



We all have basic needs

Pupils will learn that animals have needs just like humans. They'll explore and discuss what animals need to stay healthy and happy.

Key stage 1

Downloads:

[ES - Five Welfare Needs](#)
[WS - What do they need?](#)

Supporting Documents:

[Presentation - visual prompts](#)
[Please see downloads section on website](#)

Did you know?

- It costs around £700 a year in the UK to keep an average-sized dog.
 - More than 900 million farm animals are reared every year in the UK.
 - There are approximately 8.5 million pet dogs in the UK
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Starter activity

Humans want

- Ask pupils to think, for two minutes, about what makes them happy. Ask everyone in the class to make a suggestion. Write or draw all the answers on the board. Repeat this, asking pupils to think what makes them healthy.

Main activity

What humans need

- Explain that they are now going to think about what they really need. Working in small groups, ask pupils to look at the list on the board and pick out which answers they think are basic needs, rather than things that they like or enjoy. They can add ideas to their lists if they think of something that hasn't been mentioned. Groups should limit their lists to no more than eight items.
- Come back together as a class and discuss the lists. Try to agree on a set of basic human needs and write or draw these on the board or flipchart.



Animals need

- Pupils should now think about what animals need to be happy and healthy. Some of them will have pets or know about farm animals or wildlife and can suggest ideas; others may need more guidance. Refer to factsheet [The five welfare needs](#) and the [Pet care](#) section of the RSPCA website.
- Ask pupils to suggest things that they think animals need. It may help to talk about a specific animal that they have experience of, such as a pet or farm animal. They can write or draw their answers on the worksheet, [What do they need?](#). For differentiation, you could play 'Pass the pebble', in a circle. Each pupil has to say what makes them happy or healthy when they are holding the pebble. Then put a soft toy animal in the centre of the circle and ask them what makes it happy and healthy. Are any of the things the same?
- Compare the two lists of needs you have written and discuss. Pupils should realise that the lists are similar.

Try the interactive version of this activity: [The Smiley Face Game](#)

Extension:

Depending on the class ability, you may be able to put together separate lists of needs for pets, farm animals and wildlife. Again, make sure that pupils understand the difference between 'wants' and 'needs'. Write this list on the board, next to the list you prepared for humans.

On a table, lay out some pictures of animals and the type of things that they might need, for example: food, a brush for grooming, water and other animals for company. You can also include 'wild card' images, such as a bar of chocolate, a cup of coffee and a bicycle, to get pupils thinking. Ask them to choose an animal and draw it in the centre of an A3 sheet of paper. They can choose things that they think it needs and draw them around the edge. (Alternatively, pupils can cut out and glue the pictures). Encourage pupils to write what each need is, next to the picture.

Animal Interviews

- Choose an animal and in pairs plan how you will interview them.
- **What questions would they like to ask?**
Think about what questions would like to ask and what would the animals say. Encourage them to act out the interviews in front of the rest of the class, some pupils playing the part of the animals and some playing the part of the interviewers - then swap roles. *(This could form the basis of a class assembly on animal welfare - pupils could begin with role play and then go on to explain more about how we should all look after animals and about the work of the RSPCA).*



Plenary activity

Looking back and forward

Ask pupils what they have learned from the activity. How did they feel thinking about animal needs? Is there anything they will do differently as a result?

What Next?

Extension activities and homework

Using a drawing program, pupils can design and create a *What do animals need?* poster. They could use photos of their pets, or of animals that they particularly like, and add their own text.

Want to explore the topic of caring for pets further?

Try these lessons:

[How do we look after pets?](#)

[Exotic animals as pets](#)

[A nation of animal lovers.](#)