

Good Training = Good Pets

Language Arts

Grades 1 and 2

Objective

To understand the need for pet owners to properly train and socialize their animals.

Skill

Students will be able to identify pet owners' responsibility for their animals' behavior.

Activity

Students will describe, dramatize, and discuss solutions to problems caused by untrained pets.

Helpful Background Information

- www.clickandtreat.com/webart03.htm
- www.doggiedoor.com

Procedure

1. Encourage students to share examples of times that they were blamed for a mistake or a poor choice they made because they didn't know any better. (Limit stories, if necessary, to a few examples.) Have them describe how they felt. Were they afraid? Confused? Embarrassed? Angry? Relate this to situations in which pets are blamed for knocking over trash, digging in gardens, jumping up on people, barking during the night, or straying into neighbors' yards. Why are these actions wrong? Can animals understand why they are wrong? Who is responsible for a pet's actions?
2. Divide students into pairs or small groups. Ask each group to brainstorm a situation involving a pet, such as one of those described above. Give students a few minutes to prepare skits that dramatize those situations.
3. As a class, discuss how people could prevent their pets from doing things they shouldn't. Emphasize proper pet training, through verbal commands and positive reinforcement—not hitting or other physical punishment.