Theme: How Animals Impact the Lives of Humans Around the World  

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   - Patent describes the history of dogs, characteristics of dogs, and the similarities and bonds that dogs and humans share. The picture book also provides facts regarding the science behind how dogs make humans healthier, both physically and emotionally. For example, looking into dogs’ eyes will increase a person’s oxytocin’s levels, which is the feeling of being welcomed. Also, dogs have the ability to read a human’s face and copy the human’s behavior. Moreover, animals, such as therapy dogs and other helpful animals help the stress, depression, PTSD, and physical disabilities that people may contain. Patent’s informative picture book for children relates to “Paws for Life” because it shows readers the benefits having dogs in our lives.

   - The narrator of Xiong’s picture book is a stone lion in Taiwan. The stone lion is the protector of all of the land. Though the lion is old and small, people of all ages and from all over Taiwan visit him. When people rub the stone lion’s head, they are reminded of their happy days and good memories. At the end of Xiong’s text, the stone lion admits that he has remembered every event that occurred in each person’s life that has visited him. Xiong’s picture book relates to “Paws for Life” because it demonstrates how lions resemble serenity in the Taiwan culture, making the text international.

   - Two Birds, a pueblo boy lived about one-hundred years ago. One day, he found a wolf pup that was all alone. Two Birds hunted rabbits and mice to feed the wolf pup. After raising the pup for quite some time, Two Birds heard wolves howl in the distance. He thought that the wolves were calling for his wolf pup, so he decided to untie his lead and set him free. Before leaving Two Birds, the pup assured him that he would be his ears and eyes for him in the wild. Ts’O’s multicultural picture book demonstrates the bond between a young pueblo boy and a wolf pup, which is why I chose it for my “Paws for Life” presentation.

   - Lady and her owner, Kathy, drove to the hospital one day to visit the patients there. Since Lady is a therapy dog, she helps and supports both children and adults at the hospital. When they arrive at the hospital, young children gather around to see what kinds of tricks Lady can perform. She also plays fetch with elders to keep them happy and active. The last child Lady sees is Rosie, a young girl who has cancer. Since Rosie is unable to participate in any activities, Lady lies on the bed with her to support and make her happy. William’s picture book is perfect for my “Paws for Life” inquiry project because it incorporates individuals with disabilities who find joy and comfort with the present of Lady, the therapy dog.

   - Emily Elizabeth and her dog, Clifford, decide to spend a day at the zoo. After visiting one animal at a time, Emily would share a fact about the animal and contrasted the animal to Clifford. At the end of the text, Emily tells Clifford that he is many things, but the most important thing is that he is loved. Bridwell’s picture book contains multiple facts about animals in the zoo and the loving relationship between Clifford and Emily. Bridwell’s text is a part of my “Paws for Life” inquiry because it teaches children about animals and demonstrates the close relationship Emily and her dog, Clifford, share with each other.

   In her picture book, Heos informs readers about the care needed to own a pet turtle or tortoise. At the end of the informative picture book, readers have the opportunity to take a short quiz to see if owning a pet turtle or tortoise is the right animal to own. Heos’ picture book is a part of my “Paws for Life” presentation because it allows readers to understand the process required to properly take care of a future pet. Also, her book is intended to teach young children responsibilities and the correct interaction between animals and humans.


   There was a devastating fire in the Lincoln National Forest, New Mexico. The fire began after a careless person threw a cigarette unto the floor of the wilderness. As the firefighters arrived on the scene, they saw many animals in panic, trying to scatter from the flames. While the firemen were trying to escape the hot flames, they caught a glimpse of a small bear cub on a tree. The firemen carefully carried the cub out of the wilderness and took him to the nearest veterinarian hospital. After a long healing process, the cub received the name ‘Smokey.’ The inspiring true story of Smokey the Bear is upon my list of books for “Paws for Life” because his story has helped people understand the importance of wildlife and how we need to protect them through conservation and wildfire prevention.


   Laidlaw’s picture book describes the lives of five elephants. Though the elephants encountered many hardships in their lives, the author explains the significance of the elephants’ stories. The five elephants mentioned in the informative picture book are the beginning of conservation efforts that exist today, to decrease the amount of elephants that encounter tragedies. Laidlaw’s text is in my “Paws for Life” presentation because it shows the interaction between humans and elephants. Throughout the informative picture book, Laidlaw describes how humans have saved the lives of many elephants and continue to do so today.


   Moberg’s picture book provides multiple stories of historical figures that had animals, domestic and wild, in their lives that changed the world forever. For example, Mozart, a famous pianist, owned a starling bird, which inspired him to compose his world renown songs. Moberg’s text consists of various personal stories, from all over the world, where historical figures interacted with animals during their lifetime. The picture book lists facts and quotes regarding the impact the animals placed on the lives of historical figures, which is why the book is a part of my “Paws for Life” presentation.


   For many years, Magdalena and her grandmother spent their nights searching for sea turtles in the waves and waited for the female turtles to come unto shore to lay her eggs. Magdalena did her part by protecting the eggs from predators, such as raccoons. Unfortunately, while waiting for the turtle eggs to hatch, Magdalena’s grandmother passed away. At first, she did not want to continue protecting the turtle eggs, because it reminded her too much of her grandmother. However, she came to the realization that her grandmother would have wanted her to continue their tradition. Crowe’s emotional picture book pertains to my “Paws for Life” Inquiry project because Magdalena and her grandmother’s relationship was centered around the compassion and care for protecting baby turtles.

- A young Korean girl named Soo Min was adopted by a family from the United States of America. Though she did not know any English and her new parents did not know any Korean, they quickly taught each other. Her best friend in her new home was their family cat named Goyangi. Goyangi comforted Soo Min, especially when she felt alone, scared, and sad. Soo Min did not like leaving the cat at home alone because she missed her too much. One day, Goyangi left their home and became lost. Soo Min was devastated. Fortunately, Goyangi returned home, so she and Soo Min were happily reunited. McDonnell’s multicolour picture book relates to “Paws for Life” because the main character is a young girl from a different country, who is struggling to fit in her new home in America. However, Goyangi provides Soo Min with comfort and warmth, so she can become more comfortable in her new home.


- One evening, a young boy, who struggles with a stuttering disability, talks to his animals. He tells them that if he ever finds his voice (without stuttering), he will be the voice for all animals. After years of practice and determination, the boy taught himself not to stutter any longer. After graduating from college, the boy spends the majority of his time in the wilderness, in various parts of the world. In the wild, he enjoys talking with animals and feels at home. Due to his passion for the freedom and safety of wild animals, especially jaguars, he fights for the development of a jaguar sanctuary. Rabinowitz’s nonfiction story is one of the best examples for “Paws for Life” due to the multicultural aspect of the story and the boy’s determination to fight for the lives of animals, who cannot speak for themselves.


- One day, a pigeon fell from the sky and landed on the sidewalk. No one noticed the bird, except for Will. Once Will saw that the bird was injured on the ground, he was determined to help it. Right then, Will’s mother put the bird into her purse and they brought it home with them. After wrapping the pigeon’s wing, Will and his parents waited for the bird to heal. After quite some time, Will and his family returned to the spot where they found the pigeon and let him fly away. Graham’s text resembles “Paws for Life” because it consists of humans who save a bird’s life, which teaches the readers compassion and determination.


- Koro Apirana, the teacher and leader of a young Mauri boy defensive class, is a native New Zealander. When Apirana finds out that his daughter just delivered a daughter, not a son, he is disappointed. Showing his anger in having a granddaughter, Apirana wonders how his native people will survive without a ‘Whale Rider,’ which is required to be a boy, so he thought. The ‘Whale Rider’s’ job, according to the Mauri’s was to balance out the ecosystem, with both humans and animals. Surprisingly, Apirana’s new granddaughter, Kahutia, possessed a passion for whales and had the ability to communicate with them. Once the tragic event of whaling began, no man could save the whales. However, Kahutia was able to mount on the back of the beached whale and lead it back into the deep ocean. Kahutia was the new ‘Whale Rider.’ Ihimaera’s international chapter book showed the beliefs and traditions that native New Zealander’s practice. Since Ihimaera’s novel consists of humans and animals interacting with each other in another country, it would be perfect for “Paws for Life.”


- Racing for a million dollars, the Red Team, was anxious to begin their journey through the great Savanna in Africa. As the team received clues and riddles on what to take pictures of, Mari, continuously helped her team solve the riddles. Along the race, Mari would educate her team members about the wildlife living in the Savanna. Mari would also inform her group members about the importance of capturing the beauty of the black rhinoceroses because they are highly endangered. Earhart’s informative and enjoyable novel is a part of “Paws for Life” because it educates readers about animals living in the Savanna of Africa, especially endangered animals like rhinos. Since rhinos are highly hunted today for their horns, multiple conservation efforts are striving to preserve the majestic animals.
Canine-Assisted Reading programs consist of dogs helping children as they read aloud. A total of 42 states and the District of Columbia use canine-assisted programs in schools, libraries, recreation centers, universities, and even hospitals. For the students who struggle with reading or reluctant readers, canine-assisted programs provide the fantastic opportunity to read a book, without any judgmental comments from their peers or adults. Since dogs have no capability judging young readers, students feel comfortable reading with them. Canine-Assisted programs will increase motivation, provide encouragement, and make reading enjoyable for young children. In addition, the programs also ensure that students’ heart rate and blood pressure will decrease with the presence of dogs, meaning that they feel comfortable and lack stress. In one study, a flat-coated retriever named Jackie and her owner, Julie Dahl, attended a local library to help children read. While the student read aloud to Jackie, Julia stood from a distance. When the student came across a word she did not know, Jackie, with the help of Julia, would place her paw over one part of the word at a time. If the child still failed to understand the word, Jackie would place her paw over the illustrations, to provide the child clues to what the word said.

Bone’s article explains that animals, both wild and domestic, pertain to children’s academic development by being educators for the students. When students are aware of the environment around them, they become more conscious of the natural world. If teachers allow students to learn more about the effect that humans have on the environment, they will be aware of living things in nature. For example, when teachers teach their students about one of many causes of forest fires, such as humans, they will be educated about how the fire may affect or even kill animals in the wild. Relating animals into lessons will provide students a greater understanding of biology. In the long run, biology lessons that relate to real-life animals will help the students comprehend why conservation efforts are so crucial today.

A second grade teacher decided to make her students research how to properly care for a new dog. The teacher decided to use this strategy before she brought her canine-assisted dog to the classroom. While the students researched and made informational papers about dogs, she decided to bring in parents and other adults into the classroom while the students presented their information. Later on in Friesen’s article, she explains how animals can be incorporated into each subject of learning. When students are learning science, teachers have the opportunity to bring a real-life animal or stuffed animal that represents a real-life animal into the classroom. With the presence of an animal, the students will be asked to observe and experiment, giving them the opportunity to use scientific tools. By observing and experimenting, the students are receiving hands-on learning experiences, which is required in the science field. On the other hand, when teaching language arts, some teachers noticed a common theme of students using animals as main subject of their stories. Lastly, when working with students and their multisensory experiences, teachers use their canine-assisted therapy dogs to have the students use their five senses based on the dog’s presence (see, hear, feel, touch, and smell). Also, for any subject, dogs and other animals have the great power to ignite imagination in each person’s life.