**CANINE COMPANIONS**

**LESSON 3: Grades K-3**

**KEEPING DOGS SAFE: PET HAZARDS**

**Curriculum Connections, Standards addressed:**

**Academic Goals:** 1.5, 1.6, 1.10, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, 3.3, 3.6, 3.7, 4.6, 4.7

**Knowledge Goals:** Communication Arts: 1, 4; Science: 3; Health/Physical Education: 5

**Objective:** To help children identify pet hazards and learn how to keep dogs safe.

**Common Core-Aligned Activities:**

**SL.3-4.1—Engage effectively in collaborative discussions building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.**

**SL.3-4.1c—Pose and respond to specific questions and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to remarks of others.**

Ask students to discuss how dogs--as living, breathing, feeling creatures---have needs. What are those needs? How can these needs be compromised? How are the needs of dogs similar to the needs of small children? What happens when we don’t provide what we should for our dog, allowing them to come in harm’s way because of our action or lack of action?

**Character Concepts:** Responsibility

Being the guardian of another creature is very important. You hold their welfare in your hands. It is vital you help maintain a safe environment for your canine friend. Your pet is totally dependent on you to do what you are supposed to do, providing a safe and compassionate home for your canine friend.

**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 cause and effect predict the likelihood of accidents as a result of hazards—in the home, neighborhood, environment?

**Materials:**

* Hole punch
* String or yarn
* Colored paper
* Scotch tape
* Markers, crayons, or colored pencils
* DOWNLOAD Handout: “Pet Hazards” cards
* DOWNLOAD Handout: “Pet Hazards at Home”
* DOWNLOAD Handout: “Happy Holidays”
* DOWNLOAD Handout: “Safety Officer” badges

**Method:** Dogs face many hazards inside and outside the home. A hazard is something that can be dangerous or pose a threat to your safety, in this case, the safety of your dog. We have always heard about being careful and safe around dogs, but what about the actual safety of your dog? Because we care about dogs, we are going to learn how to keep them safe. Dogs depend on us to watch over them and protect them from anything that can be harmful.

Today we are going to become official “Safety Officers.” You are going to be in charge of keeping dogs (actually, all pets!) safe from harm. Join us as we make badges to wear and help to bust all the dangerous hazards that our dogs may face.

Attention teachers: Distribute a copy of the” Safety Officers” badge to each student. Ask students to decorate them with markers, colored pencils or crayons. Use a hole-punch and string so that the children can wear their colorful badges or rolled scotch tape to secure them to their shirts.

Cut apart the “Pet Hazards” cards provided. Put all hazard cards into a box. Have each student choose a hazard card. Each student will be responsible for learning about the hazard they chose. In small groups, students should address:

1. Why each hazard is dangerous for dogs and other pets.
2. In what areas of the house (neighborhood, classroom, etc.) could that hazard be found?
3. How could this hazard be prevented for dogs and other animals? How is this similar to hazards for children?
4. What other hazards can students list that might be harmful to dogs (pets)?

If you had a classroom pet, what hazards could affect this pet? What other dangers can students think of that weren’t listed? Are there special times of the year that create more hazards. i.e holidays with garlands and lights? Candles for Hanukkah? Fourth of July fireworks? How can the weather be a hazard to dogs (especially “outside” or chained dogs)?

Help students review this lesson with the “Pet Hazards at Home” handout. See the “Happy Holidays” handout to find out more about seasonal hazards. This is important safety information for **all** pet parents!

**Call To Action:** Create a “Dog Safety Quilt.” Using pieces of colored paper, ask each student to draw a picture, make a collage or write a short essay to teach other students about the hazards our dogs may face---but more importantly, how they can be avoided! When all of the “quilt squares” are complete, hang them together to form a “quilt” in a large visible area of your school. Other students will then be able to learn about safety hazards for dogs (other pets and themselves, too!) and how we can help keep our best friends safe.

Even if you’re not wearing your badge, you should always be a “Safety Officer” for all animals! You can help all animals by making the world a safer place. Involve your family as you look for hazards inside and outside of your home. Take appropriate action to make your home, yard, neighborhood and school a safe place for pets and people!

**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.