

What to do today

IMPORTANT Parent or Carer – Read this page with your child and check that you are happy with what they have to do and any weblinks or use of internet.

1. Think about a picture

- Look at the picture: [My Pet](#). What do you think has happened just before this picture was taken? What might happen next? What names would you give these dogs? Who might own them?
- Can you think of three reasons why people like to keep pets?
- Make notes about your answers or tell someone about them.

2. Read a poem

- Read the poem: [My Dog](#). Read it two times, once in your head once out loud.
- Read and think about the [Poetry Questions](#). Write some of your answers as clear sentences.

3. Read a poetry collection

- Read the poems in [Animal Poetry Collection](#).
- Read at least three of the poems. Challenge yourself to read them all.
- Complete [Poetry Notes](#) and write about your favourite poem.

[Well done. Share the poems with a grown-up. Do they have the same favourite as you?](#)

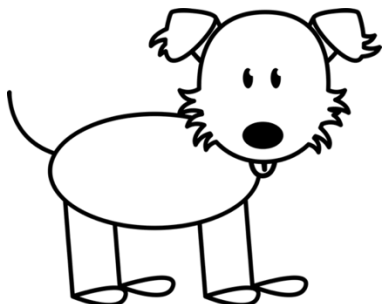
Try these Fun-Time Extras

- Can you practise reading your favourite animal poem, then record it and share your recording with someone else?
- Can you make an illustration for your favourite animal poem?

My Pet



My Dog by Vernon Scannell



My dog belongs to no known breed,
A bit of this and that,
His head looks like a small haystack,
He's lazy, smelly, fat.

If I say, 'Sit!' he walks away,
When I throw stick or ball
He flops down in the grass as if
He had no legs at all.

Then looks at me with eyes that say,
'You threw the thing, not me,
You want it back? Then get it back,
Fair's fair, you must agree.'

He is a thief. Last week but one
He stole the Sunday roast
And showed no guilt at all as we
Sat down to beans on toast.

The only time I saw him run –
And he went like a flash –
Was when a mugger in the park
Tried to steal my cash.

My loyal brave companion flew
Like a missile to the gate
And didn't stop till safely home,
He left me to my fate.

And would I swap him for a dog
Obedient, clean and good,
An honest, faithful, lively chap?
Oh boy, I would, I would!

(Read Me Out Loud p310)

Poetry Questions

What do you like about the poem? Is there anything that you dislike about it?

Does the poem remind you of anything that you have ever read? Does it remind you of any person you know? Does it remind you of anything that has happened to you?

What patterns can you find in the poem? Are any of the words or phrases linked with other words or phrases? How?

What puzzles does the poem leave? What questions does it make you want to ask?

Animal Poetry Collection

Mother doesn't want a dog

Mother doesn't want a dog.
Mother says they smell,
And never sit when you say sit,
Or even when you yell.
And when you come home late at night
And there is ice and snow,
You have to go back out because
The dumb dog has to go.

Mother doesn't want a dog.
Mother says they shed,
And always let the strangers in
And bark at friends instead,
And do disgraceful things on rugs,
And track mud on the floor,
And flop upon your bed at night
And snore their doggy snore.

Mother doesn't want a dog.
She's making a mistake.
Because, more than a dog, I think
She will not want this snake.



by Judith Viorst

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The Dog Lovers

So they bought you
And kept you in a
Very good home
Central heating
TV
A deep freeze
A very good home-

No one to take you
For that lovely long run-
But otherwise
'A very good home'
They fed you Pal and Chun
But not that lovely long run,

Until, mad with energy and boredom
You escaped- and ran and ran and ran
Under a car.

Today they will cry for you-
Tomorrow they will buy another dog.

by Spike Milligan

Black Cat

Sleepy-purred cat peers out
from the nest of my duvet
eyes glinting green gold black

He yawns
mouth prawn-pink.

Settles.

Sleek black paw
over coal black nose
and sleeps.



by Suzanne Elvidge

The Dog

The truth I do not stretch or shove
When I state that the dog is full of love.
I've also found, by actual test,
A wet dog is the lovingest.

By Ogden Nash

Barry's Budgie... Beware!

Dave's got a dog the size of a lion
Half-wolf, half-mad, frothing with venom
It chews up policemen and then spits them out
But it's nothing to the bird I'm talking about.

Claire's got a cat as wild as a cheetah
Scratching and hissing, draws blood by the litre
Jumps high walls and hedges, fights wolves on its own
But there's one tough budgie it leaves well alone.

Murray my eel has teeth like a shark
Don't mess with Murray, he'll zap out a spark
But when Barry's budgie flies over the houses
Murray dims down his lights, blows his own fuses.

This budgie's fierce, a scar down its cheek
Tattoos on its wings, a knife in its beak
Squawks wicked words, does things scarcely legal
Someone should tell Barry it's really an eagle.

by David Harmer

My Praying Mantis

I once had a mantis as a pet
A praying mantis, you must not forget,

is the tiger of the insect world,
hungry, fierce and extremely bold,

and if you are an insect, keep away
should a mantis be lurking where you play.

Anyway my mantis was my very best friend.
He sat on my shoulder and I did defend his

insect's right to stay with me,
protect him from people's curiosity;



for they thought it very strange
the way his body was arranged.
For a start his neck was very long,
and his heart-shaped head did not belong

to that thin neck and bulbous abdomen
or toothed arms as strong as ten,

wings which gave him speed in flight
when he attacked and with delight

grabbed a cockroach for his supper,
tore and ate it with his choppers.

However, one day, Phoebe, the neighbour's cat,
gobbled up my mantis and that was that.

Phoebe licked her lips, seemed satisfied
with a chewed up mantis in her inside.

I suppose, for a mantis, the moral to this story
Is, look out for cats or you'll be sorry.

by John Lyons

The Gerbil

"Can we have a gerbil, Mum?"
 "We can't," is what Mum said.
 "I'm sorry, love," she added.
 "I'm having a baby, instead."

"I'd rather have a gerbil, Mum
 I'd like a pet," I said,
 But what I'll get is a baby,
 With a face all screaming and red.

"I'll tell you what," said Mother,
 "I'll tell you what we'll do.
 If you help me with the baby,
 You can have a gerbil, too."

I got the gerbil I wanted,
 And I help Mum every day.
 The baby isn't too bad –
 But the gerbil's quieter, I'd say.

by Tony Bradman

Rabbit Poem

To keep
 a rabbit
 is a good
 habit.

A rabbit is truly curious:
 his eyes are soft
 but his whiskers wiggle
 and his nose twitches
 and his ears jiggle

and his tail
 is a bump
 on
 his rump.



A rabbit
 Is cheerful
 but not especially
 careful
 about multiplying:
 the answers
 he gets
 to the simple
 sum
 of one and one
 are mystifying...

A rabbit Is easy
 to care for:
 to munch on grass
 is what he's hare for.

So if you get
 the chance
 to have a rabbit
 grab it!

by Pamela Mordecai

Feedback on poems

Poem	Like or not? (Give a score)	Patterns I noticed.	Questions I have.
Mother doesn't want a dog			
The Dog Lovers			
Black Cat			
The Dog			
Barry's Budgie... Beware!			
My Praying Mantis			
The Gerbil			
Rabbit Poem			
<p>My favourite poem is... _____</p> <p>My reasons are....</p>			