



HOME FAMILY CARE AWARD



PROJECT: CARING FOR PETS

GOALS

A. PET RESEARCH: Learn basic principles of basic pet care.

B. PET CARE: Practice caring for your pet.

A. PET RESEARCH

Common Pets (Identify four)

Dog, cat, rabbit, fish, guinea pig, hamster, mouse, turtle, parakeet, finch

Basic Pet Needs Checklist

- Shelter (indoor/outdoor)
- Bathroom area
- Food
- Water
- Movement/exercise
- Love and care

FUN FACT: Studies show that people with pets live longer, have less stress, and fewer health problems.

Caring for a pet can be a fun and fulfilling addition to life. Pet ownership is beneficial to physical and mental health. Pet care also comes with the daily responsibility of making sure your pet's basic needs are met. Complete the following to learn about your specific pet's needs.

Step 1—Choose your Pet

Choose one of your pets to research, or choose a pet you will take care of for one week that belongs to a friend or neighbor.

Step 2—Ask an Expert

Go to your local pet store, vet, or experienced friend or family member and inquire about your pet's needs for each item in the "Basic Pet Needs Checklist." Do not worry if the expert is not familiar with varying needs of different breeds—you will be able to do more research later! See below for helpful interview questions for your expert.

- What kind of bed, cage, aquarium, or other shelter does my pet need?
- What are my pet's bathroom needs?
- What type of food does my pet eat?
- How often does my pet need to eat?
- How should I provide water for my pet?
- What kind of movement does my pet need?
(*Running, walking, room to play, time inside or outside*)
- How much time does my pet need with people?

FUN FACT: In Belgium in 1879, 37 cats were "hired" to carry bundles of letters to villages. The service didn't last long because the mail cats wouldn't cooperate!

Step 3—Research Your Pet

Find out what type of breed your animal is. For example, if you own a turtle, determine what kind of turtle it is! Research your breed and see if there is anything you need to add to your Basic Needs Checklist.

FUN FACT: There are more than 9,000 species of birds. Parakeets, canaries, finches, and parrots are the most popular to keep as pets.

B. PET CARE

Step 1—Offer to Care

Take over caring for the family pet for one week, or offer to help care for a neighbor's or friend's pet for one week.

Step 2—Plan your Week

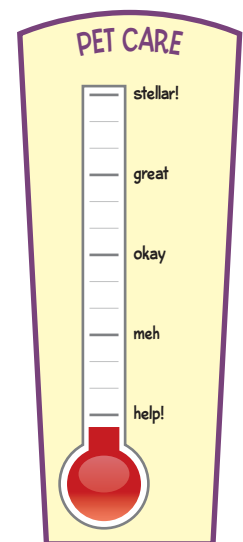
Based off your pet's food, water, and movement needs—plan your week! For example, if you are watching a dog, you may need to walk the dog every day for exercise, and schedule times to check on the food and water bowl each day. If you are bringing a pet home in a cage, make sure you have the right space and spot for the pet.

Step 3—Have Fun!

Enjoy your week caring for your pet's basic needs. Make sure you spend time holding, watching, petting, or playing with your pet (if appropriate).

Step 4—How Did You Do?

Use the following meter to grade how you did at caring for the pet! Grade yourself based off your faithfulness to care for the pet's basic needs!



RESEARCH MORE

- <http://pbskids.org/itsmylife/family/pets/>
- *The Illustrated Practical Guide to Small Pets & Pet Care* by David Alterdon
- *Cool Jobs for Young Pet Lovers (Ways to Make Money Caring for Pets)* by Pam Scheunemann.
- *I Love My Pet Dog* by Aaron Carr

My child has successfully completed the Project Goals for the topic—Caring for Pets.

Adult Signature: _____ Date: _____

(Complete SIX projects to earn your FAMILY CARE award)