



Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Discuss some of the reasons for, the consequences of, and ways to prevent companion animal homelessness.
- Identify several traits of a responsible companion animal guardian.

Time Needed

45–60 minutes
1 class period

Materials

- *Before & After Story** pictures
- “Too Many Puppies?” math worksheet
- “Hazel’s Story” handout
- HEART Puppy Mill Video
<http://www.youtube.com/user/TeachingHumane/videos>

Insider Tips

- **Before & After Story*—One of the most effective tools a humane educator can use is a personal animal story. Highlighting the difficulties and ultimate triumph of an individual animal helps students put a face and name to complex and widespread problems. In this lesson, we suggest as an option that the instructor find a story of a dog or cat who has a happy adoption story. Preferably, the story would involve a “before picture,” when the animal entered the shelter and then an “after picture,” when the animal was adopted into a loving home. The more information you can find out about the animal’s homeless story, the deeper the students will become engaged.

Overview: Students will learn about companion animal issues, specifically overpopulation, homelessness, and puppy mills. Students will learn about these topics in a variety of ways, including through a video, math worksheet and discussion of an individual dog’s story from homelessness to adoption.

Procedure:

Introduction

Ask students where people can get pets? Where can a family go to get a cat or a dog? Briefly discuss.

Individual Homeless Animal Story

Introduce the students to an individual animal’s adoption story. This story will highlight one of the millions of stories of animals who end up homeless and in animal shelters.

- **Option 1:** Hazel’s Story. Read the “Hazel’s Story” handout to the class. **Note:** This is a true story.
- **Option 2:** Introduce the students to your *Before & After Story*.* Explain to the students that this story is only one out of millions of stories of homeless animals living in the country right now.

Companion Animal Overpopulation

1. Hand each student a “Too Many Puppies?” math worksheet. Explain to the students that they are going to be using math to figure out just how many puppies can come from one unsprayed dog in only two years.
2. Have students complete the “Too Many Puppies?” math worksheet either individually or in pairs. Review the math section.
3. Hold a class discussion about the answers to questions “A” and “B.”
 - (A) Takeaway Point: There are millions of homeless animals living either on the streets or in shelters. A large percentage of these millions of animals are euthanized each year because shelters do not have adequate space and resources to take care of all the homeless animals.
 - (B) Takeaway Point: Spaying is a surgery done on female animals and neutering is a surgery done on male animals to prevent them from having more babies because there are so many companion animals that already need homes. There are also other benefits to the surgery. For example, it reduces the risks of certain diseases like cancer, helps calm the animals down, and reduces the chances of their running away and getting lost.

- To find a *Before & After Story*, we suggest contacting your local animal shelter and rescue groups. You could also do online research or ask friends and family.

Classroom Teachers

- As an extension activity, have the students write a story from the point of view of a dog living in a puppy mill or living in a shelter.
- As an extension activity, see the Homeless Animal Stories, and discussion questions, in the Helping Homeless Animals Activity #2 for Grades 3–5.
- This activity aligns to Common Core Math Standard 3.OA; Speaking and Listening Standards 1, 2, and 3; and Writing Standards 2 and 4.

Outside Humane Educators

- If possible, arrange a field trip to a local animal shelter or animal rescue group so students can meet animals affected by homelessness.
- If the math computations are too difficult for your students, consider doing the math worksheet together as a class and have the students follow along.

Resource Links

Companion Animal Homelessness

- <http://www.nhes.org/articles/view/696>
- <http://www.peta.org/issues/companion-animals/overpopulation.aspx>
- <http://www.asPCA.org/adoption/pet-overpopulation.aspx>

Puppy Mills

- www.humanesociety.org/issues/puppy_mills
- <http://www.asPCA.org/PUPPYMILLS>
- <http://bestfriends.org/common/pages/resourcearticle.aspx?id=21474864659>
- <http://www.ifaw.org/united-states/resource-centre/how-much-doggie-my-browser>

Puppy Mills

1. Explain to students that even though there are millions of homeless animals waiting for forever homes, and many more animals being born on the streets every year, there are still people who purposely breed puppies and kittens. Introduce the topic of puppy mills, briefly describe what a puppy mill is and introduce the HEART Puppy Mill Video.
2. Play the HEART Puppy Mill Video for the class.
3. After the video, ask the students the following discussion questions and debrief:
 - Do you have any initial comments/feelings to share about the video?
 - Describe what you saw in the video.
 - Where do most puppies go after they are born on puppy mills?
 - Would any of you treat your own dog the way the dogs in the video were treated?
 - Why do puppy mill operators treat their dogs this way and keep them in those conditions?
 - What can we do to help stop puppy mills?

Wrap Up:

1. Ask students what they learned today. Possible answers:
 - Companion animal overpopulation is a big problem.
 - Spaying/neutering, adoption and supporting adoption centers can help reduce overpopulation and homelessness.
 - Puppy mills are terrible places where dogs are not treated well and their puppies are sold at pet stores where unsuspecting people often buy cute puppies.
2. Ask students what they can do in their own lives to help homeless animals and puppy mill dogs. Possible answers:
 - Write to pet stores and legislators.
 - Boycott pet stores that sell puppies from puppy mills.
 - Always adopt your animals from local shelters.
 - Educate others on these topics.
 - Support organizations dedicated to solving these problems.

Too Many Puppies?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Meet Lacy. She is a nice dog with a nice family. Unfortunately, Lacy's family never got her spayed (a safe surgery to make sure Lacy doesn't have any unwanted puppies). Follow the directions to see just how many puppies can come from just one unspayed dog like Lacy.



Directions: Read each sentence and write the correct number of puppies into the right column. To get the total number of puppies, add up all the numbers in the right column.

1. Lacy's family wants ONE dog and gets Lacy.	
2. In January, Lacy had EIGHT puppies. Her first litter of puppies consisted of two males and six females.	
3. In June, Lacy had her second litter. She had SIX more puppies. Three were male and three were female.	
4. In August, Lacy's SIX daughters from her first litter each had SEVEN puppies. 24 were female. (6x7)	
5. In December, Lacy had her third litter of SIX puppies. They were all female.	
6. By the next January, Lacy's THREE daughters from her second litter each had SIX puppies. 6 were female. (3x6)	
7. In May, Lacy's TWENTY-FOUR granddaughters from her first litter each had FIVE puppies. 72 were female. (24x5)	
8. In July, Lacy's SIX granddaughters from her second litter each had FOUR puppies. 15 were female. (6x4)	
9. In August, Lacy's SIX daughters from her third litter each had FIVE puppies. 10 were female. (6x5)	
10. In December, Lacy's SEVENTY-TWO great granddaughters from her first litter each had FIVE puppies. 120 were females. (72x5)	
What is the TOTAL number of puppies that were born because of one unspayed dog in two years?	

A) Will it be easy to find homes for all these puppies? What could happen to them?

B) What could Lacy's family have done to prevent so many puppies from being born?

Too Many Puppies?

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Date: _____

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1. Lacy's family wants ONE dog and gets Lacy.	1
2. In January, Lacy had EIGHT puppies. Her first litter of puppies consisted of two males and six females.	8
3. In June, Lacy had her second litter. She had SIX more puppies. Three were male and three were female.	6
4. In August, Lacy's SIX daughters from her first litter each had SEVEN puppies. 24 were female. (6x7)	42
5. In December, Lacy had her third litter of SIX puppies. They were all female.	6
6. By the next January, Lacy's THREE daughters from her second litter each had SIX puppies. 6 were female. (3x6)	18
7. In May, Lacy's TWENTY-FOUR granddaughters from her first litter each had FIVE puppies. 72 were female. (24x5)	120
8. In July, Lacy's SIX granddaughters from her second litter each had FOUR puppies. 15 were female. (6x4)	24
9. In August, Lacy's SIX daughters from her third litter each had FIVE puppies. 10 were female. (6x5)	30
10. In December, Lacy's SEVENTY-TWO great granddaughters from her first litter each had FIVE puppies. 120 were females. (72x5)	360
What is the TOTAL number of puppies that were born because of one unspayed dog in two years?	615

A) Will it be easy to find homes for all these puppies? What could happen to them?

B) What could Lacy's family have done to prevent so many puppies from being born?

Hazel's Story



This is Hazel. Hazel's story, though unique, is unfortunately not too unusual. Her story starts with a video camera in an elevator. Police and prosecutors found some video footage from that camera, showing Hazel's guardian abusing her. The police did a thorough investigation, concerned that Hazel's guardian was a dog fighter and using Hazel as a bait dog. After the investigation, a few things happened. Hazel was seized from her guardian, had her injuries treated

by caring veterinarians, and was brought to the ASPCA animal shelter. Though he wasn't a dog fighter, Hazel's guardian was punished for abusing and hitting Hazel and he expressed deep remorse for hurting her.

At the ASPCA, Hazel was nursed back to health and recovered from her physical and emotional injuries. She learned to trust people again and, after some time, she found a new home! Hazel was adopted by a loving couple that gave her a new life. Hazel must have known she was home because her new doggie mom said, "As soon as we got her home, she started kissing me and kissing my fiancé."

Hazel's story is just one of the millions of stories of homeless animals that end up at animal shelters every year. Thankfully, Hazel's story had a happy ending, but there are still so many cats and dogs at shelters waiting for their forever homes.

