Science for families

Biological sciences

Pet project

F - Yr 2

At least 20 minutes

Paper, pens, markers,

Low to medium level of supervison

Indoors ***(Outdoors optional)***

Internet and camera access are *optional*

Preparation

- Decide on a pet the student can observe (the child's pet, or a pet of a friend/relative that can be observed via a video call).
- Print/ copy the task sheet *OR* create a copy on A4 paper or in a scrapbook.

Purpose

- Observe characteristics of a pet.
- Record and discuss ideas about the needs of animals.

Description

1. Student observes a pet for as long as they can e.g. 10 minutes, or several times over a day or a week.
2. Student creates an ideas map by writing and drawing observations about a pet, including where and when the pet sleeps, how the pet interacts with other members of the family, who looks after the pet, what the pet eats and drinks, usual and unusual habits of the pet.

Optional: *take photos of the pet exhibiting different behaviours (eating, drinking, playing etc)*

Animals, including humans, need oxygen to live. Land animals get oxygen from air. Aquatic animals use oxygen that is dissolved in the water they live in. Animals need a source of food. This provides them with energy and nutrients to maintain their bodies. This maintenance includes repairing and duplicating cells. Animals can get some water from their food but usually need to take in water separately if this is insufficient. Depending on the animal and the environment they live in, they might also need shelter. All animals need space in which to exist and grow. They also need room to move and an environment in which to find their sustenance.

Humans are classified by scientists as mammals, which are part of the animal kingdom. While there are differences between humans and other animals, it is important to recognise that there are also many similarities.

EXAMPLE:
Information *for parents* about animals and what they need to survive.

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Before the task

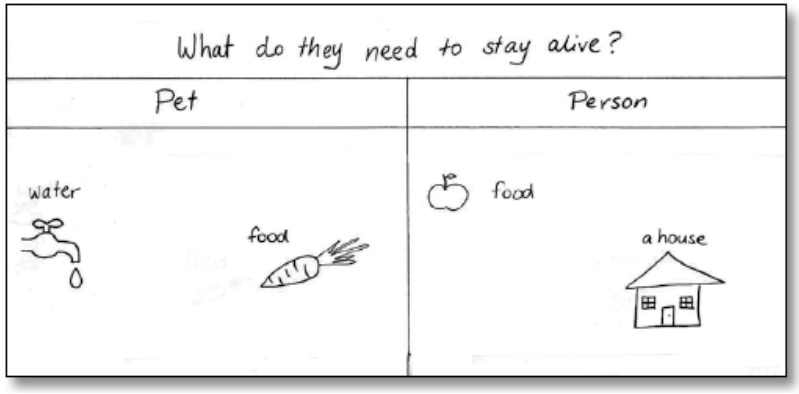
- Explain that the student will use drawings and words to record their observations and information about a pet.
  - If you don't have a pet, discuss how best to approach this task e.g. you might ask a family member to connect via video and watch footage of their pet on a device.
  - If you have more than one pet, agree on which pet will be best suited to be observed e.g. you might choose the pet that is active and responsive so that lots of observations can be made.
- Ask students what they think the pet needs to stay alive. Support the student to write or draw their responses.
- Just like scientists would before working with animals, discuss a 'code of conduct' for example: look and don't touch, leave the pet if it is sleeping, wash your hands before and after touching the pet, be gentle with the pet.

After the task

- When students have created an ideas map about the pet (see task sheet), discuss:
  - What do you think the pet needs to stay alive?
  - Why do you think it need those things?
  - What do you think would happen if it didn't have those things?
  - Is there anything else you think the pet needs to stay alive?
  - How does it keep safe?
- Students can add to their ideas map if new ideas are discussed.
- You may wish to share your ideas map, observations, and the photos and drawings of your pet with others (classmates, teacher, family members).

Explore some more

- Observe other animals. Some Australian zoos have set live stream cameras
  Zoos Victoria https://www.zoo.org.au/animals-at-home/
  Taronga Zoos https://taronga.org.au/taronga-tv
  Zoos SA https://www.zoossa.com.au/zoo-to-you/
- Draw a table with two columns with the headings 'Pet' and 'Person'. Support students to write and draw their responses to 'What do you think they need to stay alive?'. Wherever possible, use pictures to illustrate text to support literacy learning.
- Building on students' observations about the needs of the pet, ask them to create (or to help an adult create) a family pet care roster for tasks such as refilling the pet's water, refilling the pet's, food and cleaning the pet's shelter.



EXAMPLE:
A sample of a 'Pet' and 'Person' table.

SAFETY

Be aware of student allergies to certain animals

Pet project

Name:	Date:

Introducing ‘Pet project’ task

Students will be exploring the needs of living things in the context of a pet.

Students will learn about the pets that they have at home, or observe a relative’s of friend’s pet via video call.

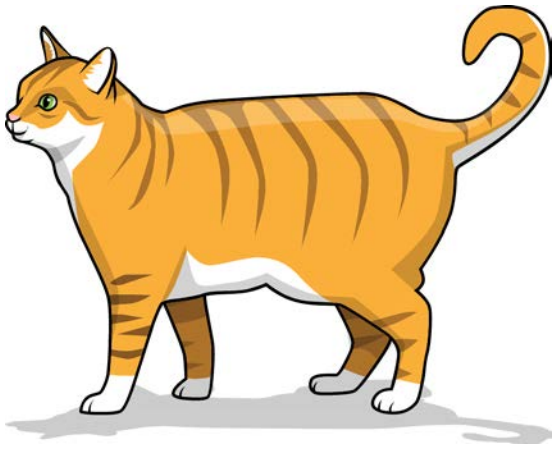
Images

Tasks to do

Each student will record information about a pet on an Ideas Map, such as:

- drawings of their pet
- where and when the pet sleeps
- how the pet interacts with other members of the family
- who looks after the pet
- what the pet eats and drinks
- unusual habits of the pet.

If possible, please take photographs of the pet, including its space for feeding and rest.



Ideas map: about a pet

Name:	Date:

(Draw more circles as required)