



Teacher Newsletter of The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Animal Careers

“I love animals, I think I’ll be a veterinarian when I grow up!”

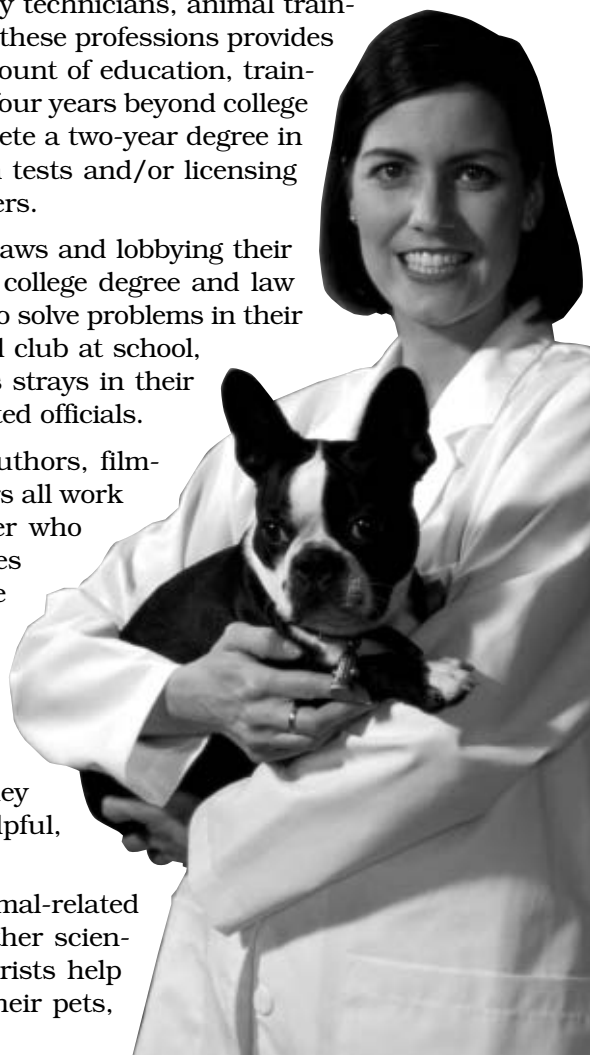
This is what you will often hear from a child who loves animals when asked about his or her future career plans. Becoming a veterinarian is a wonderful aspiration, and should be encouraged of course, but there are many other careers where working with and benefiting animals. Careers with animals can range from working directly with animals, such as veterinarians and veterinary technicians, to less hands-on endeavors, including lawyers, educators and authors.

Traditional animal-related careers include veterinarians, veterinary technicians, animal trainers, groomers, shelter workers, and wildlife rehabilitators. Each of these professions provides plenty of hands-on work with animals. They require a certain amount of education, training, or certification. Veterinarians must attend veterinary school—four years beyond college plus a two or three-year internship. Veterinary technicians complete a two-year degree in science and must be state-licensed. Apprenticeships, certification tests and/or licensing may be necessary for groomers, shelter workers and animal trainers.

Lawyers and lobbyists help animals by writing animal protection laws and lobbying their legislators to get them passed. Requirements include a four-year college degree and law school. Kids can get a taste of what lobbying is all about and work to solve problems in their own communities. They can help animals by organizing an animal club at school, choosing an animal issue that concerns their community such as strays in their neighborhoods, and starting a letter writing campaign to local elected officials.

There are almost always ways to work animals into a career. Authors, filmmakers, photographers, office support staff and humane educators all work with and for animals, too. This includes documentary filmmaker who shoots films for Animal Planet, authors who write and edit stories about animals for magazines and photographers who capture animals in action. Office support staff range from the office assistants to fundraisers, who all provide the administrative support and resources needed to run an animal shelter or humane organization efficiently. The experience and educational requirements vary for office staff. Humane educators teach children and adults about animals and why it’s important to care for them. They must be able to speak in public and a degree in education is helpful, but not always necessary.

Students interested in the sciences have many choices of animal-related careers. Animal behaviorists, marine biologists, zoologists and other scientists can either work directly or indirectly with animals. Behaviorists help people understand their sometimes complex relationships with their pets,



while marine biologists and zoologists work in zoos or research facilities to maintain the health and well-being of animals. These careers require degrees in the sciences and may require graduate and post-graduate work.

For students interested in law enforcement or animal rescue work, career as a humane officer or animal control officer may be the right choice. Humane law officers enforce humane laws to protect animals in towns and cities. In certain states, officers are allowed to carry weapons and have the power to make arrests if an individual has violated any laws that protect animals. They enforce licensing laws, rescue trapped animals and investigate cruelty cases. There is specific on-the-job training and some states require certification.

In some professions, animals help us as much as we help them, for example, mounted police officers who are partnered with a horse or canine partners. Dogs assist police officers and emergency workers in many important ways, such as drug sniffing and bomb sniffing, and search-and-rescue dogs are trained to locate lost people.

Animal-assisted educators bring animals into classrooms so children can experience them up close and learn about their care. Some animal trainers teach dogs to assist people with disabilities or detect seizures for people with epilepsy. These wonderful assistance dogs make life easier for their human partners.

Working closely with animals can be very emotional. Veterinarians and other professionals who work directly with animals deal with such sensitive issues as animal abuse, euthanasia, disease and owner apathy. All of these situations can be upsetting. When considering a career with animals, students should ask themselves some basic questions: Can I deal with illness or an animal in pain? Am I willing to study and take lots of science and math courses in school? Am I willing to volunteer my time to learn more about working with animals?

Volunteering is a great way to get a taste of the satisfaction that comes from working with animals.

Shelters in particular appreciate another set of helping hands. Volunteers in animal shelters often help feed the animals, socialize and play with them and provide walks in the park. Kids who are fourteen and up are usually welcome to help. Volunteers in shelters can also help potential adopters choose the best pets for their lifestyles, or even help with special events and fundraisers for their shelter. Interested kids should contact their local shelter's volunteer coordinator or humane educator for more information.

Perhaps the most important thing for students to remember when considering a future career is passion. If passionate and focused about what they do, chances are they will be successful and happy. There are always ways to incorporate animals and humane actions into their career. From the architect who remembers family pets when designing a new apartment building to the school teacher who fosters a kind and humane classroom, there are always opportunities to consider the needs of animals. Animals can't speak for themselves, so it is up to people to look out for and take care of them.

Helping animals is a choice young people can make no matter what their personal career goals, whether they are in the sciences, accounting, marketing or publishing.

Included below is a list of resources to help students learn more about working with animals. A career that impacts or involves animals is extremely rewarding, and a wonderful future goal for any child who loves animals. Maybe the next time you ask an animal-loving student what she wants to be when she grows up, you may just hear "I love animals, so I think I'll be a lawyer when I grow up!"

Teachers in classrooms are in the unique position to guide and help their students learn about caring for animals. If you have a classroom pet students can and should have assigned responsibilities in caring for the animal. From feeding and socializing to teaching kids in other classes or lower grades about class pets and their needs, your students will see what it is like to work with animals.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Career Ideas for Kids Who Like Animals and Nature by Diane Lindsey Reeves and Nancy Heubeck

Careers with Animals: The Humane Society of the United States by Willow Ann Sirch

Cool Careers for Girls with Animals by Ceel Pasternak and Linda Thornburg

Working With Wildlife: A Guide to Careers in the Animal World by Thane Maynard,
Forward by Jane Goodall

Teacher's Instructions



Activity Sheet 1: Grades 1-3

In this activity, students are introduced to people who work at animal shelters. Students will take on the roles of shelter workers and act out a scene that takes place at a shelter.

Initiate class discussion by asking students who works at an animal shelter. Make a list of the students' answers on the board. Students should come up with some of the workers listed in the skit. Ask for volunteers and assign each student to play a character found under the list

of actors. A teacher should narrate. Classes can use props, costumes, or masks to make the skit more engaging. To summarize the activity, you can ask students how each worker's role in the shelter helps adopt out animals.

Standard:

NCTE English Language Arts: Use spoken, written and visual language to accomplish their own purposes; NSAE Fine Arts: Acting by assuming roles and interacting in improvisations

Activity Sheet 2: Grades 3-5

In this two-part activity, students learn new vocabulary words associated with careers with animals. First, students fill in the blanks with the correct answers in the sentences provided on Activity Sheet 2. Next, students look up the words used to fill in the blanks and find them in the career search. As an additional activity, students can read aloud their answers and discuss each sentence after they finish the exercise.

Fill in the blank answers:

1. B 2. H 3. D 4. J 5.E 6.C 7.N 8.I 9. M
10. K 11.L 12. F 13.O 14. G 15.Q 16.P 17.A

Standard:

NCTE English Language Arts: Comprehend, interpret, evaluate and appreciate texts.

Activity Sheet 3: Grades 4-8

Many students are excited about working with animals, but may not realize the wide variety of careers available. In this activity, students will pick an animal career from a list of six choices and write a story about a day in the life of that person. Students will need to research their chosen career on the Internet or by visiting their library or a bookstore. Next, have students share their stories

with one another or read them out loud. To initiate discussion, ask students, "What did you learn about your chosen career? Would you work directly or indirectly with animals?" At the end of the discussion, students will be able to determine whether this career is right for them. Optional: You can have students choose other animal-related careers instead of the six listed.

Standard:

NCTE English Language Arts: Developing research skills.

Activity Sheet 4: Grades 5-8

Many students love animals and want a job working to help them, but do not know where to begin to look for a career or find out about the variety of careers available. Begin this activity by asking students what are some careers in which people work with animals. Write their answers on the board, initiate discussion, and then hand out Activity Sheet 4. The activity sheet offers students the opportunity to explore different animal-related careers by visiting websites that provide in-depth

information about specific careers. Once students have visited each site, teachers can continue the discussion on what information students have found.

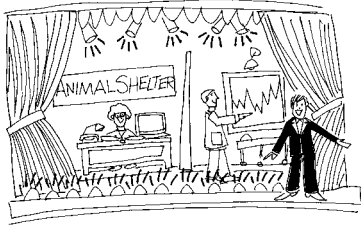
Extension Activity:

Teachers may want to contact the local shelter and invite someone from the local shelter to speak to the class.

Standard:

NCTE English Language Arts: Understanding of texts
ISTE Technology: Technology research tools.

Activity Sheet 1: Grades 1-3



Working at a Shelter

Actors:

Narrator	Dog	Animal Officer
Veterinarian	Cat	Parent
Adoption Counselor	Animal Trainer	Child

Scene: ANIMAL SHELTER

There are two rooms, a front room and a back room. The front room has a desk. In the front room, the Adoption Counselor sits at a desk. In the back room, the Veterinarian is looking at a chart.

- Narrator:** This is an animal shelter. There are many people here who help animals. Each person here helps in a different way.
- Narrator:** Officer, Dog, and Cat walk into the front room from outside and are greeted by an Adoption Counselor.
- Officer:** Hi. I am a humane law officer. I help keep animals safe. I found this poor dog and cat in an abandoned house. They did not have any food or water.
- Adoption Counselor:** Oh no! Let's help them!
- Cat:** Meow! Who is that?
- Adoption Counselor:** Hi. I'm an Adoption Counselor. I help animals find good homes.
- Narrator:** They all walk to back room.
- Dog:** Woof! Who is that?
- Vet:** Hi, I am a veterinarian. I help keep animals healthy.
- Adoption Counselor, Officer and Vet together:** Let's help these animals!
- Narrator:** The dog and cat stay at the animal shelter. Everyone treats them well. Soon, they are ready to find a new home.
- Narrator:** Adoption Counselor walks to front room to greet a Parent and Child who have just arrived. The Animal Trainer brings the dog and cat to meet the family.
- Dog and Cat:** We're ready to find a new home!
- Parent**
(to Adoption Counselor): Hi. We would like to adopt a dog and a cat.
- Adoption Counselor**
(to Animal Trainer): Great! Mr. Reed, please bring out that great dog and cat.
- Animal Trainer:** Hi, I am an animal trainer. I helped teach this dog and cat learn good manners.
- Child:** They are so cute!
- Adoption Counselor and Animal Trainer together:** We think this dog and cat would be perfect for your home.
- Parent:** Let's adopt them both!
- Narrator:** And they all lived happily ever after!
- Everyone:** Hurray!

Activity Sheet 2: Grades 3-5

Career Search

There are many different careers that you can have working with animals. Test yourself to see how many you know. First fill in the blanks. Then find the words in the word search. Look for words horizontally, forward, and backwards. For letters with *, only search for underlined words.

- | | | | |
|---------------|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a) Pet Sitter | e) Vet Tech | i) Dog Walker | *m) Humane <u>Educator</u> |
| b) Zookeeper | f) Veterinarian | j) Photographer | *n) Wildlife <u>Rehabilitator</u> |
| c) Lawyer | g) Animal Trainer | *k) Marine <u>Biologist</u> | o) Kennel Worker |
| d) Groomer | *h) <u>Animal</u> Control <u>Officer</u> | l) Curator | *p) Animal <u>Behaviorist</u> |
| | | | q) Park Ranger |

- _____ supervises care for the zoo's or aquarium's animals on a daily basis.
- _____ enforces humane laws to protect animals in a town or city.
- _____ keeps an animal's coat and nails in tip-top shape.
- _____ takes pictures of animals.
- _____ assists a veterinarian.
- _____ helps to have laws changed to protect animals.
- _____ takes care of injured wildlife.
- _____ walks other people's dogs for a fee.
- _____ teaches about animals and instills respect for all living things.
- _____ studies the animals who live in the oceans.
- _____ is in charge of a particular animal exhibit at a zoo.
- _____ is a type of doctor who takes care of animals.
- _____ takes care of animals in shelters and kennels.
- _____ teaches companion animals how to respond to cues.
- _____ helps protect park lands and makes sure visitors stay safe.
- _____ addresses behavior problems in animals.
- _____ takes care of pets while the caregiver is away.

R	D	K	L	T	P	A	Q	Z	O	O	K	E	E	P	E	R	Z
E	O	L	G	R	O	O	M	E	R	L	A	B	Q	F	H	G	I
C	G	C	V	E	T	E	R	I	N	A	R	I	A	N	M	N	O
I	W	B	E	D	U	C	A	T	O	R	Z	W	J	K	U	V	P
F	A	A	T	L	T	S	I	R	O	I	V	A	H	E	B	M	A
F	L	I	T	L	P	H	O	T	O	G	R	A	P	H	E	R	R
O	K	G	E	C	U	R	E	K	O	R	W	L	E	N	N	E	K
L	E	T	C	U	R	A	T	O	R	W	U	X	D	H	I	Y	R
A	R	U	H	B	Q	F	B	I	O	L	O	G	I	S	T	W	A
M	I	V	Q	F	H	G	I	C	E	E	L	M	T	I	H	A	N
I	G	L	P	E	T	S	I	T	T	E	R	T	O	C	D	L	G
N	R	O	T	A	T	I	L	I	B	A	H	E	R	H	G	I	E
A	N	I	M	A	L	T	R	A	I	N	E	R	I	T	P	A	R

A Day in the Life...

Pick an animal career from the list below and write a story about how a person who works in this career would spend a typical workday. You will need to research your chosen career on the Internet, your school library, or by interviewing someone who works at this job.



Choose one of the following six careers:

- **Veterinarian**
- **Adoptions Counselor**
- **Animal Trainer**
- **Humane Law Officer/Animal Cop**
- **Park Ranger**
- **Animal Photographer**

Below is an example of the beginning of one story:

Heather is an animal photographer for a national magazine. She has an assignment to take some pictures of a Halloween dog parade at the local park. Her most important job in the morning is to make sure that she has all of her camera and lighting equipment and film.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Cool Websites for Animal-Related Careers

Love animals and want a job working to help them? Check out the list of websites you can surf to find more information. There are many different careers for those interested in working with animals. Your local bookstore and library should have more information, including a list of colleges that will prepare you for careers working with animals.

ASPCA Animaland

www.animaland.org

A great place to start looking at careers is the Career Center on Animaland.

American Boarding Kennels Association

www.abka.com

Offers information on training courses, educational materials and publications.

American Association of Zoo Keepers

www.aazk.org/zoo_career.php

Supports promotion of zookeeper education; provides information on zoo keeping as a career and links to other organizations.

American Veterinary Medical Association

www.avma.org/careforanimals/animated-journeys/aboutvets/aboutvetsfl.asp

"When I grow up, I want to be a vet!" This site has a great kid's corner and lots of career information on becoming a vet or vet tech.

Association of Pet Dog Trainers

www.apdt.com/trainers-and-owners/careers.htm#trainer

Provides education for dog trainers and the public.

International Marine Animal Trainers Association

www.imata.org/organization/Career_Info.asp

Provides information about marine mammal science through training, public display, research, husbandry, conservation and education.

National Animal Control Association

www.nacanet.org

Offers information, workshops and training for individuals pursuing a career as an animal control officer.

National Association of Pet Sitters

www.petsitters.org

This organization is dedicated to advancing the pet-sitting industry and offers information on certification.

National Park Service

www.nps.gov/learn/home.htm

Interested in becoming a park ranger? Become a junior ranger online and discover what it entails in taking care of parks across the U.S.

National Marine Fisheries Service

www.swfsc.nmfs.noaa.gov/publications/careers.htm

Includes information on courses, educational materials and colleges that offer degrees in marine biology.

National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association

www.nwrawildlife.org

Maintains, develops and distributes information on the rehabilitation and care of wild animals and how to become a wildlife rehabilitator.

North American Veterinary Technician Association

www.navta.net/vettechcareer.htm

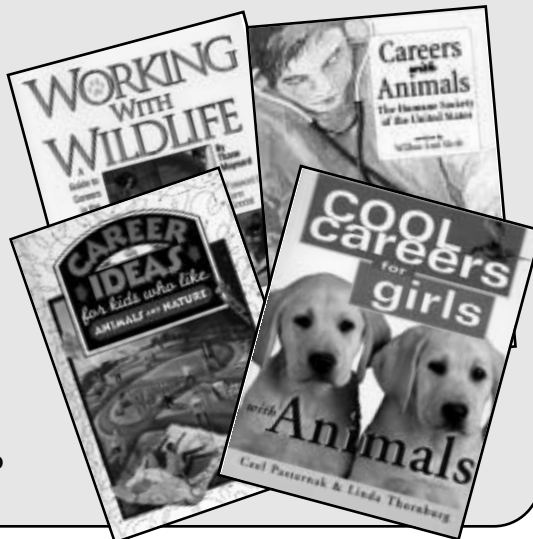
Offers information and resources for individuals thinking of a career in veterinary technology.

Also check out the **Occupational Outlook Handbook** at **www.bls.gov** to get information on the work involved, training and education requirements, earnings, working conditions and outlook for the future of the various careers.

Careers With Animals

Love animals and want a job working to help them? There are many different careers for those interested in working with animals. We offer four books for children ages 9-12. Each book guides students through different career possibilities based on interest, skills and education.

To order, visit our online store at aspcas.org/catalog or email us at education@aspcas.org to receive a catalog in the mail.



This edition of ASPCA *AnimalLessons™* is distributed by your local animal-welfare organization:

ASPCA *AnimalLessons™* is published by The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. All rights reserved.

Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited. Notwithstanding the foregoing, permission is hereby given to individual classroom teachers to reproduce the activity pages for classroom use; however, reproduction of these pages for an entire school, district or school system or for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

To obtain information about the ASPCA, contact ASPCA Humane Education Department, 424 East 92nd Street, New York, NY 10128; (212) 876-7700, ext. 4400.

Contributors to this newsletter include Steve Dercole, Jennifer Dragotta, Joanne Pentangelo, Miriam Ramos, Jacque Schultz, Pune Dracker, Marion Lane and Stephen Zawistowski, Ph.D.

© 2006 The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Visit the ASPCA's websites at aspcas.org, animalessons.org and animaland.org
Sign up to receive the ASPCA *AnimalLessons™* teacher newsletter at www.animalessons.org

ASPCA®

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS
424 EAST 92ND STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10128-6804