



Mystery Pet Box

Subject: General Care

Grade Levels: Pre-school – 5th grade

Time: 10-15 min (depending on items used)

Audience Size: any

Objectives:

- Students will be able to identify various items important to pet care
- Students will be able to explain how each item is used and describe the consequences of not using an item
- Students will be able to describe how each of a pet's needs correlates with a human need

Materials:

- A medium-sized box, decorated brightly, with the following items inside:
 - can of dog food
 - hamster water bottle
 - various types of toys for different species (i.e., bone for dog's chewing, fake mouse for cat's chasing, etc.)
 - collar with tag
 - leash
 - sealed bag with dollars and change
 - first aid kit/empty medicine bottle
 - bag of treats
 - dog sweater
 - kitty litter scoop
 - brush
 - small toy house or representation of a house

Introduction:

What does a Pet Pal do for his or her pets? (He or she helps take care of them.) If you want to be a Pet Pal, you need to know what they need to be healthy and happy. Pets need a lot of different things, just as you and I. What are some of the things we need to make us healthy and happy? (Solicit audience responses.) Those are all great answers. Believe it or not, a pet needs a lot of the same things! Let's take a look in this box and find out what a pet needs.

Procedure:

1. Ask for a volunteer. Have him or her reach into the box (without peeking) and pull out an item. Volunteer should hold item up so entire class can see.
2. Ask volunteer what item is. If volunteer is unsure, allow classmates to assist. After object has been named, volunteer can take a seat.
3. Have another student explain what item is used for. Some items will need special discussion:
 - a. collar with tag – can discuss tag vs. microchip, what information should be included in either ID form
 - b. money – explain that you don't have to be wealthy to care for a pet, but you do have to budget for expenses
 - c. treats – treats should be enjoyed in moderation
 - d. sweater – most dogs do not need clothes, but all animals should be protected from weather extremes (hot, cold, etc.)
 - e. brush – different animals have different grooming needs, but most pets enjoy regular brushing
 - f. house – cats should be kept indoors for their and wildlife's safety; dogs enjoy the company of their family and do not want to be left outside alone; caged pets (such as hamsters, snakes, fish, etc.) need their homes cleaned regularly
4. After discussing what the item is used for, compare to a similar human need
5. Continue on with all of the items in the box.
6. When box contents are exhausted, instructor should check inside the box dramatically. "Is something missing? I know there's something else Pet Pal's should give their pets. Maybe it's something that cannot be put into a box...something invisible. Do you know what it is?" Continue to lead students toward the answer, "LOVE." Pets need love just as people do. Show your pet how much you love him or her every day.