

ARE YOU AN ANIMAL SAFETY SLEUTH?

LESSON 2: Grades 4-6

USING DETECTIVE WORK TO PET-PROOF YOUR HOME AND LOCATE LOST PETS

Show Me Standards: Academic Goals: 1.5, 1.6, 1.8, 1.10, 2.1, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6, 3.7, 4.1 & 4.7
Communication Arts: 1, 4 & 6; Fine Arts: 4; Health & Phys Ed: 5 & 7

Objectives: The students will identify ways to “pet proof” their homes to make them safe for their pets. They will identify ways to prevent their pets from becoming lost and will familiarize themselves with appropriate steps of action to retrieve lost pets.

Materials:

- Household Hazards handout (one per student or make one transparency for an overhead projector)
- Microchip handout
- “Lost Pets” bookmark
- Poster board or 11 x 17 paper
- Markers
- Current pictures of students’ pets
- Tape

Method:

Part 1: Pass out the Household Hazards handouts to each student or use the transparency for all to see. Explain to students that it is very important to pet-proof your home in order to keep it safe for your pets. Tell the students that don’t have pets that they can use their sleuthing skills to help neighbors, relatives and friends pet-proof their homes. Ask your students with younger brothers and sisters to identify things that their parents have done to make their house safer for their siblings (electrical socket covers, cabinet locks, moved candles out of reach, keep small items off the floor and out of reach, etc.). Explain that these same household items and others are dangerous to animals as well. Tell them you are about to send them on a mission.

They are going to go “undercover” in groups and have three minutes to inspect the classroom, which has many of the same hazards as the home. Cooperative learning is important so encourage them to stay in their groups and explore together. Tell them to remember what they find because they are going to share what they uncover. Begin playing the Mission Impossible music, ask the students to have their spyglasses ready for some action.

Announce when the time is up and have each group report their discoveries. Write these on the board as you go, being careful not to exclude any suggestions. Write down all the rooms of a house on the chalkboard and have the class list potential hazards beneath each room. Encourage them to close their eyes and think of instances in each room in their house where potential hazards could be found (include yard, basement, bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchens, laundry room etc.). Type these up and distribute a copy to each student in a checklist format so they can use it to pet-proof their homes or the homes of neighbors and relatives. Make it official-looking, easy to read and put the name of your class somewhere on the form.

Part 2: Explain to students that besides Pet-Proofing their home, they need to escape-proof it! Discuss what could happen if their pets escape, become lost or left outdoors unsupervised:

1. they might be stolen
2. hit by a car
3. attacked by another animal
4. harmed by a mean person
5. starve without adequate food or water

Ask the class what actions can be taken to prevent a pet from becoming lost and list them on the chalkboard.

They should include:

1. Always keep your cats indoors.
2. Never leave pets outside unsupervised.
3. Always walk your pets on a leash.
4. Have your pet micro-chipped!

Explain that a microchip is a little metal bar the size of a grain of rice that is injected between the pet's shoulder blades just beneath the skin with a needle (like a shot or vaccination). If their lost pet is found and taken to a veterinary clinic or animal shelter their pet will be scanned with something very similar to a scanner at the grocery store that will show the microchip number. That number is then put into a computer database where the owner's name, address and phone number is stored and they can be called and notified that their pet has been found. Explain that thousands of animals each year are reunited with their families and find their way back home because they have a microchip. The microchip is relatively painless to insert, is injected by a veterinarian and costs around \$25.00. This is a small price to pay for your pet's ticket home! Tell your young detectives that no two microchips have the same number so each animal can be identified. *Quick Quiz:* Ask them what identification they have on their bodies that is not the same as anyone else's in the world (answer: fingerprints of course!)

Hand out a Lost Pet bookmark to each student and discuss each plan of action on the bookmark. Stress the importance of following all of the steps to increase their chances of finding their lost pet. Explain why it is important to keep recent photographs of each pet in case he/she becomes lost. You can use this photo to ask neighbors if they've seen your pet and to make posters and flyers to hang up around your neighborhood. Encourage students not to give up looking if their pets become lost! Tell them to put their detective skills to use to help friends and family find lost pets too!

Call to Action: You can speak with your principal or other teachers and invite their classes to attend an assembly where your students can explain and distribute the "pet-proof" checklists they've created.

Have students create Lost Pet Posters in advance just in case their pets become lost. Ask students with multiple pets to bring in current pictures of **all** of their pets so those students without pets can use some of their photos to make posters that their classmates can use. Students without pets may also bring in recent photos of relatives', neighbors' or friends' pets. Instruct students to tape the photo to their poster and include the following:

- Pet's name
- Description of pet
- Description of collar/tags
- Location and date he/she was last seen
- Your phone number including area code
- Offer a reward
- DO NOT put your name or address on the flyer

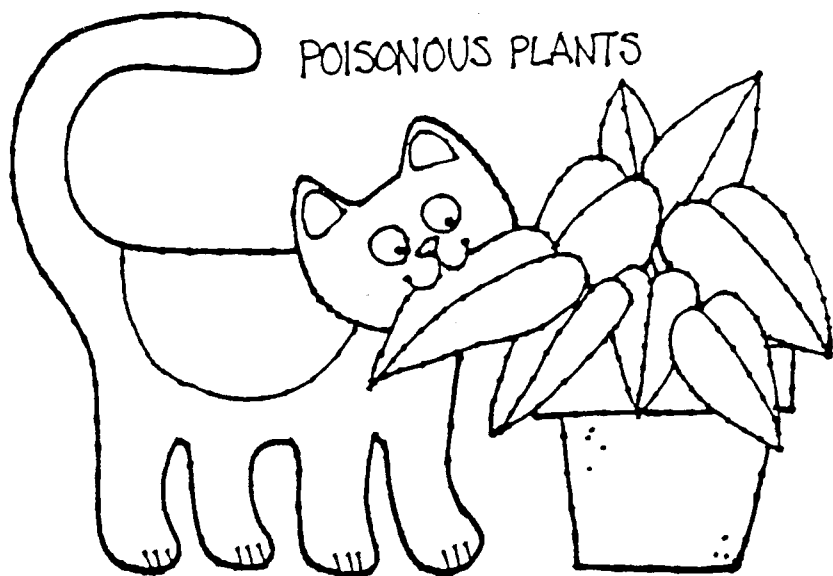
If they tape the picture instead of gluing it, they can easily remove and update the picture. Hopefully you won't need the poster but you will have it ready to go at a moment's notice if he/she does disappear.

Hang your poster(s) in grocery stores, community centers, churches, parks, gas stations and other public places in your area.

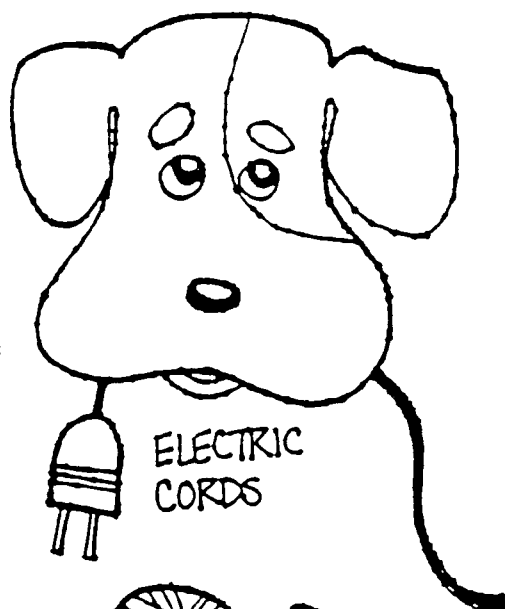
Attention Teacher: See following activity sheet "Mixed-up Nouns"

Web sites: For recommended animal-related web sites visit www.apamo.org and choose "Animal Issues" from the left-side menu, then choose "Links" from the top of the page. Or [click here](#) to launch your browser and link directly to the list.

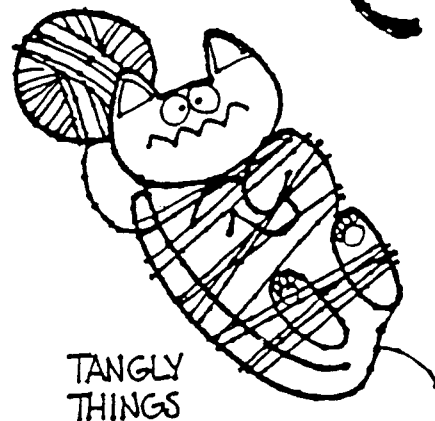
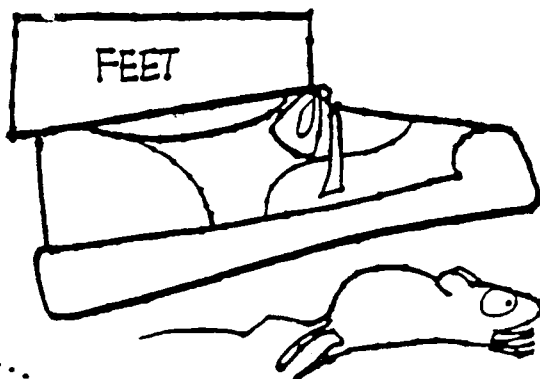
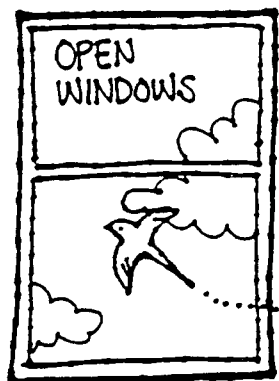
Household Hazards To Pets



POISONOUS PLANTS

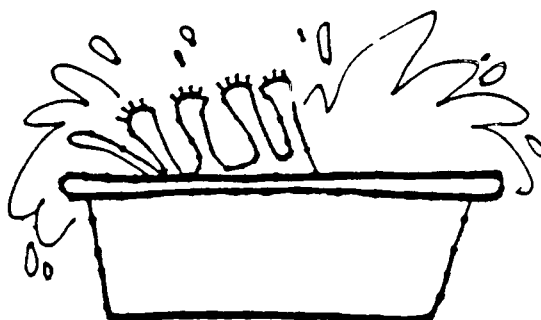
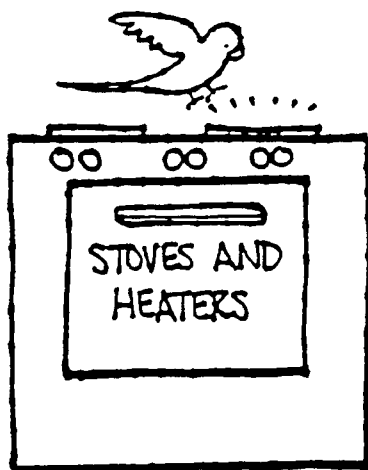
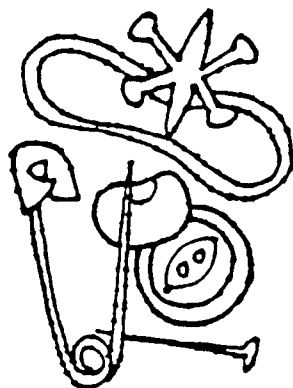


ELECTRIC CORDS



TANGLY THINGS

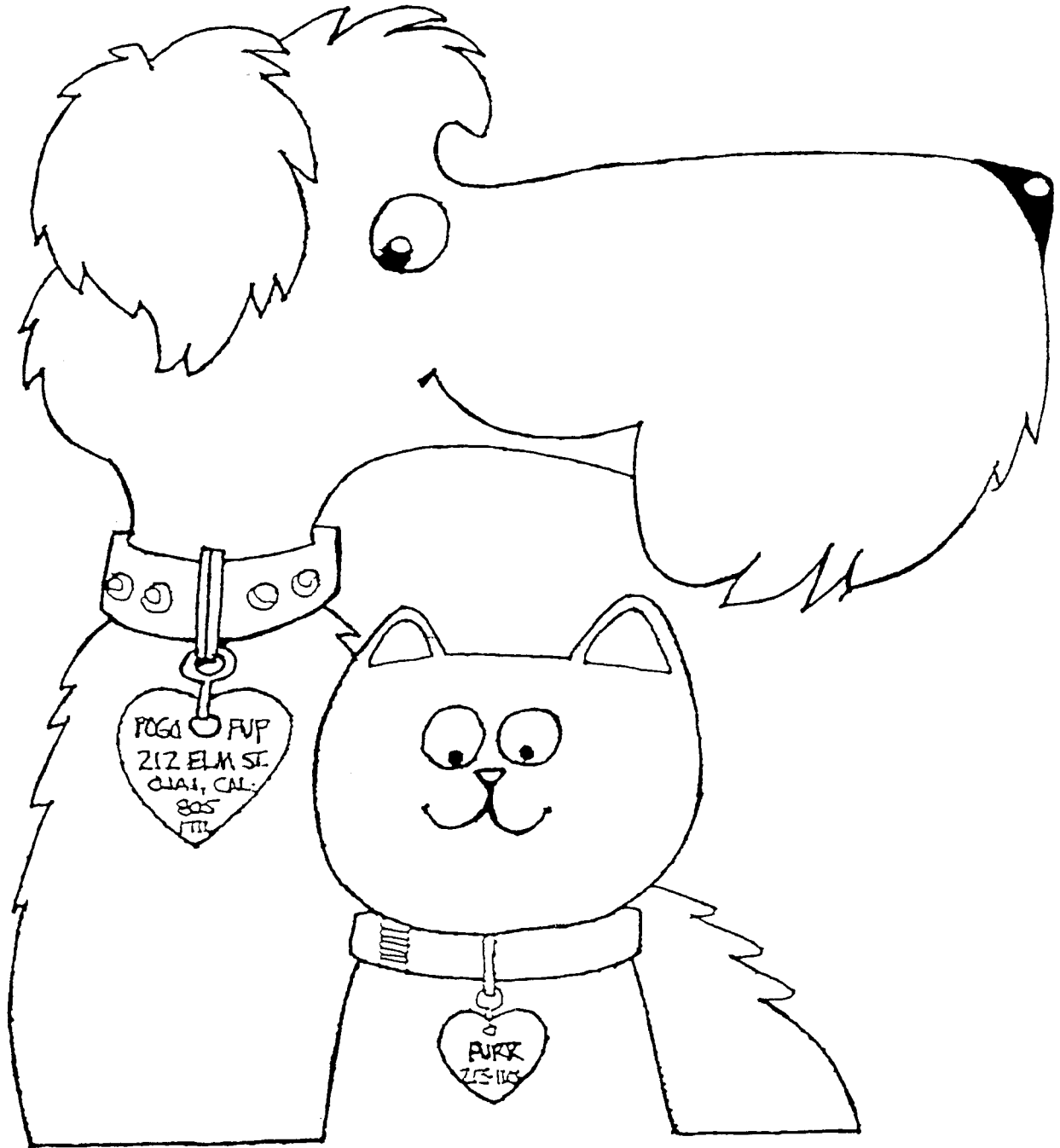
SHARP AND SWALLOWABLE THINGS



OPEN CONTAINERS OF WATER

Tell your dog or cat “I Love You” with an I.D. tag.

If it gets lost, it will greatly increase the chances of it returning to you safely.



If you LOSE a pet . . .

Look around your neighborhood. Ask people if they have seen your pet.

Check **all** animal shelters in your area **in person at least every 3 days**. Keep trying. Your pet may wander (or be kept by someone) for a while before being turned in.

Place signs in your neighborhood, shopping centers, vet offices, pet stores and grooming parlors.

Using a picture of your pet will attract attention. Adding the word "REWARD" to the signs may speed your pet's return.



Put ads in the newspaper. Watch "found" ads and respond to any that might *possibly* be your pet. A week of wandering can turn a fluffy white poodle into a "gray mutt".



HUMANE SOCIETY OF MISSOURI

314-647-8800

www.hsmo.org

1201 Macklind Ave.

St. Louis, MO 63110

2400 Drilling Service Dr.

Maryland Hgts, MO 63043

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Lost Pets

Where to check:

St. Louis City

Humane Society of Missouri
1201 Macklind Av. 63110
(314) 647-8800

St. Louis City Animal Center
2120 Gasconade 63118
(314) 353-5838

St. Louis County

Humane Society of Missouri
2400 Drilling Service 63043
(314) 647-8800

South Co. Animal Control
77 Hunter Rd. 63124
(314) 726-6655

Animal Protective Assoc.
1705 S. Hanley 63144
(314) 645-4610

North Co. Animal Control
4100 Seven Hills Dr. 63033
(314) 831-6500

St. Charles Humane Society
(636) 949-9918

**Come by the Humane
Society of Missouri to pick
up a more complete list.**

If you FIND a lost animal...
Check for an I.D. tag or
take the animal to your
veterinarian or a local
shelter to see if the animal
has a micro-chip I.D.



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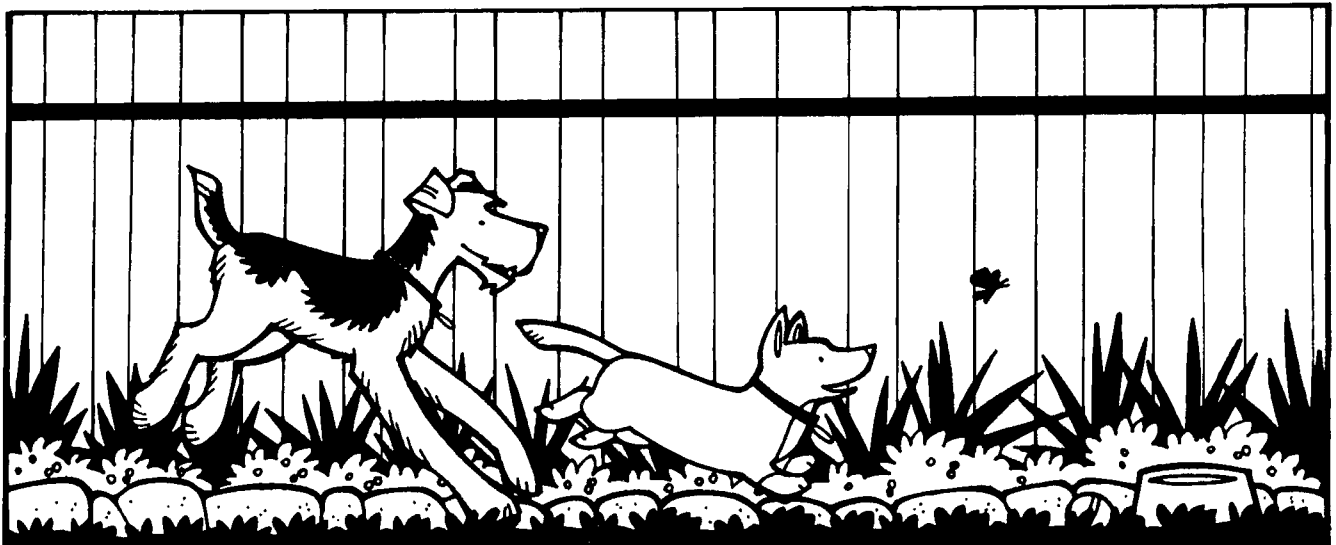
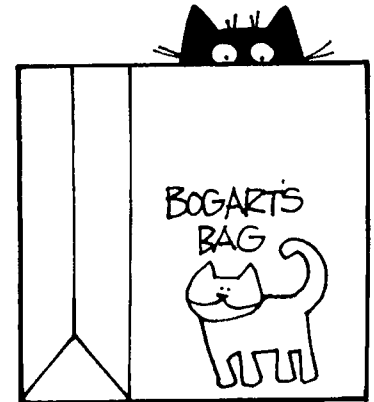
KIND Name _____

Mixed-up Nouns

A noun is a word that names a person, animal, place, or thing. In each sentence below, two nouns have been switched.

Circle the nouns that are in the wrong place in each sentence.

1. Some pets, like poinsettia and bittersweet, can make plants very sick.
2. Keep cars indoors, where they are safe from other animals and cats.
3. Make sure cats and shots have the dogs they need each year.
4. A sick veterinarian should be taken to a pet.
5. When outside, yards belong in fenced dogs or on a leash.
6. Don't let cats or yarn play with a ball of kittens.
7. A paper cat makes a fun toy for a bag.
8. Bones can choke on turkey or chicken pets.
9. Dogs can be very harmful for chocolate.
10. Clean up spilled animals, because it can poison antifreeze.



On the back, rewrite the sentences on this page so that they are correct. When written correctly, the sentences give important pet-safety tips.