

A Day In The Life - Ninth Grade

OBJECTIVE

To better understand abandoned and homeless animals and the dangers they face.

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

Students will imagine spending a day as a homeless animal (dog or cat) in this writing activity.

MATERIALS

- Writing materials

DISCUSSION

- Share the information about abandoned pets included in this lesson.
- Ask students some of the ways a pet might become abandoned.
- If you have access to a computer or other literature on the subject you can incorporate it into your discussion.

LESSON

- Have the students write an essay about their life as an abandoned pet. They should describe their surroundings, paying special attention to threats such as traffic, weather, and people who don't like animals. They should also describe the things that are necessary for their survival such as places to sleep, food, and water.

POST DISCUSSION

- Ask students how they felt when writing their essay.
- What, if any, ways did they feel safe as a stray? Do they think they would miss being loved by a human?

LOST AND ABANDONED PET FACTS

Here are some quick facts about lost and abandoned pets:

LOST PETS

- Not all pets who are lost are found by their owners.
- Only about 16% of dogs and about 2% of cats are ever recovered by their owners. This is either because the owners don't check their shelter or don't check often enough.

ABANDONED PETS

- Some pets are deliberately abandoned by their owners. Reasons include allergies, moving, behavior problems (many that can be solved by qualified trainer), and no longer being able to afford a pet.
- Sometimes they are left to fend for themselves in the wild or on the streets.
- Cats in particular often live a lonely, hard life out in the streets trying to survive on their own. These cats are often feral, and do not make good pets.

Pets that are lost or abandoned often become feral, die of disease or starvation, or are picked up by an animal shelter. Animal shelters are so overcrowded in the United States that 77% of all animals in shelters are euthanized.