

## **Friends for Life: The Perfect Pet (Grades 3-5)**

**Suggested level:** Grades 3–5

**Subject area:** Language Arts, Social Studies, Health, Family Living

**Goal:** To understand that choosing a pet is a big decision.

**Objectives:** Students will

- list things to consider before getting a pet.
- discriminate between good homes and poor homes for a particular animal.
- summarize reasons for people–pet matches.
- understand that pets are a long-term commitment.

### **Materials**

People descriptor cards

Pet descriptor cards

### **Procedure**

- With the help of students, make a list on the board of the things you have to consider before getting a pet. (e.g. space, time, long-term commitment, allergies, money, responsibility, likes and dislikes, other family members)
- Divide the class into small groups. Explain that humane societies and SPCAs don't adopt pets to just anyone. They try to match animals with the right homes. Each group will play the role of an adoption counsellor and try to find the best people-pet combinations. Give each group the people cards. Show the picture of the first pet and read the description. Each group decides which of the families would be best to adopt that animal. Repeat with all the animals.
- Bring the class together to compare answers. Which pets did they match with which people? Why? Was there anyone they thought shouldn't have a pet? Why? What would have to change in that person's situation before a pet would be a good idea?
- Choose one of the pet–people combinations and write a story about them set ten years in the future.

### **Extensions:**

- Create a "Before You Get a Pet" brochure and/or questionnaire for prospective pet owners.
- Make a poster, bulletin board display, web site or video on choosing the perfect pet. \*Note for shelter educators: use actual shelter cards and photos instead

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