



Lesson Plan: Companion Animals and their Needs

YEAR LEVELS:

P	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Outcomes: Students know about the basic needs of companion animals.
Students know about the Animal Welfare League and how they help animals in need in the community.

Duration: 30 minutes

Resources: 'What Do We Need?' Poster
'Basic Needs' picture cards
Class set of AWL stickers and colouring sheet

Teaching Notes

Basic Needs of Companion Animals

- **Food:** Dogs and cats should be given a good quality diet of both dry and wet foods. Puppies and kittens need special food for their age. Both dogs and cats should never be fed chocolate, as it can make them very sick.
- **Fresh Water:** Always provide your companion animals with fresh drinking water. Be sure to change their water every day and regularly clean out the water bowl.
- **Exercise:** Dogs should be walked twice a day, especially if they are large dogs. Small dogs should only need one walk a day. Cats are very active in the early mornings and evenings and can get some exercise by climbing up their cat posts and playing around the house.
- **Play:** Encourage your cats during their active time by playing games with them and giving them fun toys to interact with. There are many fun games you can play with your dog like ball or anything that involves running around with him.
- **Grooming:** Dogs and cats with long hair will need to be brushed every couple of days. You will need to regularly bath your dog, but cats don't usually need bathing, as they bath themselves!
- **Shelter:** Dogs and cats need somewhere comfortable and safe to rest during the day and sleep at night. If your dog spends time outside, make sure he has a place out of the sun to rest during the day and somewhere warm to sleep at night. Cats like to curl up in cosy spaces like baskets, blankets and beds.
- **Companionship:** Give your dogs and cats lots of attention and love by gently patting and stroking them when they show you that they want it. Not all animals enjoy being picked up and sometimes your companion will want time to be alone. Just make sure you 'listen' to your dog or cat and you will know whether it wants a cuddle or to be left alone.

Teaching Notes Cont...

- **Microchip:** A microchip is a tiny little computer chip that has all the information about where that dog or cat lives. A vet uses a special needle to put this microchip under the animal's skin at the back of its neck. This is the best way to identify our dogs and cats because a microchip will stay there for the animal's whole life.
- **Collar and tag:** We put a collar with a tag on it on our animal friend so if he gets lost or goes missing, he can be brought back to you. On the tag is our animal's name, the address of where it lives and the phone number of its owner. If our animal friend is a dog, he has to be registered with the council and will have a council registration tag.
- **Desexing:** There are too many puppies and kittens being born and not enough homes for them to go to. This is why we need to take our pets to the vet to be desexed. Desexing is an operation done by a vet, which means that your dog or cat can't have puppies or kittens anymore. This is a good thing because there are already so many dogs and cats looking for homes, we don't need any more being born.
In this picture you can see where this kitten has just had her operation and she has stitches where the vet operated. The operation only takes a few minutes and it is all over very quickly. It doesn't hurt the puppies and kittens because the vet gives them a special needle that sends them to sleep for a little while whilst the operation is happening. When they wake up it's all over and they just have this little scar.
We should take our puppy to the vet to be desexed by the time it is 6 months old and our kitten by the time it is 5 months old. This is because puppies can start breeding at 6 months and kittens at 5 months.
- **Vet Care:** Dogs and cats should be taken to see the vet at least once a year for a checkup. Of course if you have a puppy or kitten, they need to go more often, so they can have their vaccination needles. Also, if your dog or cat is injured or seems to be in pain, they should be taken to the vet to be treated.

Learning Activity	Approx. Duration	Teaching Procedure	Resources
1. Who is the AWL?	5 min	<p><i>Prior to lesson: ask teacher to seat students in a circle. Education officer introduces themselves and the mascot animal they have brought with them.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'Has anyone here ever been to the Animal Welfare League?'</i> • <i>'Does anyone know what we do at the AWL Qld?'</i> <p>At the AWL we take care of all the dogs and cats that don't have homes to go to. Animals just like(insert name of mascot animal here).</p> <p>These dogs and cats are <u>homeless</u> because they get lost, sometimes their owners don't want them anymore or sometimes their owners can't take care of them anymore. We care for all these animals at the AWL Sanctuary and help to find them new homes to go to. People come to the AWL Sanctuary and can adopt a cat or dog. This is called <u>rehoming</u>.</p>	AWL Mascot animal
2. Basic Needs	15 min	<p>Education officer displays the 'What do we need?' poster and explains;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'We're going to talk about what cats and dogs need to make them happy.'</i> • <i>'On these picture cards are things that dogs and cats need to make them happy. We're going to play a game with them.'</i> <p>Lay the cards out, FACE DOWN on the floor in the middle of the circle. Ask one student at a time to turn over a card. As each card is turned over, ask the students if they know what the picture is of, then elaborate on each (see teacher notes).</p>	<p><i>'What do We Need?'</i> poster</p> <p><i>'Basic Needs'</i> picture cards</p>
3. Question Time	10 min	<p>Education officer asks students; Does anyone have any questions? Remind students that you only want questions - not stories. A question is something they want to know, not a story! (see Education Officer Training Manual) Education gives stickers and colouring sheets to classroom teacher.</p>	Class set of AWL stickers and colouring sheet