

Appropriate and Inappropriate Pets

by Willow Soltow

The content of the November 1985 issue of Kind News, NAAHE's children's publication, relates to the theme of this article. If you receive Kind News, we suggest you use 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.

Unwise pet choices can have catastrophic results. The euthanasia of unwanted pets; the accidental death of pets; and, unfortunately, even the death of owners and their children can and do result. Last year in Reno, Nevada, a "pet" snake

Wild: An animal that, in its natural environment, usually does not need food and shelter from humans in order to survive. Although some wild animals live in cities (like squirrels and birds), most live in areas where there are fewer people (the countryside, forests, and jungles). In their native habitats, their breeding is not controlled by humans, and they do not like and are not meant to live with people.

Domestic: An animal that is bred by people over hundreds and hundreds of years to live comfortably with humans; to depend upon them for their food, shelter, and care; and to meet certain human needs (like companion animals and farm animals). People are generally capable of satisfying the needs of these animals, which is not the case with wild animals.

killed a baby sleeping in her crib. Such events are extremely rare but are preventable. Usually inappropriate pet choices do not produce such catastrophic results for humans but do involve guilt, frustration, grief, disappointment, and financial costs. The pet suffers even more.

We hope you will find time during your

busy school days to include this unit. An added benefit to you is the wonderful teaching techniques incorporated in this unit—precision thinking, writing with a purpose, and the multiple-response technique. These are techniques that are still new to many teachers but are as versatile as flash cards and usually a lot more fun!

Mini Unit Overview

Early Childhood and Primary Grades

Lesson	Humane Concept	Skills	Curriculum
Lesson 1: Domestic or Wild?	Animals may be domestic or wild.	definition recognition identification categorization use of small motor skills	science
Lesson 2: Yes or No: Wild Animal Pets	Some animals make appropriate pets. Others do not. Wild animals are never appropriate as pets. Appropriate pet choices are based largely on an owner's ability and desire to meet fully the needs of an animal.	definition recognition recall identification categorization analysis application discussion use of small motor skills	science social studies (family living)
Lesson 3: Yes or No: Domestic Animal Pets	Some domestic animals are inappropriate as pets for some people. Wild animals are never appropriate as pets. Appropriate pet choices are based largely on an owner's ability and desire to meet fully the needs of an animal.	definition recognition recall identification categorization analysis discussion use of small motor skills	science social studies (family living)
Lesson 4: Pets and Owners	Appropriate pet choices are based largely on an owner's ability and desire to meet fully the needs of an animal.	matching analysis recall identification use of small motor skills	reading social studies (family living)

Early Childhood and Primary Grades (continued)

Lesson	Humane Concept	Skills	Curriculum
Lesson 5: Our Pet Choices	Choosing an appropriate pet involves many decisions about what is best for the animal and the owner.	graphing spelling recall analysis application writing discussion oral expression use of small motor skills	social studies (family living) language arts math

Intermediate and Junior High Grades

Lesson	Humane Concept	Skills	Curriculum
Lesson 1: Precision Thinking	Animals may be wild or domestic. Wild animals are considered inappropriate as pets.	critical thinking classification identification definition analysis application discussion	science language arts
Lesson 2: Startling Statistics	Many animals suffer as a result of the captive wild animal trade.	understanding and computing mean, median, and range estimating reading and visualizing large numbers analysis comparison interpretation	math
Lesson 3: Captive Animal Game	Many animals suffer as a result of the captive wild animal trade.	running movement analysis describing interpretation	physical education
Lesson 4: Writing With a Purpose	Animals suffer when their needs are not met.	writing description analysis explanation synthesis formulation	language arts
Lesson 5: Problems List	Pets depend on responsible owners to fulfill their needs. Appropriate pet choices are based largely on an owner's ability and desire to meet fully the needs of an animal. Some domestic animals are inappropriate as pets for some people. Inappropriate pet choices cause suffering for both humans and animals.	categorization hypothesizing interpretation analysis inference comparison	language arts
Lesson 6: Rules To Choose	Humans have the responsibility to make appropriate pet choices.	description interpretation summarization application hypothesizing critical thinking	language arts

Helping students understand the importance of choosing an appropriate pet can prevent suffering for people and animals alike.



—John J. Dommers

Early Childhood and Primary Grades

Our beginning activities make use of a teaching technique known as the *multi-response* technique. All students will be actively involved at the same time in identifying animals as domestic or wild, and as appropriate or inappropriate pets. Although all students will respond at once in answer to your questions, you will be able to identify *quickly* each student's individual response!

Lesson 1: Wild or Domestic

- **Preparation:** Collect a number of pictures of wild and domestic animals from books, magazines, old, animal-related calendars, and other sources. Have an index card on hand for each student.

- **Activity:** 1. Prepare students for the activity by having them read the November 1985 issue of *Kind News* and/or reviewing the definitions of *domestic* and *wild* offered at the beginning of this article. Simplify the definitions as appropriate for your students. 2. Pass out an index card to each youngster. Have each child mark a large *W* on one side

of the card for *wild*, and a large *D* on the other side for *domestic*. One at a time, hold up the animal pictures you have collected and ask students to answer whether the pictured animal is wild or domestic by holding up the *W* side or the *D* side of their cards. Discuss the pictures that you notice are difficult for the class. With this technique it is easy to spot individual children who are not grasping the concept and may need some individual tutoring. Have students save their W/D cards for use in Lesson 2, which follows.

Lesson 2: Yes or No: Wild Animal "Pets"

- **Preparation:** Same as Lesson 1. Also have on hand tape and two large pieces of paper.

- **Activity:** 1. Pass out new index cards to your students. On one side of the cards have them mark *YES*, on the other side, *NO*. Meanwhile, tack up two large pieces of paper. At the top of one paper write *YES*, and at the top of the other write *NO*. 2. As in Lesson 1, hold up one at a time the animal pictures that you have collected. This time, however, have students identify whether each animal would make an appropriate pet. You can assist students in

their decision making by asking questions such as, "Can you buy food for this animal at a pet store?" "Is this animal used to being around people?" "Does this animal need lots of room?" "Could this animal do all the things it likes to do if it were your pet?" "Do you think many people know how to take care of this animal?"

After students have identified each animal to be appropriate or inappropriate as a pet, have a student tape the animal picture to one of the large papers under *YES* if the animal would make an appropriate pet, under *NO* if the animal would not make an appropriate pet.

3. Next, ask students to get out their W/D index cards. Point to each animal picture and have students indicate whether the animal is domestic or wild. Write the appropriate letter beside each picture. As you complete this activity, students should begin to see a pattern. *All* of the animals listed in the *YES* column will be domestic animals. Of the animals listed in the *NO* column, some may be domestic; but most will be wild. As you go along, discuss with students: "Are the inappropriate pets mostly domestic or wild?" "Are the appropriate pets mostly domestic or wild?" With teacher assistance, students should be able to form the conclusion that wild animals are inappropriate as pets.

4. When the activity has been completed,

