



## Picture News

### What's going on this week?

It is thought that thousands of pets were 'panic bought' at the start of the first lockdown. The Battersea Dogs and Cats Home charity have warned that the number of dogs abandoned over the next five years could increase by 27%. The charity, which rehomes animals in London and the surrounding area, surveyed 2,000 dog and cat owners who acquired a new pet during the national lockdown. It found 31% had done so despite not having considered getting a dog or cat before.

#### Main question:

#### Should anyone be allowed to buy a pet?

##### Listen, think, share

- Look at this week's poster and talk about what you can see. Explain that animal charities are warning that as our lives and routines start to go back to what they were before the pandemic, the owners of many pets that were bought during the lockdown period may find it harder to find the time to look after them.
- Why do you think that so many people chose to buy a pet during this time? Talk about how many people may have felt lonely. Discuss our own experiences of owning pets, or if we'd like to.
- Have we heard of charities such as the RSPCA or the Battersea Dogs and Cats home charity? Do we know what they do? Talk about how they help take care of animals. Read through the information found on the assembly resource about the work of the RSPCA and the Battersea Dogs and Cats Home charity and pets that have been bought over the past year. Do you think that there should be more restrictions when buying a pet? Did you know that there were charities to help in this area?
- Watch this week's useful video clip (found overleaf), which shows an RSPCA staff member explaining what has happened in recent months. Are you surprised?

#### Reflection

Deciding to have a pet is a lifelong commitment. It is important that we consider all of their needs and are confident that we are able to meet them before buying one.



## Picture News

### KS1 Focus

#### Question:

#### What types of animals do people keep as pets?

##### Listen, think, share

- Think of as many animals as possible and create a list on the board e.g. cat, dog, elephant, hawk, spider.
- Which of the animals listed do you think could be described as pets? Explain that a pet is an animal that we often keep in our homes. They are usually tame and are kept for companionship or pleasure.
- Look at resource 1, which shares some examples of popular pets. Can you name each pet? Do you have a pet? If you could choose, which pet would you like to keep? Why? Can you organise the pets on resource 1, from your most favourite to your least favourite?
- Sometimes people keep animals as pets that we might not think are pets such as hens, pigs, sheep and other farm animals or wild animals such as hedgehogs or snails. Do you know anyone who has an unusual pet?
- If someone decides to keep a pet, what do you think they need to do to make sure it is looked after? For example provide food and water, shelter, exercise, medical care. Discuss that all pets are different so need different amounts of care, space, time and attention.

#### Reflection

There are many different pets we can choose to look after. Where we live, how much time we have and what animals we like can help us decide if we should have a pet and what type of pet we can care for.



## Picture News

### KS2 Focus

#### Question:

#### Why do people buy pets?

##### Listen, think, share

- Do you have a pet or know anyone who does? Create a list of the different types of pets you or someone else you know owns.
- Explain that there are many different types of pet. People buy a pet for many different reasons.
- Look at resource 2, where some people share why they have their pet. Can you summarise why each person has their pet e.g. for company, exercise, teach responsibility, eggs? If you have a pet, why did you buy it?
- Do you think the reason someone wants a pet affects the type of animal they choose? If you are buying a pet for companionship, what type of animal might be best? What else might affect their choice e.g. the amount of space they have in their home, the amount of time, how much money it will cost?
- Can you think of any other reasons why someone might buy a pet? For example, someone using a guide dog, buying a cat to control mice, an animal that enters competitions, a sheepdog. Do you think these animals, that have a job to do, can still be described as pets?
- Do you think that everyone who owns a pet has bought it? How else might you end up owning a pet? Discuss that you may find an animal that needs help, be given a pet, take on a pet that somebody no longer wants or can care for etc.

#### Reflection

There are many different reasons why people buy pets. Whatever the reason, if we choose to own a pet, we must make sure it can be cared for properly.



## Picture News

### KS2 Follow-up Ideas

**Option 1:** Ask the children to plan and write a letter to an animal charity such as the RSPCA or Battersea Dogs and Cats charity to thank them for the work they do with animals. Use the following structure:

- Why are you writing?
- What do you admire or like about their work?
- Tell them about your favourite pet and why you like it.
- Share any ideas, suggestions or hopes you have for the future.

If possible, send your letters to them. You might even receive a response!

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**Option 2:** Make a list of as many different types of pet as you can. Can you think of different ways to sort them? For example:

- Pets that have fur and pets that do not have fur.
- Pets that have four legs and pets that do not have four legs.
- Pets that are mammals, pets that are not mammals.
- Pets that are reptiles, pets that are not reptiles.
- Pets that are invertebrates, pets that are not invertebrates.

Once you have explored various ways of grouping the pets, you can extend further by asking the children to create a pet identification key.



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### KS1 Follow-up Ideas

**Option 1:** Ask the children to think about a pet they own or a pet they would like to own. With a partner or as part of a small group, discuss the following:

- What is it?
- What is its name?
- What does it look like?
- What does it eat?
- What does it like doing?
- Where does it live e.g. a cage, a hutch, in your home, in your garden?
- What do you like about it?

Create a pet fact file. Include a picture and any other information.

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**Option 2:** Ask the children to look at the pets found on resource 1.

- Which is your favourite and why?
- Which is your least favourite and why?

Call out each pet in turn, asking the children to stand up when they hear their favourite. As a class, count the number of children who stand for each pet and record on the board.

- Which pet is the most/least popular?
- How many people like the dog best?
- How many people like the guinea pig best?
- How many more/less people voted for the goldfish than the gecko?
- Can you order the pets from most to least popular?
- Did everyone in the class vote? How can we check?



## Picture News

### This Week's Useful Websites

This week's news story

[www.expressandstar.com/news/2020/12/04/rspca-fears-pets-face-being-made-homeless/](http://www.expressandstar.com/news/2020/12/04/rspca-fears-pets-face-being-made-homeless/)

### This Week's Useful Videos

RSPCA speaking about their experience

<https://bit.ly/3ghBXJM>

### This Week's Virtual Assembly

[www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss](http://www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss)

### This Week's Useful Vocabulary

**Abandoned** – something that has been deserted or left.

**Acquired** – to have bought or obtained something.

**Commitment** – something that regularly takes up time because of an agreement you made or the responsibilities you have.

**Lifelong** – existing or happening for the whole of someone's life.

**Recent** – something that happened only a short while ago.

**Restrictions** – official rules that limit what you can do.