



## A Visit to the Vet

**Grade Level:** Pre-K - 1

**Objective:** Upon completion of the lesson, students will understand the similarities between doctors who practice veterinary medicine and those who practice medicine for humans. Students will demonstrate this understanding through personal illustration.

**Time Needed:** One class meeting of about 30 minutes

**National Education Standards Addressed:**

Health: NPH-H.K-4. Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

Art: NA-VA.K-4.1 Understanding and Applying Media, Techniques, and Processes

**Character Concepts:** Respect, Kindness, Responsibility, and Compassion

**Materials Needed:**

- Props (to set up an imaginary hospital learning/play center in the classroom.) These may include but are not limited to:
  - ♦ toy stethoscopes
  - ♦ toy thermometers
  - ♦ lab coats
  - ♦ bandages
  - ♦ toothbrushes
  - ♦ empty medicine containers
  - ♦ carpet bags or other bags to be used as doctors' bags
  - ♦ examination tables
- Five or six stuffed animals (patients)
- Photo of a people doctor and his or her examining room
- Photo of a veterinarian and his or her examining room (you may wish to show an office and a doctor visiting a barn)
- Drawing paper (enough for each student)
- Crayons

**Teacher Preparation:** Set up a mock veterinary clinic in one corner of the classroom using the props listed above. (Ideally there will be space for three or four examination tables.) For the lesson body the teacher will need some of the props.

**Helpful Background Information:**

[www.avma.org/careforanimals/default.asp](http://www.avma.org/careforanimals/default.asp)

[www.petdental.com](http://www.petdental.com)

## **Lesson Procedure**

### **Opening Activity:**

1. Ask students what they do when they are sick. Whom do they tell? What person do they visit? Once students answer “the doctor,” show the photo of the doctor and his or her examination room.
2. Discuss what a doctor does to examine and treat patients (e.g., uses a thermometer to take temperatures, gives shots or medicine to get rid of germs or relieve pain, uses a stethoscope to listen to breathing and heartbeats).
3. Ask students who animals see when they do not feel well.

### **Lesson Body:**

1. Allow students to identify veterinarians as animal doctors who use similar tools and techniques for examining and treating animal patients. Once students answer “the veterinarian,” show the photo of the doctor and his or her examination room.
2. Place all of the medical props on a table at the front of the room. Ask students to help you identify each item by asking questions such as, “What would a veterinarian use to listen to an animal’s heartbeat?” and “What would a veterinarian use to take an animal’s temperature?”
3. Pass out drawing paper and ask each student to draw their pet (or a pet they hope to have one day) visiting a veterinarian. (If students cannot yet write, they can dictate captions to the educator.)
4. Hang the drawings in the classroom near the veterinary center.

### **Closure:**

Students can act out the roles of doctor and veterinarian in the classroom vet clinic. Allow plenty of free time for exploration in the veterinary clinic.

### **Extension:**

1. Ask students what feelings they have when they go to the doctor. Have your students identify and name their own feelings (possible feelings might include scared, nervous, mad, etc.) and write those feelings up on a chalkboard or white board.
2. Ask students if their pets might have those same feelings. Brainstorm ways that they may help their pet feel comfortable when taking them to the veterinarian. Answers can include talking softly to them, taking a few of their favorite treats, etc.
3. Have a local veterinarian come into the classroom and discuss what they do, share why it is important to visit the vet, and possibly host a field trip to his or her veterinary clinic.