



End Dogfighting Unit

Lesson Four: Dogfighting Hurts Animals

Objective: The students will understand that dogfighting is harmful to the dogs being fought and other animals involved, and is not a natural activity for dogs. Students will compare the needs and feelings of dogs to those of humans to create empathy.

Grade Level: Secondary

Curriculum Connections: Students will learn via video, discussion, and nonfiction reading that pets are a lifelong responsibility and that dogfighting is bad for animals because their basic needs are not being met.

Character Concepts: Citizenship and Responsibility- Citizenship means doing your part to make your community and world better for the people and animals who live there. Responsible people provide care for those who depend on them.

National Standards Addressed:

NPH-H 5-8.7 and NHP-H 9-12.7 Health Advocacy

Materials Needed:

- One of the following videos from video.humanesociety.org (we suggest you preview both videos to determine which is appropriate for your class):
 - [Dogfighting: Life on the Chain, Death in the Ring](#) (7:49 minutes)
 - [Brutal Bloodsport](#) (1:08 minutes)
- *Just My Luck!* story (see page 3)
- *Kind News* End Dogfighting special issue, available at humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/parents_educators/kind_news_special_issue_dogfighting.pdf.
- Dogfighting factsheets (optional):
 - humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/animal_fighting/dogfighting_how_to_recognize.pdf
 - humanesociety.org/issues/dogfighting/facts/dogfighting_fact_sheet.html

Lesson Procedure:

Opening:

- 1) Ask students to sit back, relax, and listen to a short story about a new parent of a young child. Read Part I of the story *Just My Luck!* (see page 3) to the class.
- 2) Ask the class if they saw any problem with the parent in the story. Have a brief discussion with the class concerning improper things done by the parent.
- 3) Ask students to help list what the woman in the story could have provided to be a “good” parent. Answers will vary, but will include items such as clothing, a bed, a warm and dry home, food, water, training/school, health care, toys, love, and attention.

Body:

- 1) Congratulate the students on their knowledge of proper parenting and reinforce that a child is a commitment. Discuss with the students how many of the things they know about parenting apply to a pet too. Read Part II of *Just My Luck!* (see page 3), which is written about a dog instead of a child.
- 2) Ask the class to brainstorm the things that the dog would need in order to thrive and be well-behaved. Write the corresponding dog related items next to the list just created concerning human care.
- 3) Advise the students that you will be watching a short film about dogs who are forced to fight and who are used as bait. (Students may need an explanation of “bait animals”— small animals used to excite a fighting dog and make their prey drive or chase drive active.) Ask the students to think about recent discussion and the class list concerning the needs of dogs and relate that information to what they see. Explain that after the video is over the class will discuss whether the humans involved are meeting the needs of those dogs and whether they are honoring their commitment to care for a pet. Some students may want to take notes.
- 4) Show the video clip of your preference.

- 5) After viewing the video, ask students, "Using the information we discussed and the list we created, do you think the humans involved in these fights are meeting the needs of the dogs? Are they honoring their commitment to care for the dogs?" (Accept all answers and opinions.)
- 6) Ask, "Did you feel bad for the dogs in the video?" (The students do not have to answer out loud; it can be a rhetorical question depending on the audience.)
- 7) Explain how people are like a pet's adoptive parent. Review that dogs do not fight voluntarily and that this type of fighting would not occur in a natural dog pack. Ask students whether they feel the people in the video had the dogs' best interests at heart. (Accept answers; most students will say no.)
- 8) Reiterate to the students how animals in dogfights can be seriously injured or killed, are subjected to pain and exhaustion, and often do not get treatment for their severe injuries. Dogs who do not make money or bring honor to their owners are usually killed or left to starve.

Closure:

- 1) Ask students to read the articles in [Kind News](#) to learn about ways they can help to stop dogfighting and be responsible pet caregivers.

Extension:

- 1) Students can complete the [Mission: Humane Combat Cruelty project](#). This project incorporates letter-writing skills and utilizes students' prior knowledge.

Just My Luck!

Part I

I want to tell you about a friend of mine. I ask that you just listen and then let me know what you think.

She recently adopted a young child and she was so happy because her new son was so cute. She bought him nice little outfits and showed him to all of the neighbors because he looked like he was going to be a very strong boy. But, after a few weeks, she got tired of him getting food all over the place. She soon learned that if she let him eat on the ground in the backyard her house was neater. This was much easier for her and it kept the house clean. Eventually she began to feed him all of his meals outside on the ground.

But then another problem occurred. He was not potty trained and he was loud. My friend decided to build him a play house so he could be outside more often. The play house even had a little container for water in the plastic sink. She thought this worked really well! She needed to make sure he did not run away so she bought a Velcro wristband and a rope and connected him to his play house. Now she could watch him and know he was not running around the neighborhood. She was so excited!

As you can probably guess, things got worse. Her little boy started to scream and cry ALL of the time. She could not understand – he had food and water, he had a house, and he had a yard in which to play. What more could he want? Her cute little boy was not as much fun as she thought he was going to be. In fact, he was an awful lot of work! Any time she went out to the yard to see him he was dirty and he ran around. Sometimes he would throw things. She was not sure what she did wrong. Other kids are so nice and so well-behaved. She figured it was just her luck to adopt a child who did not listen or behave!

Part II

I want to tell you about a friend of mine. I ask that you just listen and then let me know what you think.

She recently adopted a young dog and she was so happy because her new dog was so cute. She bought him nice little collars and showed him to all of the neighbors because he looked like he was going to be a very strong boy. But, after a few weeks, she got tired of him getting food all over the place. She soon learned that if she let him eat on the ground in the backyard her house was neater. This was much easier for her and it kept the house clean. Eventually she began to feed him all of his meals outside on the ground.

But then another problem occurred. He was not potty trained and he was loud. My friend decided to build him a dog house so he could be outside more often. The dog house even had a little container for water in the plastic bowl. She thought this worked really well! She needed to make sure he did not run away so she bought a collar and a rope and connected him to his dog house. Now she could watch him and know he was not running around the neighborhood. She was so excited!

As you can probably guess, things got worse. Her little dog started to scream and cry ALL of the time. She could not understand – he had food and water, he had a house, and he had a yard in which to play. What more could he want? Her cute little dog was not as much fun as she thought he was going to be. In fact, he was an awful lot of work! Any time she went out to the yard to see him he was dirty and he ran around. Sometimes he would dig and paw at things. She was not sure what she did wrong. Other dogs are so nice and so well-behaved. She figured it was just her luck to adopt a dog who did not listen or behave!