

Learn to speak 'dog'

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

- Recognise and describe dogs' body language in different contexts
- Demonstrate how to behave safely around dogs

Materials and preparation

- *Dog behaviour picture cards A3* (shuffled so they are not in order)
- *Understanding dogs worksheet*

Key words

aggressive
ready or likely to attack or confront

fearful
feeling or showing fear or anxiety

relaxed
free from tension and anxiety

playful
fond of games; light-hearted

Starter

*Identifying dog
body language
15 minutes*

1. Write the following words on the board:

relaxed; playful; fearful; aggressive

2. One at a time, show the class the *Dog behaviour picture cards A3*, which show a dog displaying different emotions.

With each new image, ask them:

- How do you think each dog is feeling?
- How can you tell this by looking – what signs should the learners look for?

3. For the first picture of each example, explain how they should behave around the dog as detailed on the card.
4. For the second picture of the example, test their memory by asking them how they should behave.

For example:

How can you tell this dog is being aggressive?

How should you behave around this dog?

No – never approach a dog who looks like this. Stand still like a tree... etc.



IMPORTANT: Although there are instructions on how to approach a happy dog in a safe way, this *only* applies to pet dogs on a lead in the presence of the dog's owner. *Learners must not be encouraged to approach stray, unfamiliar or potentially dangerous dogs.*

Main activity

Worksheet
30 min

Hand out the 'understanding dogs' worksheet.

Learners can work in pairs to discuss their answers. Then go through the correct answers with the whole group.

Extension

Roleplay
10-15 mins

In pairs, one learner takes a dog's posture and the other learner works out how the 'dog' is feeling. They can role-play the appropriate behaviour and reaction between dog and human.

Plenary

Game
15 min

Safety first! game

Here are some actions you can teach the group in order to play the following game. The actions have phrases associated with them, and represent aspects of dog and human body language, for example:

Humans

- *Strange dog comes close!* – stand up straight, eyes at the floor, arms close to body, don't move
- *Dog attack!* – curl up on the floor, arms protecting head, knees tucked in to chest, stay still

Dogs

- *Happy dog* – stand loose and bouncy, mouth open, tongue out
- *Fearful dog* – hands on flat head to mimic dog's ears back on head, head and body lowered, looking up, eyes wide and looking scared
- *Aggressive dog* – arms out to mimic fur standing on end, teeth bared, frown, make a growling noise

How to play:

1. As the leader, call out any of the phrases above – 'dog attack!', 'fearful dog!' 'Strange dog comes close!', etc.
2. The learners need to listen carefully and make the actions as quickly as possible.
3. Watch carefully – they are 'out' if they get it wrong.
4. Play until you have a clear winner/s or until interest wanes.
5. Variation – make it harder by adding more actions based on dog behaviour – for example, how to walk away safely, how to greet a dog safely.

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.

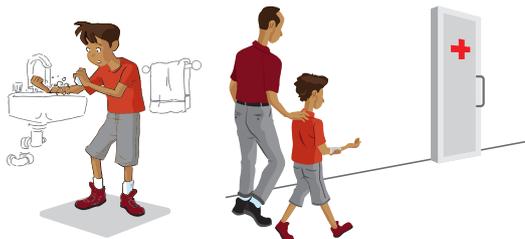
4



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.

