



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY**  
OF THE UNITED STATES

## “Read for Their Lives” Interactive Bulletin Board

**Objective:** Students will learn about the local animal shelter, the importance of spaying and neutering and proper pet care through independent reading and service-learning, while also practicing book summations. This bulletin board can be displayed in conjunction with literature related to homeless pets, or during any relevant animal commemorative days or events such as *Adopt a Shelter Dog Month* (month of October.)

**Grade Level(s):** Grade 5 (easily adapted for grades K-8)

### **Education Standards Addressed from the Common Core Standards:**

#### Reading: Literature

RL.5.10 - By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 4–5 text complexity band independently and proficiently

#### Reading: Foundation Skills

RF.5.3 - Phonics and Word Recognition - Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.

RF.5.4 - Fluency – Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension

#### Math

5.NBT: Numbers and Operations in Base 10 - Perform operations with multi-digit whole numbers and with decimals to hundredths.

5.NBT.5 - Fluently multiply multi-digit whole numbers using the standard algorithm.

5.NBT.6 - Find whole-number quotients of whole numbers with up to four-digit dividends and two-digit divisors, using strategies based on place value, the properties of operations, and/or the relationship between multiplication and division. Illustrate and explain the calculation by using equations, rectangular arrays, and/or area models

**Character Concepts Taught:** Responsibility, Kindness, Citizenship

### **Materials Needed:**

- A bulletin board with the tagline “Read for Their Lives”
- A paper building that represents an animal shelter
- dog and cat cut-outs (50 to 100 total) that can fit inside the paper building (depending on the number of students using the board and the duration of the activity)
- An “Adopted” box (may look like a house or be a large box on half of the bulletin board)
- Five pockets or folders labeled: *Spay and Neuter*, *Animal Shelter Brochure*, *Book Reports*, and *Worksheets* as well optional folder *More Information*
- Brochures from the local shelter about their organization and services and brochures about the importance of spay/neuter and where to find low-cost clinics. Locate your local shelter at [shelterpetproject.org](http://shelterpetproject.org).
- Copies of each of the included hand-outs: “Book Report” (page 5) and “Shelter Pets by the Numbers” (page 6)

- Additional text for the bulletin board is as follows: “There are many homeless pets in our community. Animal shelters provide temporary homes for these cats and dogs until they get adopted. You can help, too! For every book you read, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of sponsor), will donate \$1.00 to our local animal shelter!”
- Logo or name of the sponsors
- Poster or construction paper
- Markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- Photos of animals who are currently available for adoption (one for each student)
- (Optional) A separate shelf or selection of animal-themed books from which the students can choose.

**Preparation:**

1. Arrange for a local business (such as a pet supply store or local restaurant) to sponsor your project. You can set a cap on the donation by limiting the number of books each child can read, so sponsors know their maximum financial commitment. Alternatively, an individual donor or foundation, or even your parent-teacher organization may be willing to support this project.
2. Print a few photos of animals who are current residents of the local shelter. (A great place to look for photos is [shelterpetproject.org](http://shelterpetproject.org).)
3. Prepare the bulletin board and make copies as outlined above. (See page 7 for an example.)

**Opening Activity or Activating Strategy:**

1. Reveal the bulletin board to your students in a dramatic way to capture their attention (e.g., at the start of a new day when it was not there the day before, or drape it with a sheet and do an unveiling later in the day to increase the mystery). Upon revelation, mention how the bulletin board relates to what students are studying or mention the commemorative month/day/week to which it relates.
2. Ask students to read the bulletin board and ask questions to gauge what students know about animal shelters. Example questions can include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Who works at an animal shelter?
  - b. Who resides at the animal shelter?
  - c. Why might one visit a shelter?

**Body:**

1. Read *Maggie's Second Chance* by Nancy Furstinger (locate a library copy at [www.worldcat.org/title/maggies-second-chance-a-gentle-dogs-rescue/oclc/669754952](http://www.worldcat.org/title/maggies-second-chance-a-gentle-dogs-rescue/oclc/669754952)). Ask students to listen for information about an animal shelter and about why animals may become residents of the shelter.
2. Upon conclusion of the book ask students to list some of the reasons that companion animals may become homeless. Answers may include, but are not limited to: loss of job, allergies, a move, an animal is found stray with no ID, lack of training or socialization.
3. Show students photographs of animals who are like Maggie from the story and are current residents of the local shelter. Read the description of each animal. Upon the final reading ask students if they think they want to help the local shelter and to spread the message about the animals available for adoption from the local shelter.

4. Let the students know that there is something they can do in school and out that will let them help homeless pets. Inform students that for every book read and reviewed during the month \$1.00 will be donated to their local animal shelter to help care for homeless pets. Show students the sponsor who is making the project possible and hang the business logo or name in the corner of the bulletin board.

5. Describe the book review process to the students:

Directions: In order to get the donation for the shelter, students must read a book and complete a book review. (Show the students the book report form and the Book Report folder.) After reading the book and completing the review form the form must be given to the teacher who will read it and sign if it has been properly completed. Upon approval of the book report, the student may remove one animal from the animal shelter on the bulletin board and place the animal in the "adopted" section of the bulletin board. (The review forms will be turned into the financial sponsor as proof of each book read.)

6. Introduce students to the "Worksheets" folder. Describe to the students that along with the book reports done for each book, each student is responsible for completing the "Shelter Pets by the Numbers" worksheet sometime during the month while the bulletin board is in the classroom. Each student is responsible for answering the math questions correctly and turning the worksheet into the teacher.
7. Also introduce the students to the folders titled "Spay and Neuter" and "Animal Shelter." Invite students to review the pamphlets in the folders and take one or more home to share with their family and friends.
8. Allow students to work on their reading, math worksheet, and book reports throughout the allotted time.

#### **Closure or Wrap-up:**

1. At the conclusion of the month, return all "Shelter Pets by the Number" worksheets to the students and review the answers. Allow students to make revisions if necessary so they have the correct answers on their worksheets.
2. Ask each student to share one thing they learned about animal shelters and the animals who reside there during the project. Create a list of their answers and place it at the front of the room upon completion.
3. Repeat step two using the topic of spaying and neutering.
4. Ask students to use the ideas on the lists to make posters and fliers to advertise the homeless animals available for adoption at their local shelter or the need for spaying and neutering. Posters or fliers should include the following information:
  - a) The name of the local shelter
  - b) One or more reasons why the shelter is a great place to find a companion animal.
  - c) A photo of a pet who is currently at the shelterOR
  - a) A title that shows the topic of spaying and neutering
  - b) One or more reasons why spay and neuter is needed in the community
  - c) A place to have a companion animal spayed or neutered
  - d) Photo of a companion animal

5. Hang the finished posters throughout the school or at local businesses to help promote the shelter and adoption as well as spaying and neutering.
6. Celebrate the completion of the project by presenting the donation check to the animal shelter. Be sure to invite the sponsor and media to your event.

**Extensions:**

1. Consider doing this project on a school-wide basis, creating the bulletin board in a community space or hallway. If this is an option, have a competition among classes to see who can read the most books to help animals.
2. Visit the animal shelter or ask an animal sheltering professional to visit with your class. Learn about what shelters do and find out about the “behind the scenes” occurrences. Learn about needs that the shelter may have and assist them with any projects they may need completed. (Examples: do a paper towel collection or a food drive.)
3. Introduce students to alternatives to taking a companion animal to a shelter. A behaviorist or trainer can visit or describe their work and share the importance of training and socialization during a field trip. Discuss other rehoming ideas if possible, for example: allergy medications.

Note: Depending on the age and maturity of the students, the educator may wish to share that up to 4 million homeless dogs and cats in the United States are euthanized (humanely killed) every year because there is not enough space or money to care for all the animals.

## Read for their Lives: Book Report

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Book Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author \_\_\_\_\_ Genre \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Pages \_\_\_\_\_

A new word I learned from this book is \_\_\_\_\_

or a word I found interesting in the book is \_\_\_\_\_.

This word means \_\_\_\_\_.

A synonym for this word is \_\_\_\_\_.

My favorite part of the book was \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

**Congratulations! You helped care for a shelter pet today**

# Shelter Pets by the Numbers

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. How many of each type of animal is currently in our "classroom animal shelter"?

Dogs: \_\_\_\_\_ Cats: \_\_\_\_\_

2. How many total dogs are in our "classroom animal shelter"? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What percent of the total number of animals are dogs? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What percent of the total number of animals are cats? \_\_\_\_\_

5. If one cat has 6 kittens in one year, and she can have 3 litters per year, how many kittens could she have in that one year's time? \_\_\_\_\_

6. If half of those kittens are female, how many more kittens could be born to them in that next generation, assuming the same reproduction rate as above (3 litters with 6 kittens each year per cat)? \_\_\_\_\_

7. How could spaying cats help an animal shelter? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. If it costs \$17 per day to house and feed a dog in our animal shelter, how much money does the shelter need to spend on dogs today? \_\_\_\_\_

9. How much would they need to spend in a year assuming the same number of dogs? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# READ FOR THEIR LIVES!



There are many homeless pets in our community. Animal Shelters provide temporary homes for these cats and dogs until they get adopted. You can help, too! For every book you read, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of sponsor), will donate \$1.00 to our local animal shelter!

Spay  
and  
Neuter

Animal  
Shelter  
Brochure

Book  
Reports

Worksheets

More  
Information