PET OVERPOPULATION

**LESSON 5: Grades K-3**

**12 MONTHS OF KINDNESS**

**Curriculum Connections, Standards addressed:**

**Academic Goals:** 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 4.1, 4.3, 4.5, 4.6 & 4.7

**Knowledge Goals:**  Communication Arts: 1, 3, 4, 5 & 6; Mathematics: 1 & 3; Science 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 & 8; Social Studies: 5, 6 & 7; Fine Arts: 1, 2 & 4; Health & Phys Ed: 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6

**Objective:** To help students realize that kindness, respect and responsibility toward animals is a way of life—365 days a year. Incorporating simple changes or modifications and making good choices will help to create a year of humane attitudes for students, making the world a better place for animals and people too! The ultimate responsibility we have for our companion animals is to prevent too many from being born and to assure there are homes for all. See how many ways this message can be blended with messages about kindness to all living creatures.

**Common Core-Aligned Activities:**

**SL.K-2.1—Participate in collaborative conversations with peers and adults.**

**SL.K-2.4—Describe people, places, things and relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.**

Talk with students about the calendar, what it means and how it serves us. With 365 days a year and 24 hours a day, there is surely time each day to do one kind act. Have students discuss what types of kind acts they can do. Are they hard to do? Reasonable? Costly? Within the discussion, establish that most acts of kindness are simple to do, easily accomplished and cost nothing. Have students contribute to a master list of kind acts they would like to do. Discuss the impact this would have on your classroom, the school, their families and the community. Remind them kindness is contagious….they would be starting the type of epidemic we all would like to ‘catch.

**Character Concepts:**

**This activity touches upon ALL of the character concepts!! ☺**

**STEM initiatives: Thinking critically in the connections to Science, Technology, Engineering and Math**

**2-LS2-1—**Events have causes that generate observable patterns.

Cause and Effect are powerful observation tools that can predict patterns. How can one daily kind act from each student in your class affect your classroom, school, families and community at large?

**Materials:**

* Twelve sheets of poster paper
* Markers or crayons

**Method:** The teacher will write each month at the top of the twelve sheets of poster paper. Help children get started by discussing simple acts of kindness to animals. Discuss daily acts of kindness necessary to keep animals happy and healthy and seasonal acts. For example, when the temperature is very hot, dogs get hot, just like we do. A cool drink of water and a shady, breezy resting spot are necessary to be humane (kind.) Is fresh water only necessary during summer months? No, fresh water is essential EVERYDAY. Therefore fresh water is written under EVERY month of the year.

Some other topics for discussion may include daily care, such as feeding or brushing or spending time with your pet. Some may include seasonal topics, such as sending valentines or Christmas gifts to the homeless animals at your local animal shelter. Keep the creative juices flowing in your students by suggesting ways they can be kind to animals in your community every day!

\*\*\*\*(To download the Humane Society of Missouri’s Kind Calendars for Animals, go to www.hsmo.org and click on the Humane Education dropdown menu, then the Teachers Resources tab. Use this as a prototype to create your own special year for the animals.)

**Call To Action:** Create a Kind Calendar for Animals in art class and distribute copies to other classes in your school. (The local newspaper may be interested in a copy as well!) Distribute monthly copies with PTA and school notes to parents. Have students create large (poster sized) copies of the calendar and change monthly to display at local businesses and grocery stores. Students can produce copies of the calendars to sell as a fund-raiser for your local animal shelter. Students can present a Year of Kindness to Animals in an oral presentation or drama to other classes.

**Reading:** Visit our section entitled ***Recommended Children’s Literature*** for a comprehensive listing of animal-related books.

**Web sites:** Visit our section entitled ***Recommended Web Links*** for animal-related web sites.