



The Proper Way to Meet a Dog

Subject: Meeting a dog for the first time

Grade Levels: Pre-school – 5th grade

Time: 10-15 min

Audience Size: any

Objectives:

- Students will understand how to meet a stranger’s dog for the first time.

Materials:

- A friendly dog on a leash
- Two adult educators
- Volunteers from the audience

Introduction:

Have any of you ever been out somewhere and saw a stranger walking a dog? Have you ever wanted to go up to the dog and meet him? We’re going to tell you the safe way to do this.

Procedure:

1. First, explain to the audience that you and the other educator are going to show you one way to meet a dog. Have one of you be the “owner” and walk the dog for a couple steps in the front of the room. Have the other educator be the “child” and have her run up to the dog, yelling, “Hi dog!” and pet the dog in an exaggerated way. (Of course, you need a friendly dog that is comfortable with this kind of behavior.)
2. Ask the audience if this is the right way to meet a dog. (Hopefully they will say NO!)
3. Then show the audience the right way to meet a dog. This time, have the educator playing the child do the following things:
 - a. Pretend to ask the (invisible) adult she is with for permission to pet the dog.
 - b. Once the adult says “yes,” then she asks the dog’s owner for permission to pet the dog.
 - c. The owner says “yes,” but also informs the child to let the dog sniff her first, and then calmly pet the dog’s back or shoulders—not the face. The child goes ahead and does this.
 - d. Ask the audience if this was the right way to pet a dog. (Hopefully, they will say YES!)

4. Ask for volunteers in the audience to show the right way to pet a dog. Have them essentially recreate the same scenario for reinforcement.
5. Ask for one more, very brave, volunteer. Explain, in secret, to the volunteer that the owner will say “no” this time, but he or she is just acting. When the owner says no, the volunteer should say “okay” and walk away.
6. Explain to the audience not all owners will say yes and there are many reasons they may say no, including:
 - a. Dog is in training
 - b. Dog is working, such as a seeing eye dog would
 - c. Dog is afraid of strangers
 - d. Dog is grumpy that day