



Animals Throughout History

Koko, Binti Jua, Elsa—do these names mean anything to you?

Each belongs to an animal who changed our world or our beliefs and attitudes, in one way or another.

When we think of history, we tend to think of people, but throughout the ages, during many history-making moments, an animal was present, offering his own unique gift to improving the world.

When you think of Lewis and Clark crossing what is now the continental United States and bravely leading their expedition to the Pacific Northwest, you may not think of **Seaman**, Captain Meriwether Lewis' loyal Newfoundland. Seaman, trekked by the explorers' sides for three long years, often alerting the party to intruders on the campsites. Lewis' own journal entries from that time attest to the importance and esteem with which Seaman was regarded. The May 29, 1805 entry reads "some were curious last night we were all alarmed by a large buffalo bull, when he came near the tent, my dog saved us by causing him to change his course." Native Americans the party encountered even offered to buy Seaman. One Shawnee Indian offered three beaver skins for the dog—a generous offer for the time! Today, a beautiful statue of Seaman stands at the Lewis and Clark visitor's center in Nebraska, a monument to his importance in the journey to explore our country.



officials decided that the best way to get the medicine to Nome was by using dog sleds. With an impending blizzard, temperatures reaching -53° Fahrenheit and strong relentless winds blowing, twenty teams took part in a relay. Musher

Gunnar Kaasen drove his team, led by a dog named **Balto**, toward the end of the relay. Balto, who was not considered a particularly great lead dog, stayed on the trail through whiteout conditions. He missed his relay connection and went on to travel double the distance of the other teams to deliver the medicine. Balto received many accolades for his bravery, strength and selflessness and he, too, is immortalized by a statue—this one is in New York City's Central Park.

During times of war, one constant that keeps soldiers in touch with their empathy and a taste of home is the presence of dogs—either on stateside bases or assigned to war torn areas such as Afghanistan or Iraq. Although "**William the Conqueror**," or

Willie for short, did not perform any particularly heroic or attention-grabbing feats he claimed his place in history. The stalwart and constant companion of General George C. Patton during World War II, the sturdy and pugnacious bull terrier became a mascot of sorts to the war-weary and homesick soldiers.

In the waning days of World War I, a little pup was rescued by Corporal, Lee Duncan, from a bombed kennel in Lorraine, France. He went on to become one of America's most famous German Shepherds and is known as the dog that saved Warner Brothers Studio. That little puppy, brought all the way back to America by Corporal Duncan, was none other than **Rin Tin Tin**, the star of countless motion pictures. Also helpful was

Teacher Instructions



Rin Tin Tin's descendent, who along with Lee Duncan, helped to create Camp Hahn, the training camp in California for military dogs. Over 5,000 dogs bound for duty during World War II were trained there. Although Rin Tin Tin was rescued in 1918, his story still resonates today.

Recently **Nubs**, an Iraqi war dog, was shipped to San Diego to await the homecoming of U.S. Marine Major Brian Dennis. Major Dennis met a skinny, scarred dog on a street in Iraq and nicknamed him Nubs in honor of his missing ears, which were slashed off to make him look "tough." Although a stray, he bonded with the Marine and became his constant companion during scary days and dark nights. After Major Dennis and his team were ordered to relocate to another area over 70 miles away, he thought he'd never see his friend again. Two days later, Nubs arrived at the camp, having tracked the team to their new location. It was then that Major Dennis knew just how special Nubs really was. A collection was taken amongst the soldiers and Nubs was shipped to San Diego to be cared for by friends and fellow Marines until Major Dennis arrived safely home.



Who can forget search and rescue dogs, who descended upon New York City to tirelessly look for victims of the collapse of the World Trade Center—we might not know all their names, but we certainly know the enormous role they played during that challenging moment in United States history.

Dogs, while long thought of as man's companion, are not the only animals who have had a paw in making history. **Elsa the lion**, who was raised from infancy by Joy and George Adamson, taught an entire generation about lion behavior, pride behavior and the ability of lions to bond with humans as well as their own species. The Adamson's, famous British wildlife conservationists, returned Elsa to the wild by setting her free in a preserve in Kenya, Africa. Elsa's story was seen by millions in the motion picture *Born Free*, as well as two television series of the same name.

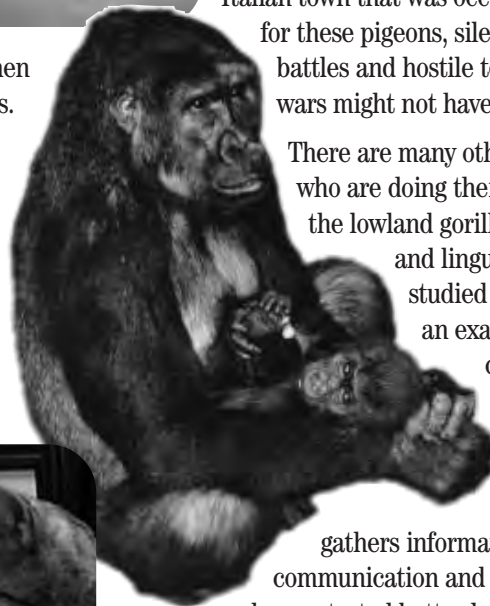


History is still being made today—**Fred** the "Undercover Kitty," helped the New York City Police Department catch an untrained and unlicensed veterinarian, who was performing botched surgeries on innocent animals. Fred, the pet of a Brooklyn Deputy District Attorney, played an instrumental role in the arrest and successful prosecution of this phony vet, and was awarded a citation by the City of New York for his bravery.

Pigeons also played a significant role during World Wars I and II. The U.S. Army used homing pigeons to carry not only messages—but also maps, photographs and even cameras—to and from the

battlefields. Some historic battles would not have been successful without the use of pigeons. They were considered an undetectable method of communication. From 1917 and 1957, the U.S. Army Pigeon Breeding and Training Center operated out of Fort Monmouth, New Jersey.

The United States Army was not the only one to "draft" pigeons into their armed service. The British Army had a unit called the Carrier Pigeon Service. During the D-Day invasion of Normandy, British carrier pigeons were used to send back information about German gun positions on the beaches. Thirty-two of these brave pigeons received the Dicken Medal, Britain's highest award for animal bravery. One pigeon, **GI Joe**, flew 20 miles in 20 minutes with a message that stopped U.S. planes from bombing an Italian town that was occupied by British forces. If not for these pigeons, silently crossing through raging battles and hostile territories, the outcome of the wars might not have been the same.



There are many other animals, past and present, who are doing their part to make history. **Koko**, the lowland gorilla whose intellectual, physical and linguistic development has been studied thoroughly since her infancy, is an example of an animal who has challenged our long held beliefs about the unique nature of human cognitive and linguistic skills. The Gorilla Language Project (www.koko.org/world) gathers information and data about gorilla communication and behavior. Koko has demonstrated better language skills than any other non-human animal. It is reported that she has a working vocabulary of over 1,000 signs, understands close to 2,000 spoken English words, and initiates conversation with humans. Koko also participated in the first on-line animal chat with humans. She is still alive and contributing to the Gorilla Language Project and our understanding of gorilla intelligence.

Who can forget **Binti Jua**, a gorilla who lives at the Brookfield Zoo in Illinois, who tenderly lifted and carried to safety an injured three-year-old boy who had fallen into her enclosure. Binti Jua shielded the child from the other curious gorillas in the exhibit and gently carried him to the arms of the zookeepers and waiting paramedics.

Animals have continued to gain our respect, admiration and appreciation throughout our history. Since children have a natural affinity for animals, you can pique your student's interest by including animals in history lessons allowing them to see historic events in a different light. Following are some great activities for your students which include animals and historic events.

Activity Sheet 1 Grades K-2

Many famous people from our nation's history are honored with a special day named for them. In this activity, students will create a special day for a famous animal discussed in the article. Present background information to your students so they understand why the animal is famous.

Students will work together as a class to decide on the details of the holiday. Encourage them to think of how famous people throughout history are remembered and what makes those days special. Ask students to fill in the answer to each question on the activity sheet based on what the class decides. Students may draw a picture of what they imagine the holiday celebration will look like.

STANDARDS:

NCTE English Language Arts #4: Communication Skills

NCTE English Language Arts #12: Applying Language Skills

NSAE Arts Education #1: Understanding and Applying Media, Techniques, and Processes

Activity Sheet 2 Grades 3-5

Almost every president has had at least one animal companion in the White House. In this activity, students will examine some of the presidential pets and decide which animals are appropriate choices and which ones would be much better suited living in the wild.

Begin a discussion about what kinds of animals make good pets and why they are good pets. Dogs, cats, rabbits, and hamsters are just several examples of good choices because these animals have been domesticated and bred to be good companions in the home. Ask the students what kinds of animals would not make good pets and why. Any wild animal is an appropriate answer because they are not domesticated animals. Keeping a wild animal as a pet could be a dangerous and unhealthy situation for the animal as well as the humans, as exotic animals often have unpredictable behaviors and may carry diseases.

Ask students to collect information on the types of animals that have called the White House home. They can find this information on one or both of the websites below. Ask them to create a graph showing the number of the different types of animals.

After the graph is complete, explain to the students that they will now research two presidential pets. They should choose one pet they think is an appropriate choice and one that is an



inappropriate choice. Once they have chosen their two examples, ask them to write a paragraph about each, explaining why that animal represents an appropriate or inappropriate choice for a pet.

www.presidentialpetmuseum.com/

www.biography.com/animalographies/presidential-pets.jsp

STANDARDS:

NSTA Science #1: Science as Inquiry

NETS Technology #1: Basic Operations and Concepts



Activity Sheet 3 Grades 3-8

Make a timeline showing when certain animals lived in relation to each other and to events in animal welfare history.

In this activity, students will research and learn about the lives of famous animals and plot important dates on a timeline. Ask students to research the animals discussed in the article, using encyclopedias, books, and the Internet. Emphasize the importance of including dates of birth, death, and other milestone events in the animals' lives that can be plotted on a timeline.

After students have completed a timeline of famous animals' lives, ask them to find dates of important events in animal

welfare history and plot them on the same timeline. To view an animated timeline of the history of the ASPCA visit www.asPCA.org/history.

STANDARDS:

NCTE English Language Arts #7:
Evaluating Data

NCTE English Language Arts #8:
Developing Research Skills

NCTE English Language Arts #12:
Applying Language Skills

NETS Technology #5:
Technology Research Tools

Activity Sheet 4 Grades 6-8

When a diphtheria epidemic broke out in Nome, Alaska during the extreme winter of 1924-25, diphtheria antitoxin was transported from Anchorage to Nenana, Alaska, by train and then on to Nome by dog sled. This became known as the legendary "Great Race of Mercy."



Musher, gunner Kassen, and his lead dog Balto, led his team on the final leg of the serum run. Students will read about this famous race at www.serumrun.org/History.htm and learn more about Togo and Balto, the heroic sled dogs involved in the race at www.baltostruery.com/togo.htm. Students will write a short paper listing the characteristics that make a great sled dog and why Togo and Balto, both famous sled dogs who took part in the serum run, were so outstanding and valuable to their mushers.

Divide students into groups and ask them to search the Internet for information on the serum run and maps of Alaska in order to create a map of the route. Students can download and print maps by state or region at www.coloringcastle.com/state_coloring_pages.html. After researching the weather surrounding Nome, Alaska during the winter of 1924-25, students will produce a

weather report similar to what they would see on television today. Ask students to use computer graphics to show the temperature, inches of snow fall and wind speed. Ask them to include warnings or directions in the weather report for mushers traveling by dog sled. Divide students into groups and ask them to take turns giving their own news and weather reports about the serum run.

As a service component, students may wish to make protective booties similar to the ones the mushers made for their sled dogs to protect the dogs' feet from frostbite. For a pattern and instructions go to <http://serumrun.org/Booties.htm>. Students can then research sled dog rescue organizations to find a place to donate the booties.

STANDARDS:

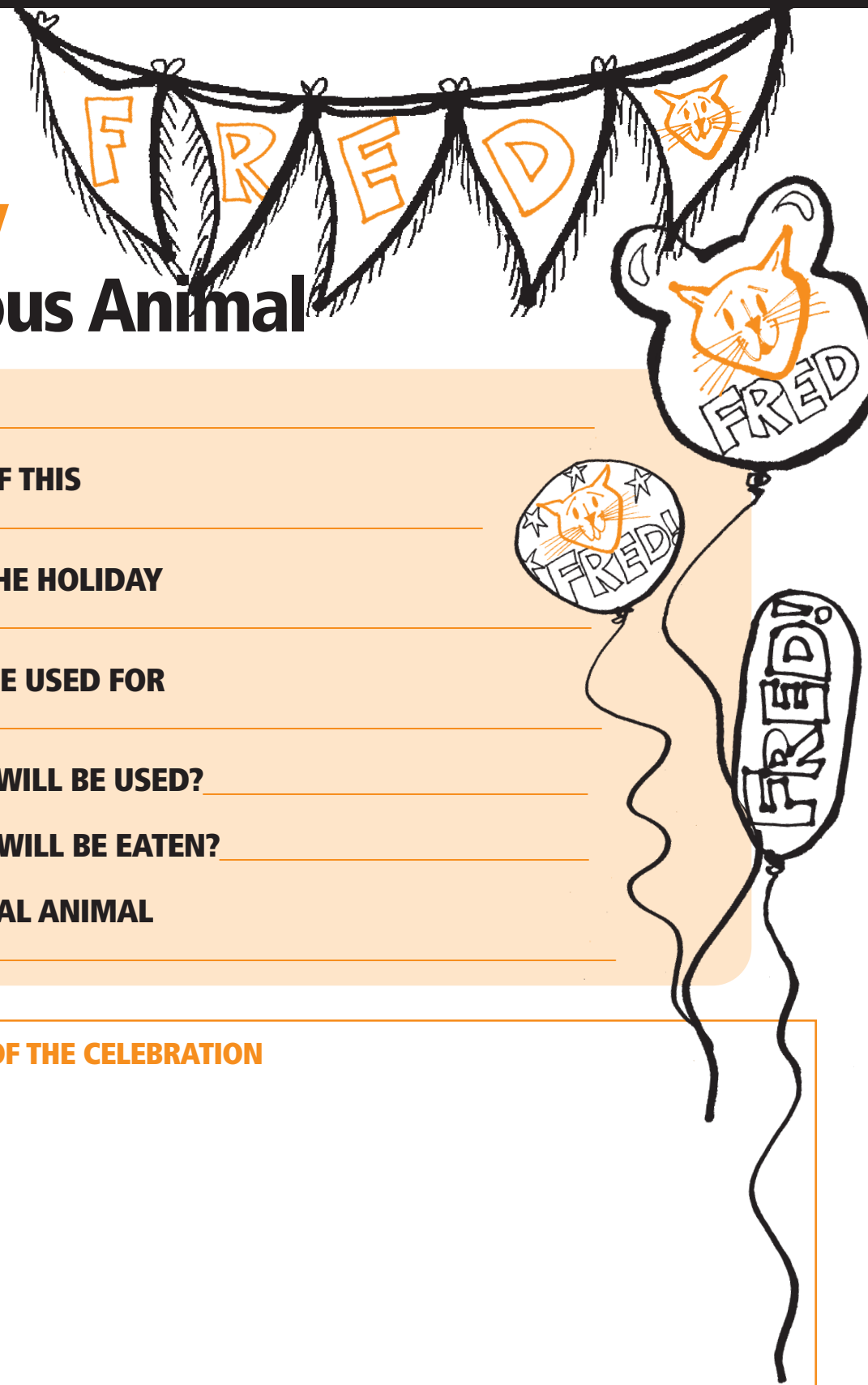
NCTE English Language Arts # 4:
Communication Skills

NCTE English Language Arts # 8:
Developing Research Skills

NETS Technology # 12:
Applying Language Skills

NSTA Science #5:
Technology Research Tools

Create a Holiday for a Famous Animal



LET'S HONOR _____

WHAT IS THE NAME OF THIS SPECIAL DAY? _____

ON WHAT DAY WILL THE HOLIDAY BE CELEBRATED? _____

WHAT COLORS WILL BE USED FOR THE SPECIAL DAY? _____

WHAT DECORATIONS WILL BE USED? _____

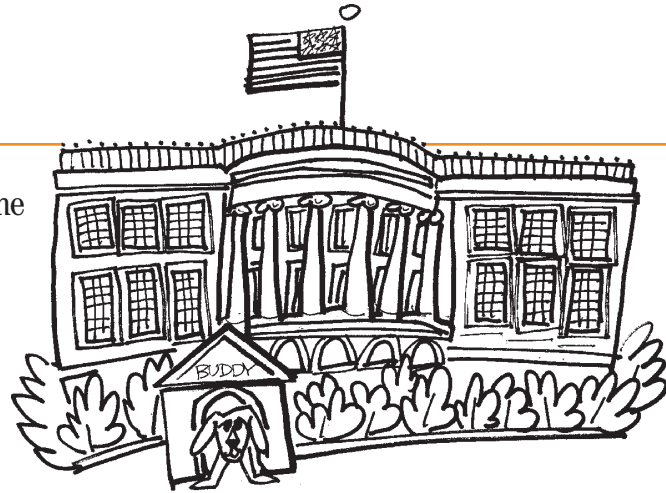
WHAT SPECIAL FOOD WILL BE EATEN? _____

HOW WILL THIS SPECIAL ANIMAL BE HONORED? _____

NOW DRAW A PICTURE OF THE CELEBRATION



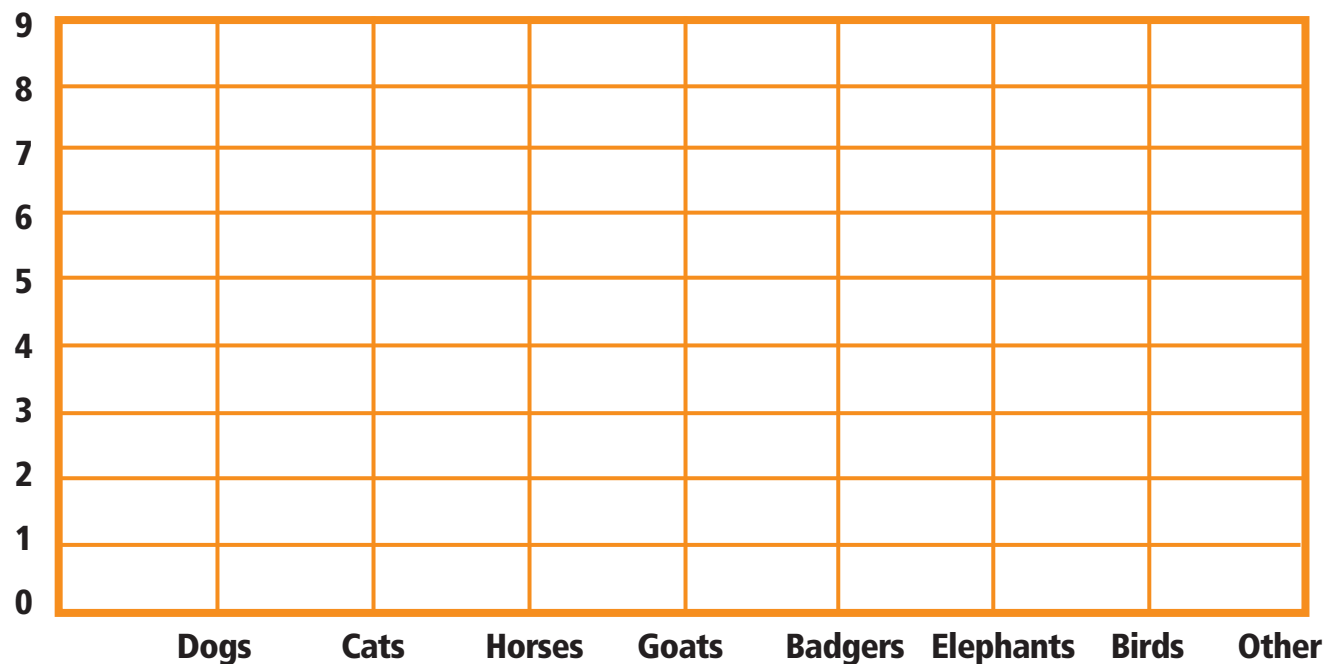
Presidential Pets



Almost every president has had at least one pet in the White House. From George Washington's horse Nelson, to George W. Bush's dog Barney, animal companions have been present during many historic moments in the United States. There have been cats, dogs, horses, goats, crocodiles, elephants and badgers in the White House. Some of our presidents made wonderful decisions in choosing the right kind of animal companion, while others did not. Some had inappropriate decisions made for them—they were given exotic animals as gifts.

Using the websites below, gather information about the types of animals that have found themselves living at the White House. Create a graph to show how many of each type of animal has been a presidential pet. When that is complete, choose two presidential pets to write about. One should be an animal you think is a good choice for a pet and the other should be an animal you don't think is a good choice for a pet. Write a paragraph about each animal telling why he or she would or would not make a good pet.

THE PRESIDENTIAL PET MUSEUM **ANIMALOGRAPHIES- PRESIDENTIAL PETS**
www.presidentialpetmuseum.com/ www.biography.com/animalographies/presidential-pets.jsp



A Timeline of Famous Animals

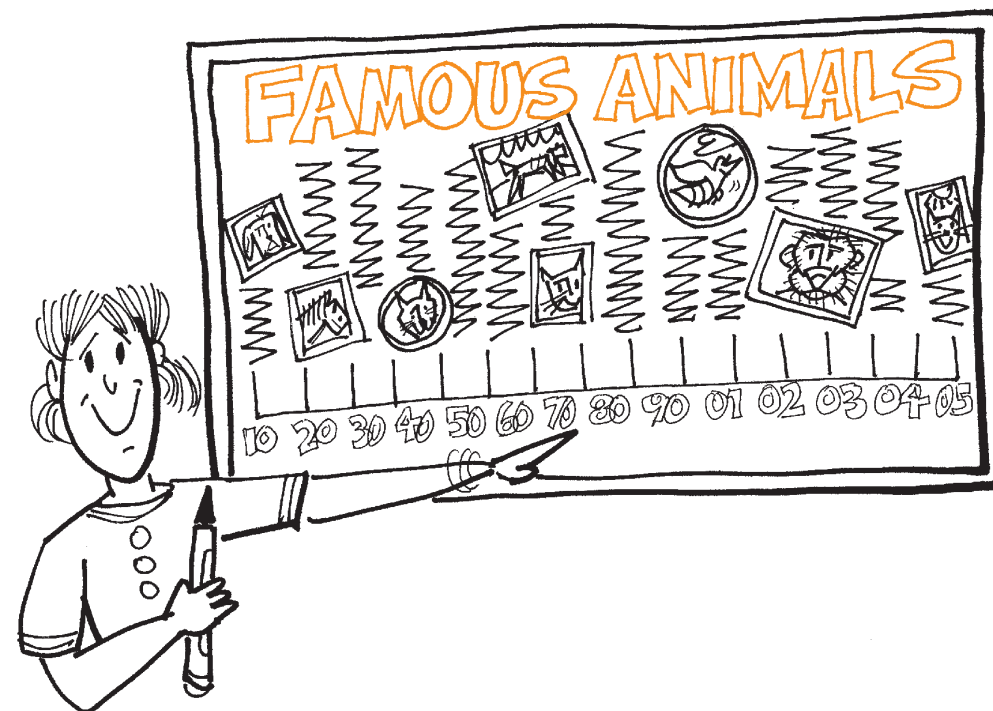
The following famous animals led very interesting lives. Working individually or with a group, create a timeline that shows important dates in each of their lives.

- ◀ SEAMAN ▶ BALTO ▶ WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR ▶ GI JOE ▶ KOKO
- ◀ BINTI ▶ JUA ▶ ELSA THE LION ▶ FRED THE UNDERCOVER KITTY

Begin by researching the animals, using the **INTERNET, ENCYCLOPEDIAS,** and **BOOKS** from your library. As you conduct your research, try to answer these four questions about each animal:

1. **WHEN WAS THE ANIMAL BORN?**
2. **WHEN DID THE ANIMAL BECOME FAMOUS?**
3. **WHY IS THE ANIMAL FAMOUS?**
4. **WHEN DID THE ANIMAL DIE?**

After you finish your research, assemble your timeline using markers and a large piece of poster paper. List the dates on the timeline in chronological order from earliest dates to latest dates.



FIND DATES OF IMPORTANT EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE ASPCA AND PLOT THEM ON THE SAME TIMELINE. VISIT

www.aspc.org/history



Weather Report



There are many stories about famous animal heroes. One of the most dramatic and well-documented stories of animals helping people, is the 1925 serum run or “Great Race of Mercy” that took place in northern Alaska .

Read about this famous race at www.serumrun.org/History.htm.

List the characteristics of a great sled dog. Then write a short paper on why Togo and Balto, both famous sled dogs who took part in the serum run, were so outstanding and valuable to their mushers. www.baltostruestory.com/togo.htm.

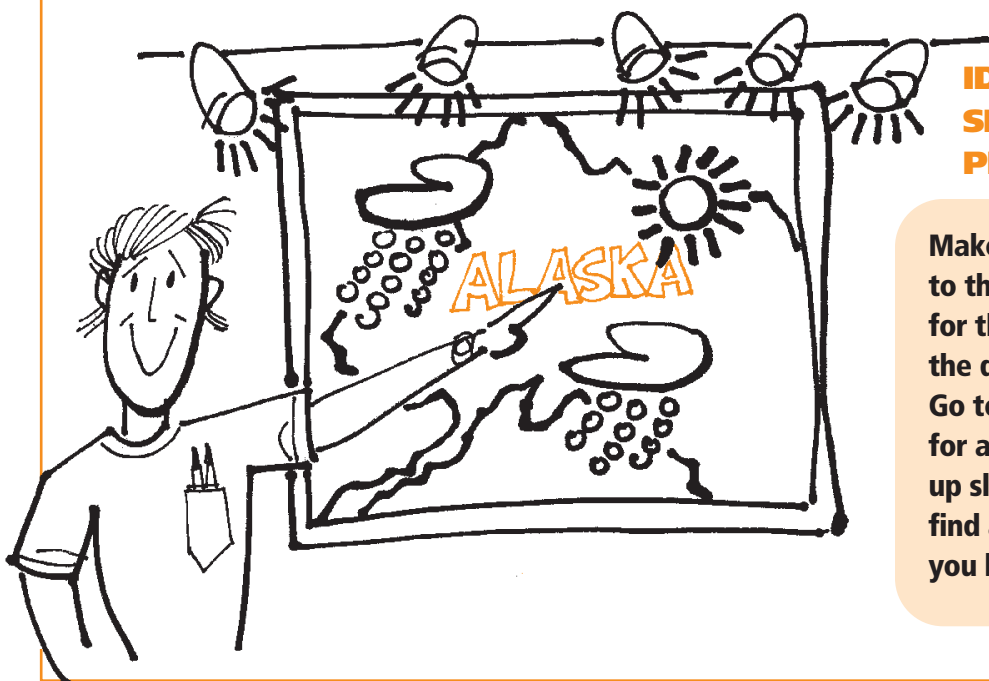


Search the Internet for information then make a map of the serum run’s route. You can download and print maps by state or region at www.coloringcastle.com/state_coloring_pages.html.

Research the time of year the serum run took place, then describe the weather conditions in which the sled dogs had to travel.

Get into teams and conduct a news broadcast, including information about the serum run and the weather conditions at the time—using graphics of the route, the dogs and the weather. Model your report after a television news broadcast. For the weather report, make a graph showing the temperature, inches of snow fall and wind speed. What warnings or directions would you give to mushers travelling by dog sled?

Have a classroom discussion about how this event might be different if it happened today.



IDEA FOR A SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT!



Make **PROTECTIVE BOOTIES** similar to the ones that the mushers made for their sled dogs. They prevented the dogs’ feet from getting frostbite. Go to <http://serumrun.org/Booties.htm> for a pattern and instructions. Look up sled dog rescue organizations to find a place to donate the booties you have.