Alberta SPCA Humane Education Program

Challenges

Opportunities

Successes


https://mybeautifulworldblog.com/2013/11/

https://raising-a-good-dog.com/dog-agility/
Challenges

- No animal facility
- Significant area/population
- Small department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Population of Alberta</th>
<th>4.1 million</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students (K-12)</td>
<td>717,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of schools</td>
<td>2000+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Opportunities

“In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity”

– Albert Einstein

• No animal facility
  – Focus on quality educational resources
Significant population/area & small department

- Target audience primarily teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Dept.</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>12,191</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Opportunities

- Significant population/area & small department
- Technology
- Mail
Successes

- 4 animal themed books
- Teacher’s guide
- Accompanying materials
- One month lending period
- Free
Using literature to develop character

Would you recommend this program to other teachers? If so, what would you say?

Yes, highly. Empathy is a tough concept to teach, and by using animals instead of humans, students really seemed to get it.

- Addresses issues/problems
- Picture books are particularly effective
- Animals are intrinsically interesting!
The Teacher’s Guide: Format

- Pre-reading discussion questions *(Intro)*
- Discussion questions *(promotes critical thinking, perspective taking, empathy building)*
- Post-reading activities *(tied to the Alberta Program of Studies, solidify concepts learned, and apply them to their lives)*
The Teacher’s Guide: Format

- Pre-reading discussion questions/activities (*Intro*)

How much do you have in common with an ant?
Story Time!!!
How did the students demonstrate that they were showing empathy, critical thinking or learning about responsible pet ownership? (Examples could include activities, discussion, service learning projects, etc)

Yes! After reading ‘Hey, Little Ant’, the class was very aware of the insects on the playground. They found a moth after it snowed and brought it inside the classroom to keep it safe.
AnimalTales: Study

- Dr. Donna Crawford (Education Consultant)
- Review of the program through interviews with students, teachers, administrators, parents
- Grade 2 and 5 classes
- 18 classrooms (urban, metro, rural)

[Links]
everylivingthing.ca/AnimalTalesStudy
everylivingthing.ca/AnimalTales
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reflection</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ants are part of nature</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be good to the environment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ants and living things are good for planet, helpful</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ants and people are similar</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be nice to all living things, all part of the planet</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be nice to ants, they have a right to live</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaches about empathy</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer pressure is hard</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How Smudge Came: Student Reflection

- Be Thankful: 2
- Can Still Be Happy or Kind with a Problem: 2
- Need to Ask Before You Take in a Dog: 3
- Don't Judge by Appearances: 3
- Proper Care of Pets: 4
- People with Disability Have Strengths: 5
- Animals Can Help People with Problems: 7
Why teachers used the program:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Used Picture Books</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussed Right to Life of all Living Things</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped Students Learn About Pet Owner Responsibilities</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross Curricular Lessons</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Value</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindness Caring Focus</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fits with Overall School Focus</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Has Social/Behavioural Issues</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met English Language Learner Goals</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had an Animal Focus</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well Developed Lessons</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met One or More Alberta Ed Curricular Outcomes</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AnimalTales...

a compliment to other humane education programs

What specifically did you do that worked well?

I loved having books that were new to all of us! The preplanned activities were enjoyed by the students. We went to the Humane Society at the end of the unit and it all fit very well.
Considerations:

• Adding books into your humane ed. program
  • (include deeper engagement ie: discussion/activities)

• Tie resources to your provincial curriculum

• Embrace broader humane education themes
  (people, and the environment- it’s all connected!)
They can't speak but they can feel.

Draw yourself in the circle speaking out for animals, people or the environment! Then, using words or pictures fill in your speech bubble!
Melissa Logan, BSc., BEd.
Director of Education
mlogan@albertaspca.org
everylivingthing.ca
@evrylivingthing