Drop Everything Else, Read!

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People & Animals: A Humane Education Curriculum Guide

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Animals offer a ready topic whose appeal is practically universal. When students are encouraged to read about animals, their love for both animals and reading is almost sure to grow.

Let Animals Teach Your Students to Read

by Willow Soltow

Kind News is a newspaper for first- through sixth-grade students who care about animals. The March 1986 issue contains articles and activities about animals and books that are correlated to the following "Kind News Feature." If you receive Kind News, we suggest you see it as hands-on material to support the activities covered here. If you do not receive Kind News and would like more information about it, write to Kind News, Box 362, East Haddam, CT 06423.

S

Sometimes it seems we are raising a nation of students who can read...but can't. Along with phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension skills, we must also impart a love of reading.

One way to set about doing this is to tap into some of the topics that students want
to read about on their own and, at the same
time, give students ample opportunity to sit
back and experience the joy of reading.
Animals offer a reading topic that has
virtually universal appeal. When you begin
encouraging your students to read about
animals, you'll see their love for both
animals and reading grow!

Just how should you go about initiating
an animal focus in your reading lessons?
Consider organizing a schoolwide reading
week especially designed to create an
enthusiasm for reading about animals. In
this article you'll find everything you need
to organize a uniquely successful reading
week...including a full-size poster,
bookmarks, activities, handouts, work
sheets, and teaching strategies.

April brings with it National Library
Week. Start planning your own reading
week now to coincide. Share the ideas and
activities from this issue of Children &
Animals with other teachers and
administrators. Ella schoolwide or
districtwide participation in a week
guaranteed to foster a love of reading and
animals.

A Special Reading Week
A reading week can simply be a time
when all teachers and librarians make a
point of encouraging students to read. But
our reading week is much more than that!

Our reading week makes use of a popular
teaching technique that has been in the
classroom for some time now—the
U.S.S.R. (Uninterrupted Sustained Silent
Reading) period. The U.S.S.R. period is a
set time for everyone in the school,
including the principal, the janitor,
the teachers, and the students to take time out
for a reading break.

For our reading week, you will use the
special Children & Animals version of
U.S.S.R. We call it D.E.E.R., or Drop
Everything Else, Read! The difference with
D.E.E.R. is that everyone reads about
animals—such as deer and mice and cats
and polar bears and all the wonderful
creatures with whom we share Earth. In
addition, this activity offers a chance to
promote a new "non-hunting" image for
deer.

Introducing D.E.E.R.
Whether you already have a U.S.S.R.
period or will be utilizing it for the first
time, we have a special way to introduce
D.E.E.R. Two weeks before your reading
week begins, use an opaque projector to
make an enlarged version of one of our
D.E.E.R. symbols. The symbols appear
with the work sheets at the end of this
article. You can simply trace the symbols
onto chart paper and cut it out. (The bigger
it is, the better.) Place it prominently in the
school cafeteria, gymnasium, or hallway. If
students inquire about it, just shrug your
shoulders and smile.

The week prior to your scheduled reading
week, photocopy plenty of our D.E.E.R.
symbols and cut them out. You may want
to color them in, copy them onto colored
paper, or just use them as is. After the
enlarged D.E.E.R. symbol has been up for
a week, begin putting up the smaller
versions. Begin with one or two on the first
day, building up to as many as you like by
the Friday before reading week begins. Have
most of them displayed in communal areas.
In addition, see that several are in each
classroom. Hide some in students' note-
books, on school buses, and in a
textbook or two—until students are all very
curious. Tell students they will find out
what the symbol means on Monday. (That
is, on the day your reading week actually
begins.)

On the Monday beginning your reading
week, explain to students that the D.E.E.R.
symbol stands for "Drop Everything...",
and let them guess the rest. Explain that for
the rest of this week, everyone in the school is
going to read about deer—and other animals at
a prescribed time each day (from 9:30 to 9:45
a.m., for instance). If you are working with
younger students, you may want to set aside
this time each day as a read-aloud story
period, focusing on animals.

Once the meaning of D.E.E.R. has been
made clear, be sure to put up our reading
week poster, bound into this issue of
Children & Animals.

Of course, not all classes will be able to
go to the library on Monday to obtain
books on animals. So be sure each teacher
already has in his or her classroom a wide
variety of books on animals checked out from
the library ahead of time. In addition, have
students complete their own original
animal books, following the directions
offered in the article "How to Make an
Animal Book," from the March 1986 issue of
Kind News. Include these homemade
books in your classroom selection. There's
nothing like a limited choice of animal
books to stir up demand! All the students
will inevitably want the same book. That's
OK! D.E.E.R. can continue in your
classroom for several weeks as popular
books are traded around and as new ones
are checked out from the library by
students. You may want to allow two or
more students to read a book jointly.
The whole idea, after all, is to make reading
appealing. For a list of animal books
recommended in past issues of Children &
Animals, please send a SASE to Good
Books, Children & Animals Magazine, Box
362, East Haddam, CT 06423.

You will, of course, want to have on
hand copies of Kind News. There are plenty
of short, interesting readings about
animals with something to please everyone.
(Note: If you would like several packets of
past issues of Kind News for D.E.E.R. week,
the packets are available for $2.50 each from
NAAHE, Box 362, East Haddam, CT
06423. Each packet contains thirty-five
copies of one issue—enough for all the
students in your class. Order now for
delivery in time for your reading week
in April.)

Keeping Up the Momentum
To keep the enthusiasm level high for
D.E.E.R. week, you, the teacher, need to
set an example by reading silently to
yourself. Choose a student library book to
read at your desk or elsewhere in the
Make it obvious that reading is enjoyable.
Smile, laugh, groan, or gasp as you read
your book. Students will want that library
book next!

If you do not already have a reading
corner in your classroom, make one. Try
putting a rocking chair or a few throw
pillows in a special place marked "For
Reading Only." Allow students to take
turns sitting there. Invite the principal
to have a turn in your reading corner.
How about inviting the school nurse, the
janitor, and the bus driver too? In particular,
be sure your most reluctant reader takes a turn
in the reading corner. Find an excuse to add
a bowl of peanuts or popcorn in the corner
that day.

Thinking Bookmarks
During the week, pass out our Thinking
Bookmarks to students to get them involved
in a fun activity with a humane emphasis
relating to the book they have chosen to
read.

Making reading appealing is one of the keys
to fostering a love of good books. Here a
youngster and his best friend enjoy an animal
book together.
Activity 1: A Learning Center

A learning center can add color and variety to your room, while helping children to practice learning independently. To make an appealing learning center for primary students, collect pictures or photographs of familiar animals and mount them on index cards. For each mounted picture of an animal, make one blank card out of cardboard and mark it with the correct letter of the animal’s name. A picture of a cow, for instance, would have a matching card marked with a C. To make the activity self-checking, turn over the card and on the back, mark the first letter that begins the animal’s name. Mix up the cards and place them at a learning center. Have students match the animal pictures with the letter cards and check their answers by turning over the animal pictures.

When the learning center has been in use for a while, pass out the animal cards. Have each student hold up a card and have another class member tell the letter that begins the animal’s name. Then have the student holding the card tell one way he or she and that animal are alike.

Activity 2: Animal Letter Charades

Give beginner readers additional practice in identifying first letters of animal words with the following activity. Divide the class into small groups of three students each. Have students count off by threes. Have each group choose a “letterperson.” Assign a different letter of the alphabet to each group and have the groups take turns presenting their letters to the rest of the class. Within each group, the letterperson is to form his group’s letter with his body. The remaining group members act out animals whose names begin with their letter. (You may want to suggest the names of appropriate animals for each group.) Let the rest of the class try to guess the letters and the names of the animals being performed. After the animal names have been guessed, have students tell something they especially like about each animal whose name was acted out.

Activity 3: The Lost and Found Game

Introduce this activity by explaining that, each day, in the class, some students accidentally lose their pets. Ask students to name some of the things we can do to keep our pets safe. What should include: keeping a license on a dog or an ID tag on a cat, keeping cats indoors, spaying or neutering, and not letting your dog outside except in a fenced yard or on a leash.

Next, explain that if people do lose their pets, they can contact local animal shelters to see if the animal has been picked up. Have students try the following game to reinforce recall and the ability to describe in detail the name and looks of a lost pet. Divide the class into pairs. One student should take the role of farm animal friends they want to recover.

Choose five or six animal characters from stories your class has read together. Write the name of each character on a three-by-five-inch index card. Then, write each animal’s name on a slip of paper, to be folded and dropped into a brown paper bag. (Do not use wild animal characters, as students might draw the incorrect conclusion that it is acceptable to keep a wild animal as a pet.) Put up a six-foot length of string or rope and mark it with a post. Using clothespins, pin up the index cards so that only one child (the “shelter worker”) can see the names. Revise the game as needed in your classroom. Select one student to be the animal shelter worker and another to be the person who has lost the pet. Provide or find a piece of cloth or clothingline as a dividing line between the two players, have the child who has come to claim an animal take one side of the line, and the worker the other. (Provide assistance as needed in reading the name.) Child then describes what animal she or he claims, as well as the characteristics of the animal’s home. (Provide assistance as needed in reading the name.) Child then describes what animal she or he claims, as well as the characteristics of the animal’s home. The worker must try to identify the animal character from the description alone. If the shelter worker is correct in their guess, have the student whose character the card gives to it the student who “lost” the pet. Follow the above steps to give the animal’s home, the characteristics of need and identify tags for pets.

Activity 4: The Mother Deer Game

To add zest to your vocabulary flashcard activities by the 2nd or 3rd grader. In addition to your regular flashcards, you will need an index card that is white on one side and brown on the other. Explain to students that some kinds of deer use their tails to signal a warning to their young ones. If a mother deer’s tail is up and white, her fawns know that all is safe and that they may follow her. If the mother’s tail is down and only the brown fur shows, her babies know to keep still and quiet. Discuss with students: what are some things a mother deer might want to warn her babies about? Now tell students you are going to play a flashcard game that is a little like “Simon Says.” Review the rules for “Simon Says,” in order to make the game slightly more difficult any time you begin. Explain that you will hold up a vocabulary flashcard in one hand and your brown index card in the other. When the white side of the index card is showing, students may read the word or phrase aloud, but not say the word on the brown side of the index card shows, students are to remain quiet.

Make the activity more challenging by changing the animal’s name on a slip of paper, to be folded and dropped into a brown paper bag. (Do not use wild animal characters, as students might draw the incorrect conclusion that it is acceptable to keep a wild animal as a pet.) Put up a six-foot length of string or rope and mark it with a post. Using clothespins, pin up the index cards so that only one child (the “shelter worker”) can see the names. Revise the game as needed in your classroom. Select one student to be the animal shelter worker and another to be the person who has lost the pet. Provide or find a piece of cloth or clothingline as a dividing line between the two players, have the child who has come to claim an animal take one side of the line, and the worker the other. (Provide assistance as needed in reading the name.) Child then describes what animal she or he claims, as well as the characteristics of the animal’s home. The worker must try to identify the animal character from the description alone. If the shelter worker is correct in their guess, have the student whose character the card gives to it the student who “lost” the pet. Follow the above steps to give the animal’s home, the characteristics of need and identify tags for pets.
of the cardboard square will be pointing up. The number that appears on the side of the square that points up indicates the number of spaces a player should move.

Set up the game as a learning center. You might want to enliven the learning center area by tacking up students’ drawings of sea turtles as well as sea turtle photographs from old magazines.

Activity 5: Nobody Loves Me

To help boost reading comprehension, make up its own Animal News learning center. Ask students to donate any family’s old newspapers and magazines to the classroom. Or use past issues of Kind News, NAAHE’s animal-related educational publication, for articles about animals and cut out one newspaper article on an animal subject. Have students share their proposed articles with you before cutting to be sure there are no duplicates.

Have each child mount his or her article on paper and add a series of five comprehension questions. Pass out one manila folder to each student to label with the animal topic addressed by his or her article. Then store the articles in their respective folders in a box at a learning center in the classroom. Remind students to put their names on the folders they have made in case other students working at the learning center have a question about the folder they are working on.

Activity 8: Animal Friends

Being a friend means being responsible. Explain to students that being responsible toward a pet means providing for a pet’s needs. Sometimes, being responsible toward a wild animal means leaving it alone. Have students read a nonfiction book about an animal or a kind of animal. Then have students write a letter to the author of their book explaining the ways in which animals do or do not actually behave as portrayed in the author’s book. (As a follow-up to the work sheet, have students write an imaginary definition of wolves.)

Activity 7: Animals in the News

Newspapers and magazines provide a wonderful medium for stimulating willingness to read. You can have the class read articles about animals in the news, especially if they are of interest to the students. Have students complete a work sheet called “Animals We Care About.”

Answers to work sheet “Nobody Loves Me”:
1. Spider monkeys live in the jungle.
2. The film jaws was about a shark.
3. A Volkswagen beetle is a kind of car, not a kind of insect.
4. It’s fun to draw pictures of wolves.

Activity 6: A Reason to Read

Having a reason to read is what makes reading worthwhile. Reinforce the definitions of fiction and nonfiction for students. Then explain that animal characters in a fiction book often do not behave like real animals. At the same time, help students realize that some portrayals of animals experiencing emotions may be realistic.

Assign students to read one of a number of fictional books about animals. (As a resource, you may want to send for the Children & Animals list of recommended animal books for students mentioned earlier in this article.) Instead of a traditional book report on one of the fiction books they have chosen, have students write an imaginary letter to the author of their book explaining the ways in which animals do or do not actually behave as portrayed in the author’s book.

Activity 7: Animals in the News

Use these pinup D.E.E.R. symbols to pique student interest in your animal-focused reading week and help give deer a new “non-hunting” image. Please see our “Kind News Feature” for instructions.

One Night in the Forest

It was just after sunset. Some of the animals in the forest were beginning to wake up. Others were beginning to go to sleep.

A mouse woke up and looked out of his nest (vocal sounds—squeaking). He was hungry. He ran out over the dry brown leaves on the forest floor (rustle dried leaves or papers in a box). As he went looking for something to eat, a sleepy chipmunk chattered at him (vocal sounds—chipmunk chattering).

He passed a beaver. The beaver was hard at work. He was chewing on a fallen branch (make crunching sound by shaking dry rice in a box or paper cup). Next the mouse came to a pond. A frog was sitting at the edge of the pond (vocal sounds—frog croaking). But the frog jumped away (drop coin into a container full of water).

Just then there was a loud rustle of wings and a third (rustle of sheet of paper and make a thudding noise with your fist on a tabletop or desk top). A huge owl had landed nearby (vocal sound—owl hooting). My! How hungry she was! She had a nest full of babies back at home. Her babies were hungry too. The mouse jumped into a hollow log just in time to escape being caught by the owl. That made the owl and her babies go hungry tonight.

The owl flew away (rustle sheet of paper). The mouse came out of his hiding place. The forest seemed very quiet. The animals were not making any noise because humans were approaching (make stomping noises with feet). It was a boy and a girl. They were out very late. Their flashlight shone on the little mouse. He froze—but it was no use.

“What a cute mouse!” said the girl.

“I want him for a pet.”

“Here,” cried the boy. “Let’s catch him!”

Huge hands came down almost on top of the mouse. How fast he ran! Quickly he scurried into an old tree stump. His heart was pounding (thump chest rapidly). The humans went away. He could hear their loud footsteps grow fainter and fainter in the distance (stomping noises with feet).

Time passed and so did the danger. The mouse found some nuts and seeds to eat (make soft, crunching noise by wadding a piece of aluminum foil). Then he scurried back over the dry leaves of the forest floor to his nest (rustle leaves in box and settled down to sleep. He got sleepy and slept...and so our story ends.
Use these pinup D.E.E.R. symbols to pique student interest in your animal-focused reading week and help give deer a new "non-hunting" image. Please see our "Kind News Feature" for instructions.

Duplicate and distribute our bookmarks to your students during your D.E.E.R. Reading Week. At the conclusion of the week, hand out copies of the certificates of participation to your students. Please see our "Kind News Feature" for details.

What do you like best about the animal in your book?

What kind of animal is presented in your book? What can people do to help this kind of animal?

Name three ways in which you and the animal portrayed in your book are alike.

This is to certify that ____________ has participated in D.E.E.R. Reading Week and is eager to learn more about protecting the animals that share our world.
Nobody Loves Me

Directions: For each paragraph below, cross out the sentence that does not belong. There is only one sentence in each paragraph that does not belong.

Spiders Are Helpful Animals

Are you afraid of spiders? Most people do not understand how helpful spiders really are. These people think spiders are ugly. Often for this reason alone, they kill spiders. Spider monkeys live in the jungle. But spiders are helpful animals who spend all day trapping insects. Many of these insects, if not kept in check by spiders, could cause problems for people and other animals.

The Remarkable Shark

Many people are afraid of sharks and do not like them. But the more you learn about sharks, the more you will appreciate how remarkable they are. Interestingly enough, they belong to a very old group of animals. In fact, the first sharks lived over 400 million years ago! The film Jaws was about a shark. Sharks are also unusual because they have changed very little over the years. When you look at a shark, it is a little like looking at a living fossil.

Insects Are Important Animals

Some people say they dislike all insects, but insects are very important animals. Our world depends on them. Some kinds of beetles get rid of weeds. Butterflies and bees pollinate flowers so they can bloom year after year. A Volkswagen beetle is a kind of car, not a kind of insect. Insects such as ladybugs and praying mantises eat insects that are harmful to plants. Many insects provide food for other animals such as birds, reptiles, and small mammals. The more you find out about insects, the more you will see how our world depends on them.

The Misunderstood Wolf

All through history, wolves have been misunderstood by people. Even today, wolves are blamed for things they usually do not do—things such as hurting people or farm animals. The fact is that wolves are beautiful and important animals. It’s fun to draw pictures of wolves. Wolves are good parents. They protect their babies from danger. They are also loyal mates. Wolves eat large animals such as deer and moose. By eating sick and weak animals, they help keep the deer and moose herds healthy.

A Tough Life for Sea Turtles

It was evening. The moon shone on a large female sea turtle as she climbed out of the ocean onto the beach. It would be the most dangerous night of her life. For several years, she had been safe in the ocean. She was so large that few animals could hurt her. Her only natural enemy in the ocean was the shark.

Unfortunately, in the ocean, she faced the threat of being caught in a fisherman’s net. (Sea turtles breathe air like humans. They are often caught in fishing nets by accident and held underwater. Without air to breathe, they drown just like a person would drown.) On the beach, however, the female turtle was now in danger of meeting the worst enemy of all ... a human poacher. Poachers hunt animals such as sea turtles even though it is against the law. Today all species of sea turtles are in danger of dying out—of becoming extinct. It is against the law to kill a sea turtle or to collect sea turtle eggs. But that does not stop some people. That is why sea turtles are endangered.

The mother climbed slowly up the beach away from the water. She could swim quickly in the ocean. But she moved very slowly on land. When she was far enough away from the water, she dug a hole in the sand. In the hole, she laid more than 100 eggs.

When the eggs had been laid, the mother turtle covered the hole with sand. This would help to hide the eggs. The mother sea turtle was very lucky. Her eggs were not found by humans. They were not found by a raccoon or a wild hog either. Both of these wild animals like to make a meal out of sea turtle eggs.

The eggs remained safely hidden for six weeks. By that time, there was a tiny sea turtle inside each egg. The turtles used their teeth to scratch their way out of the leathery eggshells. When they were half out of the shells, they spent a couple of days resting before making the long journey to the ocean.

Several nights later, the tiny baby turtles crawled up out of their sandy nest. Instinct told them which way to go. As quickly as they could, they scrambled toward the ocean.

Life was difficult for the baby sea turtles. Some of them never made it to the water. They were eaten by natural predators such as seabirds and crabs. Once the remaining baby sea turtles got to the water, they were in danger of being eaten by sharks and other fish. Few, if any, would live to have babies of their own.

It is believed that only 1 out of 10,000 sea turtle eggs survives to become an adult turtle. Overall, people who hunt sea turtles and collect sea turtle eggs are the greatest danger to the turtles. But people can also work to save endangered sea turtles. The only help by not buying decorative items made from tortoise shell, which is actually the shell of a sea turtle. They can also help by not buying leather items such as shoes, wallets, and watchbands made from sea turtle skin.

Most of these products can no longer be bought in the United States. But tourists may bring these products back with them, which can hurt sea turtles. Each of these products can no longer be bought in the United States. But it can still hurt sea turtles. It is very important that we work together to protect endangered sea turtles before they become extinct.

Directions for

The Sea Turtle Game

by Willow Soltow

1. Put all the game cards in a pile on the game board.
2. This game is for two players. Each of you should choose a marker as you go in START.
3. Read the story A Tough Life for Sea Turtles. Be sure to read carefully. During the game, you will have to answer questions based on what you have read.
4. If you should take one spin of the spinner to decide who will go first, Whoever has the highest number goes first. In case of a tie, both of you should spin again.
5. Take turns spinning the spinner and following the directions on the game board. For each turn, follow only one direction on the board. For example, you might land on a square that tells you to go back one space. When you go back one space, the new square gives you another direction. But you do not follow it. Your turn is over.
6. When you land on a square with a turtle on it, you must take a card and answer the question. The answers are on the backs of the cards. If you answer the question correctly, you get another turn. If your answer is incorrect, you do not get an extra turn.
7. The first one of you to get to the finish wins the Sea Turtle Game!
The Sea Turtle Game

You are endangered. Move back 1 space.

Poachers are coming. Go back to START.

You ate too many jellyfish. Stay where you are.

Your nest washed away in a storm. Move back 2 spaces.

Your ocean is polluted. Move back 2 spaces.

You see another sea turtle. Move ahead 1 space.

A hotel is built on your nesting beach. Move back 1 space.

A poacher just stole the eggs from your nest. Move back 1 space.

You are caught in a fishing net. Lose a turn.

If you are lucky, you can live to be 50 years old. Move ahead 1 space.

Put cards here

Sea Turtle Game Cards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>True or false? Sea turtles breathe air just like humans.</th>
<th>How many weeks does it take sea turtle eggs to hatch?</th>
<th>Only _______ out of 10,000 sea turtle eggs lives to be an adult sea turtle.</th>
<th>What is the sea turtle's worst enemy on land?</th>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<th>True or false? Baby sea turtles scratch their way out of their eggs with the help of egg teeth.</th>
<th>In the ocean, what is the sea turtle's only natural enemy?</th>
<th>True or false? People can help sea turtles by buying more combs made of tortoise shell.</th>
<th>What do you call people who hunt animals such as sea turtles even though it is against the law?</th>
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<tr>
<th>What does the mother sea turtle make in the sand in order to lay her eggs?</th>
<th>About how many eggs does the mother sea turtle lay at a time?</th>
<th>Sea turtles are sometimes drowned by being caught in _______ in the ocean.</th>
<th>What are two wild animals that like to eat sea turtle eggs?</th>
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<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<th>True or false? Sea turtles are endangered mostly because of wild hogs.</th>
<th>In the ocean, a sea turtle is usually safe because it is so _______.</th>
<th>Sea turtles are in danger of becoming _______. If this happens, there will be no more sea turtles.</th>
<th>True or false? Sea turtles move very quickly on land.</th>
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<tr>
<th>True or false? When baby sea turtles leave their nest, they know in which direction the water is because their mother shows them.</th>
<th>People can work to help endangered sea turtles by not buying sea turtle or _______.</th>
<th>True or false? Shoes, wallets, and watchbands are sometimes made from sea turtles.</th>
<th>True or false? It is OK to bring items made from endangered sea turtles into the United States.</th>
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<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
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Learning About Animals With Choral Reading

"Let's begin with line one, class. Ready now? All together! With expression!"

Thus has many an unwilling student been initiated (occasionally kicking and screaming) into the joys of choral reading. And yet, once they begin reading poems as members of a chorus, enjoying the rhythm of words, students can never seem to get enough of it. Choral reading activities can be as flexible as your curriculum needs will allow. They can be done informally in the classroom with some parts taken by all members of the group and a few individual solos. Or they can form the basis for a formal presentation onstage, featuring dramatic or entertaining readings. Choral reading can be done with any combination of voices. Poetry is usually the main focus, but prose passages can also be used effectively.

One of the keys to successful choral reading is to focus on poems to which students can relate. Students' imaginations are invariably captured by animal topics like those contained in the choral readings offered here. Our animal poems are simple to use. Just pass out copies of the piece to be read, assign parts, and begin. Students do not memorize their parts, but rather read them with great dramatic (and fun) oral expression! Choral reading offers plenty of variations. High voices may be contrasted with low ones, or a small chorus may respond to a large one, for instance. For the novice choral reading group, you may have the greatest success with a leader–chorus approach. Your first choral reading example, "Bad Man, Sad Man," is suitable for a leader–chorus approach. You might want to read the solo parts yourself, or assign them, one each, to six confident students. The remaining portions may be read by the entire group.

The chorus has very short lines, which is advisable for a class that is just learning how to read in unison. "Bad Man, Sad Man," was written originally as a song by naturalist and humane educator Gerry Axelrod. Gerry sees a need for humane education materials designed for street-wise youngsters who are turned off by sentimental approaches to humane education. In "Bad Man, Sad Man," a man boasts of all his evil deeds. He claims, "I'm a bad, bad man," to which the children respond, "He's a sad, sad man." Gerry likes to don a black hat and adopt an evil expression for performing the solo parts in "Bad Man, Sad Man." Your students might enjoy trying something similar, adding props and gestures as they like.

In our second poem, "My Dog," children learn about pet owner responsibility. You might want to line up ten students in front of the classroom to perform the solo parts. Repeat the chorus each time, adding a new solo and repeating the previous solos as well, just as phrases are added and repeated in "The Twelve Days of Christmas."

Our final choral reading poem, "Guilty Eyes," is just for fun, although its underlying message is a serious one. Before beginning, you may want to point out to students that owning a pet means devoting yourself to your animal's training and forgiving him when he makes mistakes.

**Bad Man, Sad Man by Gerry Axelrod**

**solo 1:** I don't like dogs and I don't like cats.
But I have lots of beds, how'd you like that?
I only feed them when I'm feeling good.
I let them run wild in my neighborhood.
I'm a bad, bad man!

**chorus:** He's a sad, sad man!

**solo 1:** I've a very old trick that never fails.
I pull my cats by the end of their tails.
You say they feel like people do.
But I don't like people and I don't like you.
I'm a bad, bad man!

**chorus:** He's a sad, sad man!

**solo 2:** My dog had puppies out in the yard.
For me it's not trouble, for me it's not hard.
When they're old enough they'd bark real good,
I put them in a box and I throw them in the woods.
I'm a bad, bad man!

**chorus:** He's a sad, sad man!

**solo 3:** I give her fresh water each day, wouldn't you?
I keep her on a leash when we walk, wouldn't you?
I buy her a license to wear, wouldn't you?
I give her good food every day, wouldn't you?

**chorus:** He's a sad, sad man!

**solo 4:** I don't give a hoot about the birdies in the woods.
I don't give a hoot about the birdies in the woods.
All that tweety tweeting don't do the world no good.
I own the country with roads and parking lots.
What's mother nature got that I haven't got?
I'm a bad, bad man!

**chorus:** He's a sad, sad man!

**solo 5:** I'm a bad, bad man!

**chorus:** He's a sad, sad man!

**solo 6:** I'm a sad, sad man!
I'm a bad, bad man!
I'm a bad, bad man!
I'm a sad, sad man!
I'm a sad, sad man!
I'm a bad, bad man!
I'm a sad, sad man!
I'm a bad, bad man!
I'm a sad, sad man!

**Guilty Eyes by Patty Finch**

**chorus 1:** "Who ripped the blue chair?"
Dad wanted to know.

**chorus 2:** I said, "Oh, who cares?" You know I can sew!*

**chorus 3:** I blame it on Snowstorms.
Except for my aunt who cared.

**chorus 4:** I love my dog, but she's sort of ugly.
She's got short legs and her eyes are buggy.

**chorus 5:** I'm a sad, sad man!

**chorus 6:** I'm a sad, sad man!

*Note: Gerry Axelrod's "Bad Man, Sad Man" is featured on his record Turtles and Snakes and Snowstorms available from Folkways Records, 43 West 61st Street, New York, NY 10023.

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Problem Solving and Pet Overpopulation: Critter Count

Grades 4 Through 6

Critter Count is a teaching activity designed to help you improve your students' skills at solving mathematical word problems. This activity will provide students with a visual approach to problem solving and will help them learn to analyze and work through word problems by extracting information in an organized, step-by-step manner. In addition, Critter Count will provide students with hands-on exposure to expansion of numbers beyond simple arithmetic progression and will help to prepare them for the kinds of functions and equations they will encounter in more advanced mathematics courses.

**Background:** The Humane Society of the United States estimates that 2,500 to 3,000 dogs and cats are born every hour in the United States. Every year millions of unwanted animals find their way into shelters and humane societies. Most of them (approximately 7.6 million dogs and cats per year) must be euthanized for lack of good homes—a tragic waste of precious life.

Many other unwanted animals never make it to the shelters. Huge numbers of stray and abandoned pets roam the streets of our cities and towns. It is estimated that for every contented, well-cared-for dog or cat, there are many others unfortunate enough to spend their short lives at the mercy of disease, freezing weather, cruel humans, and speeding cars.

Why this tragedy? Though many factors contribute to the pet overpopulation problem (the growth of the pet industry is one), the primary cause is the irresponsibility and ignorance of pet owners who allow their animals to roam and breed. Many people do not realize there is a severe pet overpopulation problem and that every new litter adds to this problem.

**Lesson Overview:** Students will be constructing a coat hanger model, similar to the one pictured in the photograph, that visually depicts the concept of cumulative female offspring in dogs. Students will then complete a work sheet based on a word problem that illustrates the same concept.

**Preparation:** Supply each student (or group of students if the quantity of materials is limited) with a wire coat hanger (you may want to have each student bring one from home), scissors, tape, crayons or felt-tip markers, and sheets of two different colors of heavy construction paper or oak tag. You will also need a hole puncher.

**Activity:** 1. Explain to students they will be constructing a model that will help describe the way the population of pet animals increases. Before beginning construction, ask students how many of them have a cat and/or dog at home. Have the animals had litters? Ask students to estimate the usual number of puppies and kittens in a litter. Explain that the number of offspring varies depending on breed (especially in the case of dogs) and that four puppies per litter is a conservative estimate. (For cats, a reasonable estimate is three kittens per litter.)

2. Have students begin constructing their model puppy litters. Explain that they will need to cut out four puppy figures (per coat hanger) from the construction paper or oak tag. The base of each puppy figure should be straight so that it can easily be affixed to the coat hanger. Tell students that two of the four puppies on each hanger will represent female puppies and should be one color. The other two will represent males and should also be one color, but a different color from the females. Enlist one student to draw and cut out a larger figure of the mother dog, similar to the one in the photographed model.

3. Once students have cut out their puppy figures they will need to draw faces and other features on them. Students should then affix their puppies onto the coat hangers with tape, placing the females on the ends and the two males in the middle. Once the puppies have been affixed, pass the hole puncher around the class, punch one hole in the base of each female puppy figure. (To save time, you may want to do the hole punching yourself as students are preparing their models.)

4. Once the models are ready, hold up the cutout figure of the mother dog and explain to the students that, in the first year of her life, she will be able to have one litter of puppies. Then pick a student to come to the front of the class with his/her coat hanger and affix the mother dog to the top of the hanger. This hanger, with the attached puppy figures, represents the mother dog’s first litter.

5. Next have another student bring his/her hanger up and hang it between the two males of the mother’s first litter. This hanger represents the litter of puppies the mother will have in the second year of her life. Ask students if this is all the possible puppies that can be born in the second year. Are there any other sources for puppies during this year besides the mother dog? Most students will quickly realize that the mother dog’s daughters from the first litter are now a year old and can have puppies of their own. Have two students come up and hang their coat hangers in the holes punched through the two female puppy figures. (You may, at this point, want to hang the coat hanger figure of the mother dog and the set of coat hangers from a ceiling hook.)

6. For the mother’s third year of life and her third litter, students should find 9 females, which can each have another litter. Thus, students should add 9 coat hangers representing 36 new puppies, for a total of 55 offspring. (Note: Older students may notice that the total number of offspring is always a factor of 4.)

7. There will undoubtedly not be enough hangers to represent completely the fourth year’s offspring (108 new puppies). Students may wish, instead, to build a second three-year model to share with another classroom.

8. After the models are completed, explain to students that the hangers represent the concept of cumulative female offspring that predicts the total number of offspring for the following year, based upon the previous year’s total offspring. (For example: X = Previous Year’s Total; Next Year’s Total = 4(X/2) + 4 + X.)

9. Older students may notice that the total number of offspring is always a factor of 4.) You may wish to challenge advanced students to come up with an equation that predicts the total number of offspring for the following year, based upon the previous year’s total offspring. (For example: X = Previous Year’s Total; Next Year’s Total = 4(X/2) + 4 + X.)

This drawing can be used as a pattern for the puppies appearing in the coat hanger model.
Essentially this means that offspring can increase at a dramatic rate because all females can have their own litters, not just the original mother dog! If you do not wish to present younger students with the term cumulative female offspring, it is illustrative to explain the growth in population by referring to the mother dog's daughters, granddaughters, and so on as all having puppies, even as the original mother dog continues having puppies.

9. Point out to students that, even though their hanger models show how dramatic pet population growth can be, the models still do not present the whole picture. Explain that the two males from each litter can also be fathers of puppies (that is, responsible for offspring by mating with other females). In addition, explain to students that female cats can have two litters per year (after their first year of life) and thus populate even faster than dogs.

10. Explain to the class that, because pets can reproduce in such numbers so quickly, it is essential people not allow their pets to have puppies and kittens. (At this point you may want to share with students some of the information contained in the background section.) Explain that there is only one way people can ensure that their pets do not breed—by having their pets spayed (female) or neutered (male). Explain to students that spaying and neutering are operations for pets that prevent the animals from having or producing babies. Moreover, both male and female dogs and cats have been shown to have reduced cancer rates later in life as the result of spay and neuter operations. (Explain also that spayed or neutered animals should not be allowed to roam, in order to keep them safe and to prevent them from damaging other people's property.)

11. Provide each student with a copy of the work sheet found at the end of this article. You may want to circulate through the class to provide students with assistance as they attempt to solve the word problem.
Voice of the Southwest
Activities for Introducing Students
To the Animal Stories of Byrd Baylor

By Willow Soltow

Byrd Baylor has spent most of his life in the Southwest. She was born in San Antonio, Texas. As a child, she spent her summers in Sonora, Mexico, and her winters going to school in Arizona. Her reverence for people who have lived and strength and magic is explored.

As a kind of enrichment, Byrd's books to enhance students' understanding of animals from the story and explain their choices. Then, have the student to come up to the paper, dip the foam rubber printer into paper. Provide tempera paint or another printing medium. As each animal is introduced in the story, select a student to come up to the paper, dip the foam rubber printer into the paint, and make a series of animal footprints over the paper. Who wants to take off their shoes and socks for the deer person's footprints?

After finishing the story, have students identify their favorite animals from the story and explain their choices. Then, have the class choose an animal theme such as Forest Animals, or Endangered Species.

About the Story
Tim desert creatures speak for themselves in this book as they tell of their lives in their desert home. No cute, fictionalized representations of real animals are found here. Instead, the animals are portrayed with stunning realism enhanced by the illustrations of artist Peter Parnall. Byrd Baylor calls Desert Voices "my way of honoring the animals who live here too and who I believe have as much right to the land as I do.""
The Play’s the Thing

Are you looking for a way to enhance your English or drama class? We are offering bound copies of the play A Lover of Animals by Henry S. Salt. Written in 1895, this drama on the subject of animal protection is appropriate for intermediate and high school presentations. We have heard from a number of educators who have used the play with their students and have received very good response to having children work with this material.

Dr. Michael Fox of The Humane Society of the United States calls the play “a lost treasure” and recommends it for its educational value. Printed on high-quality linen paper, the play is also suitable as a gift for friends interested in animal welfare. Performance is royalty-free. Single copies of the play may be purchased for $4.95 each (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage) to perform in a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourage performance, we’re making a set of ten (includes postage). To encourag
February 9
Beginning of Chinese New Year

It's the Year of the Tiger, according to ancient Chinese tradition. Each year is identified with one of twelve different animals on a rotating basis: rat, ox, tiger, hare, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, rooster, dog, and pig. People born during the Year of the Tiger are supposed to share certain traits with that animal.

In class tomorrow, have students name some possible tiger traits. List each on the chalkboard. Have students come up to the board and draw a circle around those that humans might share. Then discuss: What are some other traits that humans share with animals in general? Do animals experience pain, fear, joy, and other emotions? How do students know?

February 14
Valentine Day

Explain to students that Valentine Day used to be associated more with kindness than with romantic love. Then try the following game to reinforce students' awareness about kindness toward animals. You will need some balloons and some small pieces of paper. Write a true or false statement about animal needs on each slip of paper. Roll each paper and insert it in a balloon. Inflate the balloons, tie them, and give one to each student. Call on each student to break his or her balloon with a pin and decide if the statement is true or false. Some sample true-false statements include: You should not give a pet to someone as a gift. (true-The decision to own a pet is a serious one that each person should make individually.) Wild animals do not make good pets. (true) Cats do not need to be brushed. (false) Whales are endangered, yet humans still hunt and kill them. (true)

March 1
National Day of the Seal

In class tomorrow, remind students that seals continue to be slaughtered to provide fur for coats and trinkets. In their natural habitat, seals, just like other animals, are part of a food chain. Food chains are an important part of natural ecosystems. Seals feed on fish and other small marine animals. Those animals feed on plankton, which gets its energy from the sun. Seals, in turn, are food for sharks and killer whales. List the following on the board and have students number them in a food chain from one to five, beginning with the sun: plankton, fish, seal, sun, killer whale. What can happen to other animals in a food chain if one kind of animal is taken away? Can students list some ways in which people can see that seals are not disturbed in their natural habitat? (by not buying fur, by preventing oil spills, by telling people about the need to protect these marine animals)

March 2-8
National Women's History Week

You can combine your observance of National Women's History Week with an emphasis on women in history who have worked to help and or learn about animals. Have the class divide into groups of four or five students each. Have each group research one of the following women and tell about how her work has helped animals as well as people: Frances Cobbe, Anna Kingsford, Velma Johnston, Jane Goodall, and Dian Fossey. (Note: Two helpful resources are Wild Animals, Gentle Women by Margery Facklam, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1978 and Friends of All Creatures by Rose Evans, available from Sea Fog Press, Box 210056, San Francisco, CA 94121-0056.)
March 1986

It's the beginning of National Women's History Week. Please see our more detailed activity.

- Florida became a state on this day in 1845. Quick! Name an endangered animal that lives in the Everglades (Florida cougar, for instance)
- It's National Aardvark Week! True or false: One aardvark can dig faster than an entire team of humans. (True! Aardvarks have short tongues. False — their tongues can be 16 inches long.)
- Tomorrow is International Working Women's Day. Can students name some women in your community who work to help animals?
- Dentures as we know them were invented on December 9, 1882. Have students read about carnivores and herbivores. Judging from their teeth, which do humans resemble most — carnivores or herbivores?
- Pelican Island was set aside as a bird sanctuary on this day in 1903. Brown pelicans, once seriously endangered, are making a comeback. How can people save endangered species?
- Sing "Happy Birthday" to Marcel Marceau, the famous mime artist. Have students draw animal names from a hat and pantomime the animal they have chosen until the rest of the class guesses it.
- Did March come in like a lion? Is it going out like a lamb? What does this saying mean? How many other animal-related sayings can students think of? Which ones are derogatory or untrue?

It's National Day of the Seal. Please see our more detailed activity.
Sometimes, A Valentine Is Made of Lettuce!

Valentine Day is an ideal time of year to teach children about caring and sharing where animals are concerned. Point out, historically, Valentine Day had more of an emphasis on friendship than on romantic love. Then challenge students to think of ways to show friendship to various animals. How is the girl in the picture showing love to the rabbit? How would she best show friendship to a wild rabbit? (Leave it alone, keep her dog in a fenced-in yard or on a leash, post “no hunting” signs, for example.) Discuss: Can protection be part of friendship?

Finally, have students make their own heart-shaped valentines to display on a bulletin board titled “I Have a Heart for Animals.” In the center of the heart, have each student write the name of an animal and a description of one way he or she would like to help that animal. (For example: Whales—I would like to help stop the whale hunts.)

You might want to use a copy of our Kind News poster “100 Ways to Be Kind to Animals” in conjunction with this activity. To obtain a copy send a large SASE to Be Kind to Animals Poster, NAAHE, Box 362, East Haddam, CT 06423.