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KiDDiWiNKiE  
SCHOOLHOUSE

@ Newton

(Centre Code: PT5280)

# AN INNOVATION GUIDANCE PROJECT ON 'RESPONSIBLE AND CONSIDERATE PET OWNERSHIP'

By: Fang Hong and Sheryl



## Objectives

1. Show care and respect for the soft toy pet living in the classroom (DOW, Learning Goal 3)
2. Take responsibility for their actions (SED, Learning Goal 5)

## Brief Description

- Each class has adopted a soft toy pet (cat / dog) in their calming cove corner.
- Children are being encouraged to take care of it during their daily time in school.
- Five planned lesson activities will also be conducted.

## Summary of Five Planned Lesson Activities

- 1 • Differentiate wild animals from pets
- 2 • Benefits of having pets
- 3 • Introduction to our class pet
- 4 • Caring for the class pet
- 5 • Responsible pet ownership, and civic-minded behaviour of pet owners



*Calming Cove at Sheryl's Nursery classroom*

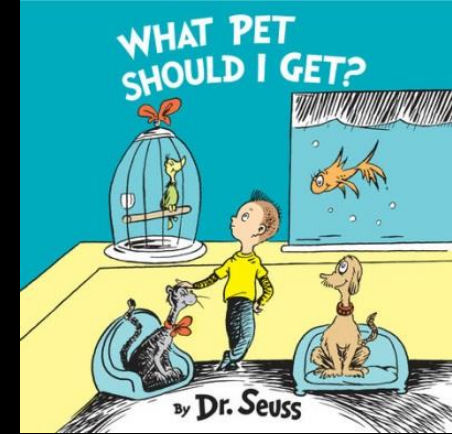


*Child who was caring for the soft toy pet at Fang Hong's K2 classroom*

# Fang Hong's Reflection on the Implementation of the Activities

After reading the storybook titled "What Pet Should I Get?" Storybook by Dr. Seuss, the children discussed about the following questions.

- Which animals would make a good pet?
- Why can't we adopt wild animals as pets?
- Should we discuss with our family members before getting a pet? Why or why not?
- How can we be a responsible pet owner?
- Why should we buy a pet from the pet shop?
- Other than the pet shop, where else can we find the pets that we like?



## Children's learning points and sharing:

1. Children were able to differentiate wild animals from pets.
2. Children recognized that wild animals thrive in their own natural environment. Hence, humans should not bother them.
3. Some wild animals may easily hurt humans.
4. Wild animals may carry diseases which may be spread to humans.
5. Only wildlife doctors know how to care for wild animals.
6. Before getting a pet, you need to discuss with and seek the approval from all family members. This is as a form of respect to your family members' decision. If our family members do not like pets or have allergies, we should not adopt a pet. We also need to gather their support to help out in taking care of the pet.
7. Pets in the pet shop are healthy and do not carry diseases. Hence, it is safe for us to buy a pet from the pet shop.

During the discussion, a child asked, "But what if I don't like pets?" Hence, to extend their learning, we read the storybook titled "Who Stole My Pizza?" to instil the value of "responsibility".



Extension activity:

## Fang Hong's Reflection on the Implementation of the Activities

After reading the storybook titled, "Who Stole My Pizza?", the children came up with two questions, "What is a stray animal?", "Why do animals like dogs or cats loiter around?" The children discussed based on these two lines of inquiry, and concluded that:

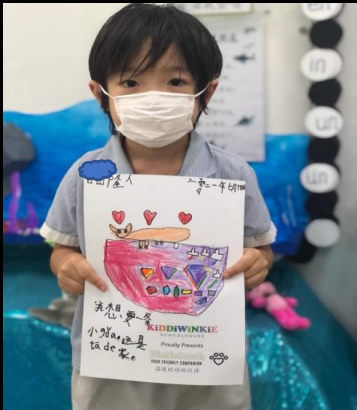
1. We cannot abandon pets. Otherwise, it will become a stray dog or cat. It will be very pitiful, with no food, dirt, and easily fall sick or get bullied by others.
2. We must be responsible for our pet. We need to learn how to take care of pets, and give them food and water. The pets' food and water are different from ours. We need to maintain their hygiene by giving it showers and cleaning after its poo. We also need to play with them and let them exercise. They also need to visit the doctor and take medication when ill.

A child shared that he has 48 small fishes at home, which needs to be fed 5 times daily, in very small portions. They need to change water for the fish regularly, otherwise the fish poo will dirty the water and cause the fish to fall ill.

Another child shared her experience of taking care of her pet dog at her grandmother's house. She would visit it every weekend and bring its favourite food, help to bathe it, exercise and play together. She would even sing songs to it as it likes it.

3. If you encounter a stray cat or dog, you can ask your mummy or daddy to call the hotline to request for them to find its pet owner.
4. The children then drew what they like about pets.

I want to have a dog.  
I will give it lots of love.



Mummy bought a pet  
fish for me.



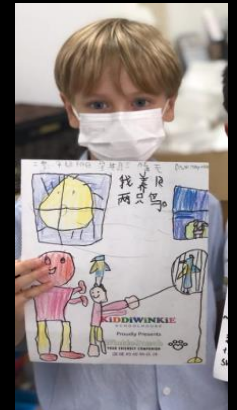
I want to have a pet rabbit.  
I will bring it to the garden  
to play.



My four family members  
with our pet dog. It is  
four years old.



I adopted two pet  
birds. I enjoy playing  
with them.





## Sheryl's Reflection on the Implementation of the Activities

- The daily consistency in caring for the class pet has been effective in instilling the values of care and responsible pet ownership in the children.
- While my initial plan was to only introduce the class pet during the third lesson, I had given the children ample of opportunities to figure how they would do so using the provided tools prior to the lesson implementations due to their curiosity and interest in caring for it. Initially, I observed that the children were just playing and exploring how they could interact with the pet. They seemed to treat it as an inanimate play object with more of a one-way interaction. At times, they would even find it funny to brush the pet in a not-so-gentle manner, snatch or throw it around.
- During the third lesson, I improvised and pretended to be lollipop, and encouraged them to identify animal feelings and behaviour. We explored treating Lollipop in different ways (using gentle and not-so-gentle touches), and demonstrated how their actions would affect Lollipop's behaviour. Afterwards, I spent time guiding the children during the daily caring of the pet, and modelling pretending to be Lollipop during their play. Gradually over time, the children began showing more thoughtful and empathetic interaction with Lollipop, as they started taking turns and working together to interact with and care for Lollipop, as well as gave suggestions on how to improve Lollipop's living conditions, such as, "Can we have a bath tub for lollipop?" "Let's make a cake for Lollipop's birthday!" This showed me that they were being sensitive in considering and caring for Lollipop's needs. Some of them had also shown perspective taking, as they caught onto my modelling of pretending to be Lollipop, and had done so themselves. They pretended to be Lollipop chasing after and fetching the ball which their peer had thrown to Lollipop.

### Lesson 3



**R:** This is a happy dog and a happy cat.

**S:** Look, Tr. Sheryl! I'm pretending to be a happy dog. I can crawl and jump so high you know?

### Lesson 4



**L:** Lollipop finished poo-ing. I will shower him.

**S:** I will help you to hold Lollipop. You can measure his heartbeat.

**S:** I will brush its hair after you wash it.

**R:** Lollipop is sick. I will listen to his heartbeat.

# Sheryl's Reflection on the Implementation of the Activities

- The five lessons have been effective in enriching the children's conceptual understanding of responsible and considerate pet ownership to a moderate extent. Spontaneous changes were made to the planned activities so as to better support their understanding of responsible and considerate pet ownership.
- The first two lessons were helpful in deepening the children's interest and understanding about what can be considered pets, and what is not considered pets. The second lesson was a little challenging for me to prepare as I was not very sure about which animal they would think of. The children could plan and use the available basic materials they would like to use to create their pet, and I supported their ideas by adding more materials from there. During the fifth lesson, the children were able to pick a picture which they were interested in. They were given time to discuss in their pairs or groups of three about what they saw. They were invited to share their inferences about the pictures. I observed that their sharing was brief and basic. Hence, I provided further probing to facilitate their understanding about how these pet owner behaviours seemed - whether it was responsible or not so responsible, as well as to suggest how they could have been more responsible. After the final lesson, few children seemed to remain at the level of describing how to take care of pets, while at least half of the children could describe how to be a responsible and civic-minded pet owner.

C: A big space to move; toys for playing; a place to pee.

What will a pet need?

A: It needs to eat food; drink water.

C: A terrapin is a pet, but a shark is a wild animal.

Lesson 1

Lesson 2

A: I'm making a bird.

A: I want (to add) feathers. Bird have wings.

C: I think it is resting and playing inside the box.

A: I see a cat inside the box.

R: I see so many dogs. 1, 2, 3, ... 11!

Lesson 5

*Thank You For  
Listening*