



THE FIRST DOG by JAN BRETT

One can imagine that this fictional tale closely portrays the way that the first wolf became "man's best friend". Wolves are the lions of North America; yet instead of seeing them as "lordly" animals, we perceive them as "sneaky" and "bloodthirsty" predators. Even more confusion is added if we recognize that they are the ancestors of all dogs and possess all the same traits that we love in our loyal pets.

As we study the behavior of dogs, we will be learning about wolves, too. Dogs communicate or talk to other dogs in the same way they talk to us; they inherited this social behavior from wolves. Dogs and wolves have keen senses of hearing; they can hear howling several miles away. Use the following activities to come to know and love wolves as Kip did.

MATERIALS: blindfolds, domestic dog observation sheet, dog talk sheets

ACTIVITY # 1: How to locate sounds as a wolf does.

Put on a blindfold; have a partner stand somewhere in the room and clap his/her hands. As the clapping continues, turn your head, i.e. your ears, from side to side until the sound is the loudest. Point in the direction from which the sound is coming. Take off the blindfold and see if you are correct. Try the activity again with your partner moving around the room while clapping. Try to follow the movements with your ears.

ACTIVITY # 2: Dog communication

First complete the dog talk sheets with your class. Then assign the Dog Observation Activity for homework. Caution students to observe their own pet dog or a neighborhood dog. This activity should be completed, if possible without the animal's awareness. A

sketch on the back of the observation sheet might prove helpful. In the class discussion the following day, point out that they would see these same behaviors if they were observing wolves.

SOURCE: *ZOOBOOKS: WOLVES*, January 1989 & "Wolves and Humans" Kit from the Boston Museum of Science.

ADDITIONAL BOOKS: "Alaska Happy Dog Trilogy" by Mary Shields. Mary lives in Goldstream Valley, Alaska where she raises sled dogs and travels cross-country with her dog team. She is the first woman to finish the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race.

The trilogy includes: Can Dogs Talk? Volume 1; Loving A Happy Dog Volume 2; Secret Messages - Training A Happy Dog Volume 3.

Her other books include: Sled Dog Trails; Small Wonders: Year Round Alaska; "Season of the Sled Dog" - a PBS special (60 minute video).

These books and video can be purchased from:

Pyrola Publishing

P.O. Box 80961-P

Fairbanks, AK 99708

"The Bulgarian Biodiversity Preservation Society-Semperviva- is collaborating with the Balkani Wildlife Society to simultaneously protect wolves and save an ancient dog breed, bred some 5000 years ago by the nomadic Karakachan tribe to protect their flocks of sheep. These dogs are the wolves' nearest domesticated relatives.

In this corner of Europe on the Balkan peninsula, wolves still prowl forested mountain ranges that are sparsely settled by small-scale farmers. Together with the Iberian peninsula, conservationists consider this area the cornerstone of the wolf's chances for survival in Europe." An excerpt from the *Wildlife Conservation Society* magazine March/April 2003.

STANDARDS:

BSL: 1.3, 1.5, 1.7, 1.11, 4.12, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6.1, 12.1, 12.3, 12.7

NCTM: none

SCS: A1, C1, C3, H2, H3

Brett, Jan. The First Dog. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988, ISBN#0-15-227651-3.

Domestic Dog Observation

Observation by _____

Date/Time _____

Animal Description (include age, breed and sex) _____

Location (include if area is familiar to animal) _____

Type of Observation (include if animal was aware of observer) _____

Length of Observation (number of minutes) _____

Distance between Observer and Animal (can be different at various times) _____

Describe Animal's Parts during Behavior:

Ears _____

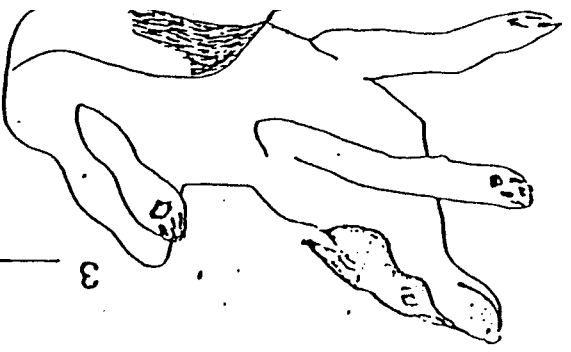
Mouth _____

Tail _____

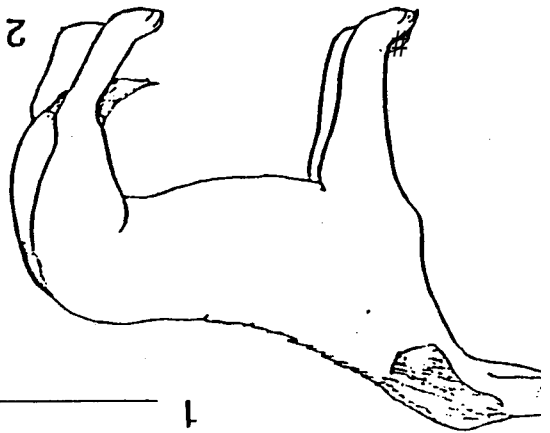
Body _____

General Description of Behavior _____

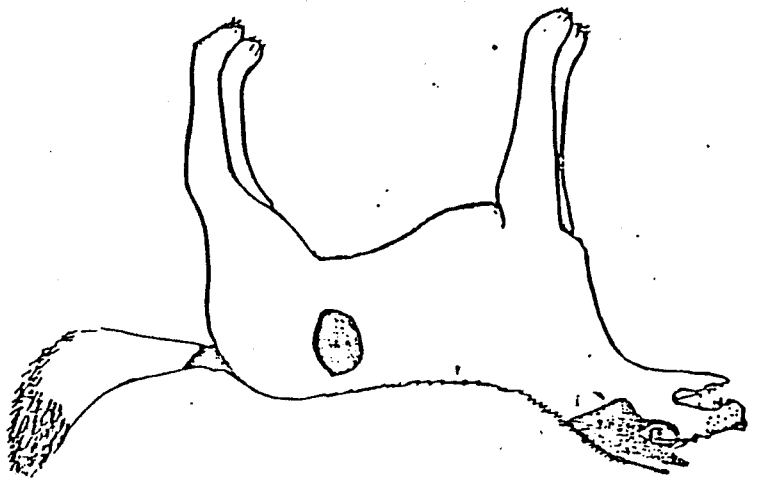
Reasons for behavior _____



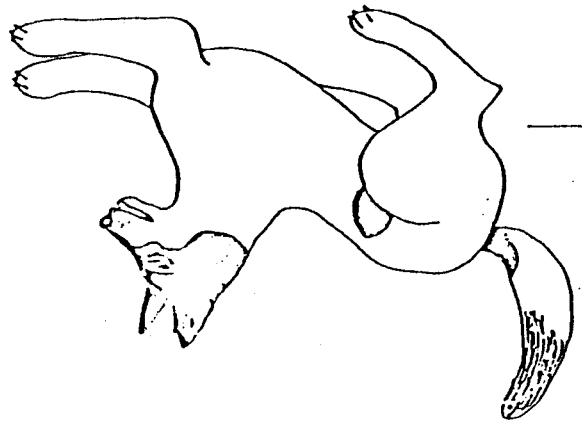
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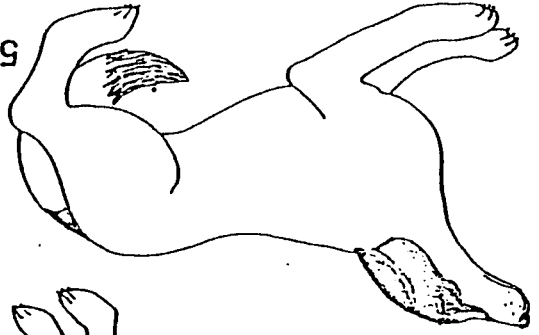
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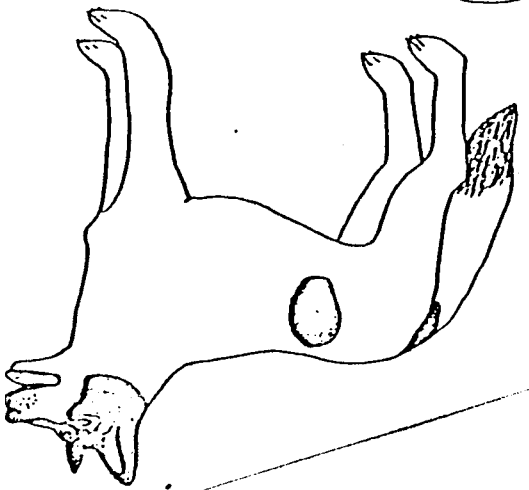
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6



5



4

DOG TALK

What are these dogs saying?

Match the sentences below with the dog pictures.

- A Let's play!
- B I give up.
- C Get out of here! I'm the boss!
- D I'm sorry.
- E Get out of here! I'm scared!
- F Hi! I'm ready!

TEACHER NOTES:

Sound is vibration; when objects move or vibrate back and forth, they create sound waves. As these sound waves touch air molecules, they spread out in every direction like the ripples that are created when a rock is dropped in a lake. Sound slows down as it travels through liquids and gases. It cannot travel in a complete vacuum. Energy is necessary to produce sound; sound is a form of energy.

A talking cup acts something like the old tin can telephone. The plastic tail is inserted in the bottom of the cup; by pulling your fingernail down the tail, your nail catches and slips along the ridges of the plastic. This pulls on the end of the cup. The ridges on the tail are spaced and shaped much like the grooves on a regular phonograph record. The frequency or pitch of the sound is controlled by how close together the ridges are. The loudness or intensity is determined by the height of the bumps.

Talking cups are available from Educational Innovations, Inc.:

www.teachersource.com