



# The Kindergarten Chronicles

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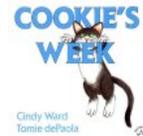
## Building on Prior Knowledge and Meaningful Student Contexts

Pets and kids go hand-in-hand! What a great way to incorporate literacy into a theme that is familiar. Research shows that students learn more effectively when they already know something about a content area (schema) and when concepts are meaningful. When teachers link new information to the student's prior knowledge, teachers activate the student's interest and curiosity, and infuse instruction with a sense of purpose. Engage students in these meaningful literature-based activities that incorporate prior knowledge, and facilitate learning.

Source: *Funds of Knowledge: Theorizing Practices in Households and Classrooms* by Norma Gonzalez (Editor), Luis C. Moll (Editor), Cathy Amanti (Editor)



Use The Perfect Pet by Margie Palatini to introduce the Pet theme unit. Adults and children will find this story amusing. Elizabeth wants all the pets, but her parents object to each of them. At the end, she settles for a bug. Open a discussion about the pets students have.

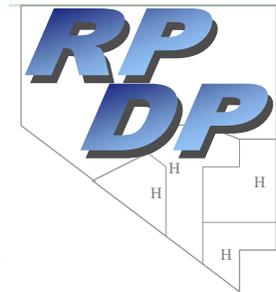


After reading Cookie's Week by Cindy Ward, discuss all the things Cookie did in the story that were naughty. Next, have the students think of other things Cookie might do and have them write and draw a picture of their idea. When finished, bind their pictures into a class book.

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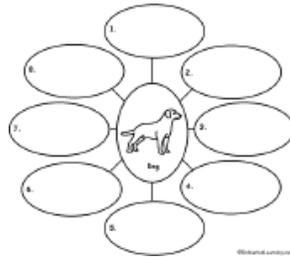
Bill Hanlon, Director

### Integrated Literacy Based Activities

**Vocabulary Development-** Use pictures, labels, and diagrams.

Pet Words -Printable pet words for your thematic word wall

Our Pet Words



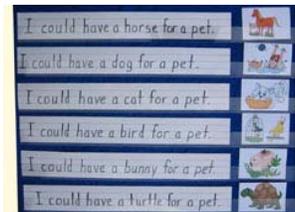
Visit [www.enchantedlearning.com](http://www.enchantedlearning.com) for great pet theme activities.

**Poetry-** Make a paper bag dog puppet. Create a B-I-N-G-O poetry card and have students sing/read the poem using the puppet. Glue a copy of the text to the back of the bag.



**Pocket Chart-** Make a predictable chart or big book to model concepts of print, sentence structure, context clues, and sight words:

I could have a **horse** for a pet.  
I could have a **dog** for a pet.  
I could have a **bunny** for a pet.  
I could have a **guinea pig** for a pet.  
I could have a **rat** for a pet.  
I could even have a **bug** for a pet.  
What pet would you like?



**Writing-** Use predictable charts, structured sentences, and various writing prompts.

- Have students bring in a photo of their pet or a pet he/she would like to have. Make a class book.

Our Pets

Michelle has a fish.  
Cameron wants a dog.  
Shelby has a cat.



- Interactive Writing Chart: "How to Take Care of a Pet"
- Get a class pet! Hamsters, goldfish, and even a little bug could make a nice addition to your classroom. Have students write notes to the class pet. Vote on the perfect name for your pet. Send the pet home on the weekend with a student and keep a travel log. Have students write about what they did with the pet.

**Science-** Use photos or stuffed animals to categorize and classify: *Pet or Not a Pet* or *mammals, fish, birds, reptiles*.

**Math-** Make a "Favorite Pet" graph, count pet stuffed animals, line animals up and identify first and last in a series, make up addition or subtraction stories using a dog house box or pet shop display.

**Art-** Use paper plates to make pets!



**Try This:** Take a field trip to the local humane society and let your children learn about the mistreatment of animals and talk to them about how much these pets need adopting.



