

All about rabies

N.B. This lesson works better if you have taught the lesson *Learn to speak 'dog'* first. Please refer to the dog posture images resource.

By the end of the lesson the learners will be able to:

- Demonstrate how to behave around any dog, particularly a stray
- Describe what rabies is, how it is transmitted, and how to take precautions to avoid dog bites.
- Feel empowered to raise awareness about rabies within their communities, and create material that informs people about the dangers of rabies.

Materials and preparation

- *All about rabies fact sheet* – enough for one between four learners
- Resources for poster making – paper, colouring pencils or pens
- *All about rabies quiz sheet* – enough for one each

Key words

Rabies

a disease transmitted to dogs, humans and other mammals through a virus found in the saliva. It causes madness, convulsions and death.

Starter

See the set of images on dog postures and behaviour that accompanied the previous lesson *Learn to speak 'dog'*.

Game – recap on previous lesson 'learn to speak 'dog''

10-15 mins

1. Bring a learner to the front of the class, and ask them to adopt a dog pose. Encourage them to move around and make appropriate noises relating to how the dog is feeling. For example, if they are fearful they will make high-pitched whimpering noises, or when angry they might growl and then bark loudly.
2. Ask the class:

- How do you think this dog is feeling?
- What is it about the dog's posture that tells you they are feeling that way?
- How should you behave towards a dog if you see it behaving like this?

3. Repeat with different learners, taking different poses.

Alternatively, if learners are too shy to do this on their own, ask the whole class to show you the different poses relating to different emotions.

Main activity

Quiz
5-10 min

Ask the class:

What do you know about rabies?

- If the class obviously know a bit about rabies already, use the following quiz to elicit answers from learners.
- If the class have not heard of rabies, briefly explain what the disease is (information found on the factsheet), then move onto the quiz below.

(If you feel that the learners could answer the questions without the multiple choice answers, then please don't read them out.)

1. **Sometimes people throw stones at dogs. Why do you think this is?**

- Because they are scared that the dog might attack them.
- Because they don't like dogs.
- Because they think that all stray dogs are dangerous.

Answer: **All** answers could be correct

2. **How do you think dogs feel if they have stones thrown at them?**

- Dogs can't feel anything
- Scared
- Sad

Answer: **b** and **c**

3. **Do all stray dogs have rabies?**

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I don't know

Answer: **b** – No.

4. **How does a dog affected by rabies behave?**

- a) It might look nervous and anxious.
- b) It's irritable, it tries to bite and snap.
- c) It might drool a lot.

All of those answers are correct

5. **What should you do if you think a dog has rabies?**

- a) Throw stones at it to make it go away.
- b) Move away slowly and carefully from the dog and tell an adult.
- c) Approach the dog to try and help it.

Answer: **b** – children should **never** approach a dog they don't know, or throw stones at one. They risk being bitten or attacked if they do.

6. **What should you do if a stray dog comes close to you?**

- a) Stand still like a tree, arms by your sides, keep quiet and look at your feet until it goes away.
- b) Run away, calling loudly for help.
- c) Throw stones at it.

Answer: **a**. Never run away as the dog is likely to chase and might attack. Dogs also do not like sudden loud noises, so shouting is a very bad idea. Never throw stones at a dog as it can make it angry and likely to attack you.

Collecting facts
15 min

1. Ask the learners to sit in groups of four and to read the *Rabies Fact sheet* together. The learners will use the information contained in the fact sheet to complete their own *Rabies quiz sheet*.
2. Read out the learners' initial answers about what they know about rabies from the board and compare these to the facts they have just read about. Did learners have any misconceptions?

Plenary

Poster
20 mins+

Learners choose a fact from the fact sheet provided, and turn it into a message about rabies prevention. This could take the form of an illustrated leaflet or poster.

(As this may take a longer than twenty minutes, you might want to finish the posters in another lesson, or at home.)

Once finished, display the posters in prominent, public places in the school or community.

The class could use what they have learnt in this lesson to plan and perform an assembly for the whole school to make sure everyone knows how to prevent dog bites.

Optional extension

Game
10 min

Rabid Dog

This game is played a bit like 'tag' or 'it'. You need a large outside space to play this game.

- One learner is the 'rabid dog'.
- The others run away from them and shout.
- The dog will 'bite' them (touch with their hand) if they can be caught before they can adopt the 'tree' or 'rock' pose and stay still. While they are still in these positions, the dog will ignore them.
- If they are caught while moving or shouting they are out.
- Players can only stay still and be quiet for a maximum of three seconds.
- The winner is the last one not 'out'.

5 tips

to prevent dog bites



Dogs can be your best friends, but sometimes when we are angry or scared we might bite. Let's learn to live together responsibly and safely to prevent being bitten.

1



Don't disturb me or frighten me, particularly when I am eating or tied up.

- Don't disturb me when I am with my toys, my puppies, in a car, behind a fence or when I am asleep or ill.

2



Keep away from me when I am angry or scared.

- When I am angry, I will show my teeth.
- When I am scared, my tail will be between my legs and I will try to run away.

3



Don't move if I approach you when I am not on a lead.

- Stand still like a tree trunk.
- If you fall over, curl up and stay as still and heavy as a rock.

4



Approach me slowly and quietly.

- Ask my owner or your parents/guardian's permission before you touch me. Let me sniff your hand before you touch me. When you stroke me, stroke my back first.

5



If a dog bites you act quickly. Wash the wound with soap and water and look for a first aid centre.

- Remember to tell your parents that you were bitten. Tell them which dog it was and where you were when it bit you.

Rabies is a disease that kills people and dogs. If a dog has rabies and it bites you it can give you the disease. If you are bitten remembering what the dog that bit you looked like and getting medical help can save your life. Don't disturb, mistreat or kill the dog.

Remind your parents, teachers, friends and everyone you know that the best way to stop rabies is to make sure all dogs are vaccinated against it every year.

