

Pet Care Adds Up

Math

Grades 3 and 4

Objective

To gain an understanding of the costs involved in properly caring for a pet.

Skill

Students will be able to calculate the expenses associated with owning a pet.

Materials

- Pet supply catalogs, Web sites, and circulars, as well as information provided by local veterinarians, pet-care providers (such as boarding kennels, sitters, humane societies, and groomers), and municipal agencies.

Activity

Students will gather and compare information about pet care costs using the above sources.

Helpful Background Information

- www.hsus.org/programs/companion/pet_care/pet_care.html
- www.healthypet.com/Library/index.html

Procedure:

1. Explain to students that a major factor in pet selection is the cost of caring for a pet.
2. Divide the class into groups and assign each a different pet, such as a dog, cat, horse, hamster, gerbil, or rabbit.
3. Distribute pet care literature so that students can become more familiar with the needs of the animal they've been assigned. Then help each group brainstorm a list of expenses associated with caring for the pet they've been assigned. These should include not only food and supplies but also adoption, vaccinations, licensing, spaying/neutering, grooming, and boarding fees.
4. Have each group research, call, or write to the sources of information listed above in order to determine the costs for each item on their list. Each group can then create a poster that illustrates their pet's needs and the expenses associated with them. Posters can be displayed in a bulletin board so that costs for different pets can be compared.