owner. Have them include in their ad a list of characteristics that the ideal owner and a new home should have.



Plan a field trip to the local Humane Society or have someone who works there visit the classroom and talk with the students about pet adoption, pet care, and safety around animals. Following the visit, the class might organize a drive for donations of items that the Humane Society needs.



Gather a collection of pet stories and display them in the classroom. (To find additional pet-related books look up the Teacher's Guide "Supplementary Booklists" for the "Related **Reading Rainbow** Programs" listed below.) Read several aloud to the class and encourage students to read as many as possible independently. As a class, decide which pet characters to honor with the "Golden Paw Award" for outstanding achievement in various categories. Categories might include the following: "Funniest Pet," "Best Hero," "Most Helpful Pet," "Best All-Around Pet" (this one might be their favorite pet character), "Pet We Would Most Like to Own," or others that would be consistent with pet characters in the books they have read. Prepare a paper ballot that lists all the categories and have students write in the name of the

pet character to which they would award the "Golden Paw" in each category. Tabulate the results. (Have a hand count in case of a tie.) Attach a "Golden Paw" to a book featuring each of the winners and ask the media specialist to display them in the school library. (Make Golden Paws by enlarging the outline on this page and duplicating it on gold paper or on bright yellow paper edged in gold glitter.)



Have students conduct a mini-survey of favorite pets. Include other classrooms and adult school personnel in the survey. Graph the data and display it where everyone can see the results. As part of the survey, have students ask WHY people responded as they did. Cut out some large shapes to represent different pets (e.g., a bone, a cat, a bird, a fish, etc.) and post them on the wall. Record the reasons people give for wanting pets on the shapes. (Use an abbreviated form for recording, such as "friendship," "fun to play with," "teach it tricks," "easy to care for," and the like.)

### Supplemental Books:

TEN TRUE ANIMAL STORIES  
by Jeanne Betancourt (Scholastic)

ROSIE: A VISITING DOG'S STORY  
by Stephanie Calmenson, photos by Justin Sutcliffe (Clarion)

THE BRAVEST CAT!: THE TRUE STORY OF SCARLETT  
by Laura Driscoll, illus. by DyAnne DiSalvo-Ryan (Grosset Dunlap)

DR. WHITE  
by Jane Goodall, illus. by Julie Litty (North-South)

LEO THE MAGNIFICAT  
by Ann M. Martin, illus. by Emily Arnold McCully (Scholastic)

EDWARD GETS A PET  
by Michaela Morgan, illus. by Sue Porter (Dutton)

OFFICER BUCKLE AND GLORIA  
by Peggy Rathmann (Putnam)

POLE DOG  
by Tres Seymour, illus. by David Soman (Orchard)

A DOG'S GOTTA DO WHAT A DOG'S GOTTA DO  
by Marilyn Singer (Henry Holt)

THE BRAVEST DOG EVER: THE TRUE STORY OF BALTO  
by Natalie Standiford, illus. by Donald Cook (Random House)

UNKNOWN  
by Colin Thompson, illus. by Anna Pignataro (Walker)

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