

Name: _____

Read the story, then answer the questions below.

The Essay

"I know I'll win the Be Kind to Animals essay contest," Janette said to Arturo. "After all, everyone knows I love animals. No one has more pets than I do!"

Arturo nodded. That was true. Everywhere you looked at Janette's house—indoors and out—there were animals. There were dogs, cats, birds, hamsters, a horse, and a bunch of rabbits.

"But what about you, Arturo?" You don't have a pet. What will you write about?"

Not getting an answer, Janette turned around. Arturo was crouched down picking up worms from the sidewalk. There had been a rain shower earlier. But now the sun was out, and the sidewalk was drying up. She watched as he gently placed the worms in the cool, damp grass.

Walking along, the kids saw a turtle on the side of the road. "This is perfect!" said Janette. "Bring her home with you. She can be your pet—you can write about saving her!"

Arturo shook his head. "No, she belongs in the wild," he replied as he watched the turtle enter the safety of some tall grass.

"Don't you want a pet?" asked Janette.

"Sure I do. And someday I'll have one. But our apartment is small. And with school and soccer practice, I don't have time for a pet right now," Arturo answered as they reached Janette's home.

"Watch out when I open the door," she warned. "The dogs will jump on us. They're always so glad to see me! Let's get a snack," she called over the loud barking, as she hurried past the dogs.

"Why don't we walk your dogs first?" Arturo asked, petting a pooch with a big grin and a thumping tail.

"No, I'll just let them out. They'll be fine," said Janette, opening the door. The dogs charged outdoors, and along with them, a cat scooted through the open door.

"Your cat got out!" said Arturo, alarmed.

"Don't worry; he likes to chase mice and birds," yelled Janette from the kitchen.

At the sound of screeching tires, Arturo looked out the window. One of the dogs had barely escaped being hit by a passing car. Startled birds flew into the sky as the cat streaked toward the bush they are in.

"Ick!" Janette shuddered, entering the room. "That spider is gross. Step on him, Arturo!"

Arturo covered the spider with a cup, then gently slid cardboard underneath it. Carefully, he let the spider free outdoors. Then he picked up the cat and whistled for the dogs. They all went back indoors. Moments later, the birds returned to the berry bush. Watching them, Arturo smiled.

"Hmmm," he wondered. "What will I write about in my essay...?"

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1 Which of these kids is more humane? How can you tell?

2 Give some examples of humane vs. careless behavior. If you were Arturo, what would you write about?

