

# Ideas for Dog Learning Activities

## Advanced Level

Need more ideas for your dog project? There are hundreds of things you can do! This list is organized by topics that match the chapters in the 4-H *Dog Resource Handbook*. You are being asked to complete **at least five** activities each year. Use this list and your imagination, and then write your ideas in your *Dog Project and Record Book*. Have fun!

### Characteristics of Dogs

- List the scientific classification of dogs.
- Select two species in the *Canis* group other than the domestic dog; identify five characteristics of each species.
- Explain evolution and domestication of the dog.
- Compare the characteristics of the domestic dog to those of the gray wolf.
- Chart the evolution of the dog.
- Compare the scientific classification of dogs to that of another species of animal.
- Name the five types of vertebrae in a dog's skeleton, show on a picture where each is located, and list how many of each type there are.

### Breeds

- Select five breeds of dogs within one group and describe each breed's origin and characteristics.
- Select one breed of dog from each group and describe its origin and characteristics.
- Describe the function of a pointer and compare it to the functions of a setter, retriever, and spaniel.

### Conformation

- Using correct terminology, describe your dog's conformation.
- Draw and label each type of bite.
- Name and describe the five ear types and find a picture of each.
- Name and describe the four eye types and find a picture of each.
- Name and describe the five kinds of tail carriage and find a picture of each.
- Select two breeds of dogs and explain what kind of topline they have.
- Name and describe the four kinds of dog's feet and find a picture of each.
- Describe the purpose of the dog's forequarters and hindquarters and the kind of front legs and rear legs your dog has.



## **Grooming**

- Groom your dog.
- Groom at least one other dog with a coat type different from your own dog.
- Make a grooming kit.
- Teach another member how to groom their dog.

## **Selection**

- Compare the factors you should consider when first owning a puppy versus owning an adult dog.
- Research information about two breeds of dogs and list the pros and cons of owning each breed.
- Build a dog house.
- Investigate local laws regarding dog ownership.

## **Communication and Behavior**

- Describe socialization as it pertains to dogs.
- Explain why it is important to observe the complete picture of a dog's environment when attempting to interpret dog behavior.
- Observe the body postures of your dog over a period of one week and record those observations.
- List the similarities and differences between active submission and passive submission.
- List the similarities and differences between offensive threat and defense threat.
- Explain what your dog does to reduce stress and why these calming signals are important.
- Identify two responses you might get from staring at a dog.
- Describe the appropriate tones of voice to use when praising a dog and when correcting a dog.
- Describe how to humanely discipline a dog.
- Explain the purpose of the AKC Canine Good Citizen (CGC) Program® and name and describe the ten test items.
- Pass the CGC test with your dog.
- Teach another member how to perform the ten CGC test items.
- Help organize a CGC testing day in your county or community.
- Help organize a dog bite prevention program in your community.

## **Puppy Care and Socialization**

- Teach another person how to crate train and housebreak a dog.
- Describe the six steps of how to start grooming as outlined in the *Dog Resource Handbook*.

## **Beginning Training Techniques**

- Explain the four principles of operant conditioning.
- Show how to use negative punishment with your dog.
- Read one book about positive training and explain to another person how to use it.
- Subscribe to and read the *Whole Dog Journal*.
- Research training information written by Leslie Nelson.
- Teach another person how to use a lure and how to use targeting when training.
- Teach someone else the Name Game, the Attention Game, or the Set Up Game.

## **Obedience**

- Show your dog in the appropriate obedience class.
- Enroll in an obedience class.
- Train your dog to do any of the advanced obedience and graduate novice exercises described in the *Dog Resource Handbook*.
- Train your dog to do any of the open class or graduate open exercises described in the *Dog Resource Handbook*.
- Train your dog to do any of the utility, brace, team, or rally exercises described in the *Dog Resource Handbook*.
- Show in a brace class, a team class, or a rally obedience competition.
- Help another member learn brace or rally.

## **Judging**

- Learn the graduate novice, the open, the utility, or the rally score sheet.

## **Showmanship**

- Show your dog in a showmanship class.
- Learn how to do the Down and Back Pattern with two dogs.
- Interview a showmanship judge to learn what he or she looks for when judging.
- Attend an AKC show that has Junior Showmanship.
- Name four questions a judge asks him/herself when evaluating a handler and dog.

- Keep a scrapbook of your showmanship activities this project year.

### **Performance Events**

- Explain the importance of dogs eating a high-quality diet and being in good condition to compete in performance events.
- Join an agility association.
- Teach your dog the seesaw or teeter-totter.
- Build a broad jump and use it with your dog.
- Build a tire jump and use it with your dog.
- Compete in an agility trial or participate in a drill team.
- Assist with choreographing music for a drill team performance.
- Teach your dog a free style routine and perform it for your 4-H club.
- Compete in an Earthdog test, a coonhound event, a field trial, a herding trial, a hunting test, lure coursing, or tracking.

### **Working Dogs**

- Invite a K-9 Unit or a Search and Rescue team to give a presentation at a 4-H club meeting or countywide event.
- Interview a K-9 police officer or a Search and rescue team member and report what you learned.
- Research the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), learn the terminology used in access laws in your state, and report to your club where assistance dogs have access to by law.
- Surf the Internet to find five organizations that do *not* belong to Assistance Dogs International, Inc. (ADI), their locations, and their contact persons.
- On the ADI website, review the standards and ethics regarding dogs and the standards and ethics regarding clients.
- On the ADI website, review ADI minimum standards for training guide dogs, hearing dogs, or service dogs.
- Tour an assistance dogs facility.
- Work with your local Lions Club to help raise money for blind people.
- Be a guest speaker at your Lions Club to help raise money for blind people.
- Identify three guide dog organizations, hearing dog organizations, or service dog organizations located in or near Ohio.
- Give a demonstration or show your assistance dog at your county judging or fair.
- Compare the similarities and differences of assistance dogs and therapy dogs.
- List the similarities and differences among three therapy dog organizations.

- Join a therapy dog organization.
- Join a 4-H PetPALS Club.
- If certified, visit a nursing home or healthcare facility with your dog.
- Fulfill the requirements to be certified by a therapy dog organization.

### **Showing Your Project Dog**

- Plan to attend or organize a dog show.
- Name and describe four kinds of dog shows and the key people typically involved.

### **Anatomy and Physiology**

- Explain the difference between the biology of anatomy and physiology.
- Explain the purposes of the axial skeleton and the appendicular skeleton.
- Compare the human skeleton to the canine skeleton and describe four major differences.
- Draw the three basic dog head shapes and identify and describe each.
- Draw the foot of a dog and label the parts.
- Draw and identify the different kinds of teeth in an adult dog's mouth.
- Select one system of the dog and compare and contrast its function to that of the same system of a human.
- Describe the function of each type of muscle fiber.
- Investigate why a puppy's heart beats faster than an adult dog and why larger dogs have slower heart rates than smaller dogs.
- Name the parts of the respiratory system.
- Discuss special considerations of the respiratory system, such as dogs with brachycephalic head shapes and reverse sneezing.
- Identify and describe the function of each major division of the nervous system.
- Chart the digestive process.
- Name three parts of the female dog's reproductive system and three parts of a male dog's reproductive system.
- Describe the nature of a dog's sense of smell and sense of taste and how the two work together.
- Explain how a dog sniffs.
- Describe how dog vision differs from human vision in terms of visual acuity, night vision, color, and movement.

## Health

- Remove a tick from a dog.
- Select one species of mite, describe the symptoms it causes, and discuss how to treat a dog that is infested.
- Define the term zoonotic disease and name three zoonotic diseases.
- Teach another person how to brush their dog's teeth.
- Make a dog first aid kit.
- Take and record your dog's temperature, pulse, and respiratory rate; compare them to the normal temperature, pulse, and respiratory rate.
- Compare and record your dog's respiratory and heart rates at rest and after exercise.
- Describe the danger, symptoms, and action required for three first-aid situations outlined in the *Dog Resource Handbook*.

## Nutrition and Exercise

- Explain what amino acids are and why essential amino acids must be in the dog's diet
- Identify the two types of vitamins found in your dog's food and explain the value in your dog's diet.
- Identify the macro-minerals and the micro-minerals found in your dog's food and explain their value in your dog's diet.
- Develop a one-month exercise plan for your dog that includes places in your community for dogs to exercise safely.
- Complete the reading Dog Food Labels activity and quiz in the Dog Care and Welfare section.

## Reproduction

- Debate the pros and cons of breeding dogs.
- Name and describe the four stages of a bitch's estrus cycle.
- Describe at least two situations during delivery of puppies that require human intervention.
- Describe postpartum care of puppies, including the importance of colostrum.
- Describe what to feed puppies from 3 to 4 weeks of age through weaning.

## Careers

- Shadow a person in a dog-related career for a day.
- Visit a pet hotel or boarding facility and interview the owner to learn more about this career.