

### Overview

Students will examine some of the many ways that animals come to shelters, rescues, or sanctuaries. Students will translate this new knowledge into creating a first-person narrative.

### Procedure

#### 1. Introduction

- Begin by asking the students if they know what an animal shelter, rescue, or sanctuary is and if they know any of the reasons why an animal might enter one. Allow students to share their ideas and discuss any possible misunderstandings. (It is important to explain these terms to ensure students know the purpose and mission of these types of organizations.)

#### 2. Sharing Animal Stories

- Next, share stories of animals who live at the shelter, rescue, or sanctuary that you represent. If you do not work at one of these types of organizations, research examples from a local shelter, rescue, or sanctuary. (It helps to provide students with photos and/or videos of the individual animals who you are discussing.)
- Explain that there are many animals who have had similar experiences, and how these stories reflect larger, systemic problems. It is important to make the systemic issues explicit and list them on the board. Some examples include:



- After each story, ask students what could have been done differently or what changes need to be made to ensure animals have happy and healthy lives.

#### 3. Animal Stories

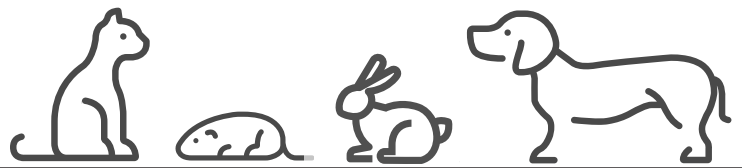
- Hand out the relevant “Telling Their Story” worksheet to students. Explain that they will write a story based on the lives of one of the animals who they learned about.
- Explain that because animals communicate differently from the way people do, they are unable to tell their stories. However, we can use perspective-taking and empathy to interpret their stories.
- Allow students to answer the questions on the worksheet. Provide them with summaries of the animals’ stories, so that they can remember main ideas from those stories.
- After students complete the “Telling Their Story” worksheet, have them use it to create a one-page narrative from the viewpoint of the animal they wrote about on their worksheet.

#### 4. Reflections

- Once students have completed the narratives, invite volunteers to share them out loud.
- Ask students what can be done to prevent animals from depending on shelters, rescues, or sanctuaries for their care.

Story	Systemic Issue
A dog was surrendered to a shelter with her brothers and sisters because her mother became pregnant, and the human family they lived with could not find homes for all the puppies.	Failing to spay and neuter dogs and other companion animals contributes to animal homelessness.
A piglet with a broken leg was brought to a sanctuary by a sympathetic farm worker.	Laws to protect farm animals such as pigs are minimal because people view these animals as existing for humans’ use, rather than as sentient beings.
A bear previously performed in a circus and was transferred to a sanctuary by a national animal protection organization.	Many people place a high value on the use of wild animals for entertainment without understanding the suffering these animals experience as a result.

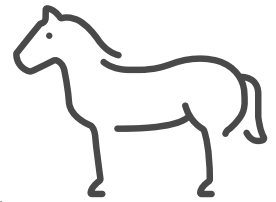
# Companion Animal



**Instructions:** Answer the following questions as though you are an animal companion who was brought to an animal adoption center.

What is your name? What kind of animal companion are you?	
What was your life like before you came to the shelter or rescue?	
Why were you brought to the animal shelter?	
How do you spend your days?	
What makes you happy?	
What makes you sad or worried?	
What do you wish your life were like?	
How can people help you so that you, or other animals like you, have a better life?	
What do you want to tell people about how you think they should treat animals like yourself?	

# Farm Animal

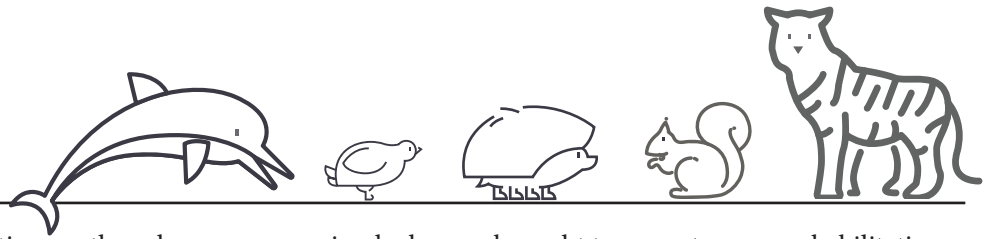


**Instructions:** Answer the following questions as though you are an animal who was brought to a sanctuary.

What is your name? What kind of farm animal are you?	
What was your life like before you came to the sanctuary?	
Why were you brought to the sanctuary?	
How did you get to the sanctuary?	
How do you spend your days?	
What makes you happy?	
What makes you sad or worried?	
What do you wish your life were like?	
How can people help you so that you, or other animals like you, have a better life?	
What do you want to tell people about how you think they should treat animals like yourself?	

Telling Their Story

# Wild Animal



**Instructions:** Answer the following questions as though you are an animal who was brought to a sanctuary or rehabilitation center.

What is your name? What kind of animal are you?	
What was your life like before you came to the sanctuary or rehabilitation center?	
Why were you brought to the sanctuary or rehabilitation center?	
How did you get to the sanctuary or rehabilitation center?	
How do you spend your days?	
What makes you happy?	
What makes you sad or worried?	
What do you wish your life were like?	
How can people help you so that you, or other animals like you, have a better life?	
What do you want to tell people about how you think they should treat animals like yourself?	