

Good Answers for Pet Problems

Social Studies

Grades 5 and 6



Objective

To identify ways of avoiding problems that commonly lead to pet relinquishment.

Skill

Students will identify reasons that people give up their pets and some ways those circumstances or problems could be avoided.

Materials

poster board and art supplies (crayons, markers, or colored pencils)

Activity

Students will design posters illustrating responsible pet ownership, as a way of encouraging people to avoid problems that can lead to pet relinquishment.

Procedure

1. Ask students to think of some reasons people might give up their pets. Write these on the chalkboard.

The National Council on Pet Population Study and Policy recently published the following list, which represents the top ten reasons people give for relinquishing their pets. Add these to your list if they have not already been identified.

1. I'm moving.
2. My landlord doesn't allow pets.
3. I have too many pets.
4. Pet care costs too much.
5. I'm having personal problems.
6. My home isn't big enough.
7. I can't find homes for a whole litter of puppies or kittens.
8. I don't have enough time for a pet.
9. My pet misbehaves.
10. The animal doesn't get along with my other pets.

2. As a class, brainstorm ways that each of the above problems could have been solved or avoided. Here are some examples, with the problems from the above list that they address.

- Don't allow your pets to have babies. Have them spayed or neutered. (3, 7, 9)
- Don't adopt a pet unless you can care for the animal properly. Caring for a pet takes time, space, money, patience, and love. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10)
- See a veterinarian. (3, 7, 9, 10)

- Get obedience training for your pet; the earlier the better. (9, 10)
- Adopt a pet who will be comfortable in your size home. (6)

3. Have students design posters illustrating one of the above examples of responsible pet ownership and display these around school or, with permission, in pet supply stores.