

Persuasive Piece Used as a Model

Pets Please!

Think of how much happier the 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders would be if they had classroom pets. I know Mr. Bell has fish and Mrs. Force has turtles. There probably are a few other classes with pets. But, what about the other classes in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades without classroom pets?

Children would learn responsibilities from feeding, changing water, cleaning the cage, and handling the animal. We could have job charts and children to bring the pet home for the weekends, with parents' permission.

When I say pets I'm not thinking of big animals like dogs and cats, but small animals like hamsters, guinea pigs, rabbits, gerbils. If kids in the class were allergic to furry animals, turtles and fish could be an alternate to them. I know that sounds as if the school could turn into a pet care center, but only one animal per classroom. With the exception of two or three turtles and five to ten fish, wouldn't be a lot. If you disliked the idea of 12 minimum pets you could have a limit of one pet per team.

A big argument on your side would be safety. I can't guarantee perfect safety because reptiles like turtles carry salmonella poisoning. If you were careful about washing hands before and after handling the animals, and kept their cages clean, there would be a very slim chance of disease for the kids. Rabies may also be a concern of yours. The pets we would have in our rooms would not have run loose in the woods like a dog or cat might, so there shouldn't be a concern about rabies. I have contacted Mrs. Bradley about the safety concerns, and she has told me the arguments against pets in classrooms concerning safety and how to solve them.

If you are worried about where we could get them we could have donations or fund raisers for pets in classrooms. Then we would buy 12-20 pets along with food, cages, and other necessities. But a cheaper and more effective way to get animals for the school is for kids to just bring in already tame pets from home. I have a one and a half year old hamster in the prime of his life. He is sweet, tame and energetic. I'm sure he would like to be in a classroom for a week just as a change of scenery. I would be perfectly willing to lend him to a class and I'm sure at least 11 more kids in the 3rd, 4th and 5th grade have animals they're willing to lend.

If you are concerned about cost that isn't a very big problem because if people donated equipment or lent the school their pets, it would cost approximately zero dollars.

I remember how much I liked having fish in Mr. Bell's class. They were nice to look at while listening to Mr. Bell talk. I liked having a pet in my classroom and I'm sure other kids will too. We had job charts and we stuck to them with an alternative fish feeder if the original fish feeder was absent. Every kid in the class pitched in and helped when it was his or her turn. It was sort of a sin to forget to feed them because it was by far (in the kids mind's) the best thing on the job chart and you should be honored to get that job. If the job chart only had 2-6 jobs on it the person with the job of feeding the pet would not forget

because chances are, looking at the chart the kid would remember his or her job or a kid in the class would remind them of their responsibility.

If the animal got too distracting the teacher could put a curtain over the cage during lessons. If you had animals in classrooms you would definitely have happier kids and it would help the children's writing education because they would learn in detail how to capture something's personality and actions then write stories about it.

What I'm basically trying to say is, "If the kindergarten, 1st grade, and 2nd grade get to have the pleasure of pets in rooms, what about us?"

Sincerely,

PS. Another possibility to consider is an animal lab.