

Name: _____ Date: _____

Key Vocabulary

moon bear	a bear from Asia with a moon-shaped marking on their chest
roadside zoo	a place that keeps animals in small, cramped, or dirty cages and typically doesn't give them the care they need and deserve
morbidly obese	so overweight that it's dangerously unhealthy and moving around is difficult
dental disease	teeth and gums that aren't healthy, which can cause pain, infections, and other health problems
naturalistic	something that is very similar to what is found in nature
thriving	doing very well; being happy and healthy
accredited sanctuary	a place where animals are safe and cared for and that has a special certificate guaranteeing that it takes proper care of animals

Dillan's New Life

Dillan, a **moon bear**, was kept at a place called the Union County Sportsmen's Club, a **roadside zoo** in Pennsylvania, for 10 long years. (Before that, he was privately owned for an unknown amount of time, making it difficult to determine his age.) He was forced to live all alone in an empty cage with a concrete floor. Workers fed him junk food instead of the healthy foods he would normally eat in nature. He became **morbidly obese** because of the unhealthy food, and the enclosure he was kept in prevented him from exercising or doing any of the things bears love and need to do. The owners of the roadside zoo knew that Dillan was suffering from painful **dental disease** because the government had warned them about it many times. But they didn't provide him with veterinary treatment.



Luckily for Dillan, kind people pushed for him to be rescued—and they were successful! He was taken to The Wild Animal Sanctuary in Colorado, where he got a new life. An animal sanctuary is a place where animals are cared for and protected for the rest of their lives.

Once Dillan had arrived at the sanctuary, veterinarians performed emergency dental surgery to remove the teeth that were causing him pain. His new home was a massive **naturalistic** habitat where his needs were met. He was **thriving**. He spent his days splashing in the water, stretching, sunbathing, and hanging out with other rescued bears named Sun, Moon, and Lily (who had become his new best friend). In his new home, Dillan was always treated with the kindness that bears and all animals deserve. He lived to an old age and passed away peacefully in early 2024.

Thanks to the work of caring people who took action, the Union County Sportsmen's Club is not allowed to keep bears or many other types of animals anymore. Dillan's story had a happy ending, but many bears and other animals are still suffering like he once was. Roadside zoos are no place for animals. You can help animals like Dillan by viewing them in their natural habitats, at **accredited sanctuaries**, or in television programs that film them only in their natural homes and don't interfere with their lives. You can also speak up when people aren't treating them kindly.

Comprehension Questions: 'Dillan's New Life'

1. Describe Dillan's life before he was rescued. How do you think he felt?

2. How was Dillan's life better at The Wild Animal Sanctuary than it had been at the Union County Sportsmen's Club?

3. How do you feel about the way Dillan was treated for 10 years at the Union County Sportsmen's Club before he was rescued? Why do you feel this way?

4. How can you help bears and other animals who are suffering in roadside zoos?

Answer Sheet: 'Dillan's New Life'

1. Describe Dillan's life before he was rescued. How do you think he felt?

Answer: Dillan's life was miserable because he lived in a cage and didn't have anything to do. He was fed junk food, didn't get to exercise, became overweight, and had painful teeth. (Literal)

Possible answer: I think he felt sad and wished he was in his natural home in the wild. (Inferential)

2. How was Dillan's life better at The Wild Animal Sanctuary than it had been at the Union County Sportsmen's Club?

Possible answer: I think Dillan was happier in his new home because he was treated better. He had more room, better food, medical care, friends, and the freedom to do things he liked. He didn't have any of those things where he was kept before. (Inferential)



3. How do you feel about the way Dillan was treated for 10 years at the Union County Sportsmen's Club before he was rescued? Why do you feel this way?

Possible answer: I feel very upset about how Dillan was treated. People should be kind to animals and take care of them, not make them suffer. (Evaluative)

4. How can you help bears and other animals who are suffering in roadside zoos?

Answer: I can help bears and other animals by looking at them in nature, not in cages. I can visit animals who live at accredited sanctuaries or watch television programs about animals. I can use my voice to speak up for animals when people don't treat them kindly. (Literal)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Key Vocabulary

“micro-pig”	a dishonest term for pigs who are deliberately malnourished so that they remain smaller than average
commercial farm	a place where a large number of animals are raised for food; the animals are typically confined to small areas
animal companion	an animal who was adopted by a human and is cared for
breed	to cause animals to have offspring on purpose
vegan	someone who doesn’t use animals as food or clothing or harm them in any other way; something that has no animal ingredients or isn’t made from animals
legacy	something that is left behind for others to benefit or learn from

The following images are from *The True Adventures of Esther the Wonder Pig* by Steve Jenkins, Derek Walter, and Caprice Crane and illustrated by Cori Doerrfeld.

Get Ready to Fall in Love With Esther the Wonder Pig

A friend who wanted to find a home for a young **“micro-pig”** persuaded Toronto couple Derek Walter and Steve Jenkins to welcome piglet Esther into their lives. But soon it became obvious that Esther was no “micro-pig.” She grew bigger every day, and soon she towered over the couple’s two dogs.



Derek and Steve guessed that Esther had been born on a **commercial farm** and had been cast aside because she was a “runt,” the smallest piglet in her litter. Every year, millions of pigs are raised for food on commercial farms where they can’t do anything that’s natural or important to them.

Although the couple was surprised to learn that their new **animal companion** had likely been meant to be eaten, they were even more surprised to see how similar Esther was to their dogs. She easily learned how to sit for a treat and even how to open the refrigerator door to sniff out something yummy, such as an apple. She loved to play tug-of-war and tag and chew her toys, and naptime meant finding the nearest dog or human to snuggle up to.

Even though it soon became apparent how big Esther would get and how much care she would need, Derek and Steve couldn’t bear to part with her. As they put it, “This isn’t Esther’s fault, she didn’t ask for the life she was given. We have the chance to provide her with the life she deserves, not the one she was **bred** for. What kind of people would we be to deny her that?”

As Esther continued to grow, she also grew closer to her dads. Soon Derek and Steve realized that the animals they had always called “dinner” weren’t so different from the animals they called “friends.” Before long, both men went **vegan**. They started a Facebook page ([Facebook.com/EstherTheWonderPig](https://www.facebook.com/EstherTheWonderPig)) to help other people see that all animals are thinking, feeling individuals who value their families and their lives. Esther enjoyed a beautiful life for 11 wonderful years before passing away peacefully at home. Her **legacy** of love and kindness to animals will inspire countless people for many years to come, just as her story inspired millions of people during her lifetime.

Comprehension Questions: ‘Get Ready to Fall in Love With Esther the Wonder Pig’

1. Why did Derek and Steve welcome a pig into their lives?

2. Why did Esther’s dads think she had likely been “meant to be eaten”?

3. In what ways was Esther similar to Derek and Steve’s dogs?

4. Why did Derek and Steve choose to go vegan?

Answer Sheet: ‘Get Ready to Fall in Love With Esther the Wonder Pig’

1. Why did Derek and Steve welcome a pig into their lives?

Possible answer: They were persuaded by a friend who wanted to find a home for piglet Esther. (Literal)

2. Why did Esther’s dads think she had likely been “meant to be eaten”?

Possible answer: Esther’s dads guessed that she was from a commercial farm, where pigs are raised for people to eat. (Inferential)

3. In what ways was Esther similar to Derek and Steve’s dogs?

Possible answer: Esther learned how to sit for treats, she would sniff out food, and she enjoyed playing and cuddling. (Literal)

4. Why did Derek and Steve choose to go vegan?

Possible answer: They realized that Esther and other animals used for food and the animal companions we often share our homes with, like dogs and cats, are the same in all the ways that matter most—they are thinking, feeling individuals who want to live. Derek and Steve chose to go vegan because they realized it was wrong to care for some animals and eat others. (Evaluative)



Name _____ Date _____

Christmas the Puppy's First Holiday

Key Vocabulary

severe	serious
adopt	make someone part of the family
breeder	someone who makes animals have babies to sell them
spayed/neutered	prevented from having babies with an operation

In a poor village in the Philippines, PETA Asia staffers found a puppy named Christmas who had lice and two infected wounds on his back. He was in bad shape, but what happened next changed his life forever.

Christmas was taken to a clinic. There, he received treatment, but his condition was **severe**. He probably wouldn't have survived if left on the island, and his owners knew that. They agreed to give him to PETA so he could receive the extra treatment he needed. And so, his journey back to health began.



As soon as he got better, Christmas was **adopted** and is now loving life—and ready to celebrate his first holiday season with his new family. Gone are the days of fighting for scraps of food just to survive. He now spends his time playing with the other dogs in his family, Zoey, Maya, and Thor. And he has gone from not knowing what a toy was to having more toys than he knows what to do with!

Even though puppies, kittens, and other small animals are cute, they aren't toys and should never be bought as gifts. Taking care of an animal is a big responsibility that can last for many years. If you and your family have room in your hearts and home to care for an animal, please adopt. Never buy from a **breeder** or a pet store, and always have your animal companions **spayed** or **neutered**. As long as pet stores sell animals from breeders, healthy animals living in shelters won't find homes.

Comprehension Questions: Christmas the Puppy's First Holiday

1. What was wrong with Christmas when PETA Asia staffers found him?

2. Why did Christmas' owners agree to give him to PETA?

3. How do you think Christmas felt before being rescued and then afterward? What makes you think so?

4. What are some differences between toys and animals?

5. Why is it important not to buy animals?

Answer Sheet: Christmas the Puppy's First Holiday

1. What was wrong with Christmas when PETA Asia staffers found him?

Answer: Christmas had lice and two infected wounds on his back. (Literal)

2. Why did Christmas' owners agree to give him to PETA?

Answer: Christmas' condition was severe, and his owners knew that he probably wouldn't survive if he was left on the island. (Literal)

3. How do you think Christmas felt before being rescued and then afterward?

What makes you think so?

Possible answer: Christmas was probably very uncomfortable and in pain from his poor condition, and he may have felt scared. After being rescued, Christmas probably felt safe and happy because he was adopted into a loving home and had lots of toys and other dogs to play with. (Inferential)

4. What are some differences between toys and animals?

Possible answer: Toys don't have feelings. They don't require food, water, exercise, or love. But animals do have feelings—just like us, they can feel pain, fear, love, and joy. They also need food, water, exercise, and love in order for them to survive. (Inferential)

5. Why is it important not to buy animals?

Answer: As long as pet stores and breeders sell animals, healthy animals living in shelters won't find homes. (Literal)

Name _____ Date _____

Key Vocabulary

neglected	not given proper attention or care
recovery	becoming healthy again after an illness or injury
slaughter	kill, typically for food
accredited sanctuary	place where animals are safe and cared for
vegan	someone who does not use animals, including for food, or something that does not come from animals

Jake's Recovery

Meet Jake the turkey from Oak Ridge, North Carolina! He was rescued by Red Dog Farm from a roadside zoo. Jake was very sick when he arrived at the farm—he didn't move or eat for almost two weeks. He had been severely **neglected** and nearly died. But with the rescue group's help, he made a full **recovery**. He is a wonderful animal with a gentle soul. Today he is being properly cared for and has a loving home.



The holiday season should be joyful for everyone, but it's not a happy time for animals who end up on the dinner table. More than 45 million turkeys are killed each year at Thanksgiving and more than 22 million are **slaughtered** at Christmas for holiday meals.

Turkeys are gentle, smart birds, but most of them spend their lives suffering in filthy conditions on factory farms before they're slaughtered. Only a lucky few, like Jake, are ever rescued and get to live out their lives at **accredited sanctuaries**.

You may not be able to rescue a turkey, but you can still help give animals a reason to be thankful by going **vegan**.

Comprehension Questions: Jake's Recovery

1. How did Jake become sick?

2. How do you think the rescue group helped Jake recover?

3. What can people do to make the holidays happy for turkeys?

4. The article says that Jake made a full recovery after he was **rescued** from a roadside zoo. What's the difference between a roadside zoo and a rescue group or an **accredited sanctuary**?

Answer Sheet: Jake's Recovery

1. How did Jake become sick?

Possible answer: Jake's basic needs weren't met at the roadside zoo. (Literal)

2. How do you think the rescue group helped Jake recover?

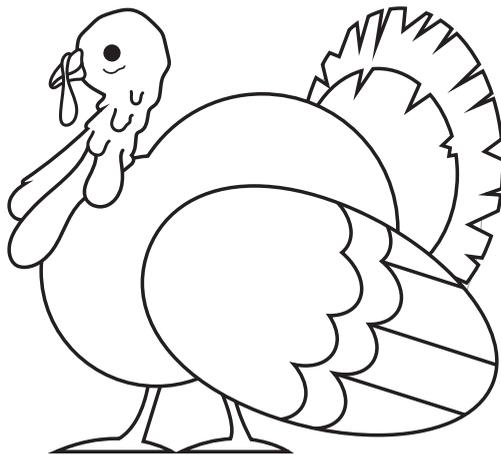
Possible answer: The rescue group met Jake's basic needs. They probably also gave him love and attention. Like all animals, he needed proper food, clean water, plenty of space to move around, veterinary care, and love. (Inferential)

3. What can people do to make the holidays happy for turkeys?

Possible answer: People can help turkeys by going vegan. There are many vegan foods, including faux-turkey products, that don't involve hurting or killing animals. People can also help turkeys by refusing to support roadside zoos. (Literal)

4. The article says that Jake made a full recovery after he was rescued from a roadside zoo. What's the difference between a roadside zoo and a rescue group or an accredited sanctuary?

Possible answer: Roadside zoos use animals to make money and usually don't take proper care of them. Rescue groups and accredited sanctuaries help animals by giving them the proper care that they deserve. (Evaluative)



Name _____ Date _____

Key Vocabulary	
suffer	experience something painful
hoarder	person who collects too many animals or things
companionship	friendship and closeness with someone
grooming	brushing and cleaning an animal's coat
guardian	someone who takes care of someone else
cruelty-free	not tested on animals

Rescued Rats Find New Home

Rats and humans have a lot in common. They giggle when tickled, fall in love, and risk their lives to save their families. Like humans—and all animals—rats can also feel pain and **suffer**, which is why PETA rescued this family of rats from a **hoarder**. Now, after being adopted, they are getting the love and care they deserve.



Melissa and Maizzie

Rats have unique personalities. Take Melissa and Maizzie, for example. They like to snuggle in their hammock together. In fact, rats need **companionship** or they will become lonely and stressed. Maizzie is shy but will approach someone she feels safe around when offered a blueberry.

Rats are also very clean animals. Bianca and Bettina are also close friends and like to keep their soft fur shiny and clean by **grooming** each other throughout the day.

Not all rats look the same. Teddy, for example, somehow lost one of his ears, but that doesn't stop him from enjoying apple slices and gentle head scratches from his **guardian**. Sometimes he climbs on top of his plastic house to keep an eye out for more treats.

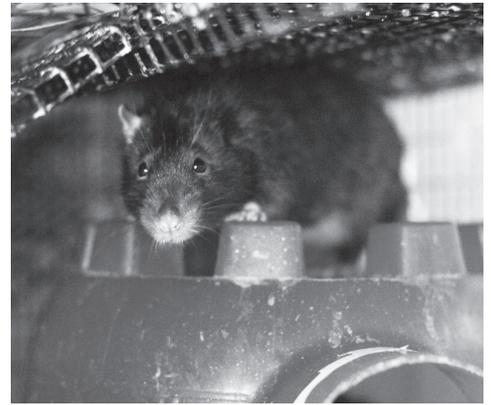
Many rats and other animals, like mice, guinea pigs, rabbits, dogs, and cats, are used in cruel science experiments. They're forced to live in small cages, are experimented on, and don't get to play, cuddle, eat their favorite foods, or do anything else they enjoy.

People can help save these smart, curious, friendly animals by buying only **cruelty-free** products, which weren't tested on rats or any other animals—it will say that right on the label.

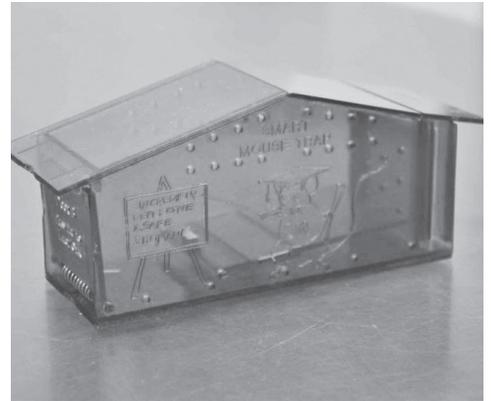
They can also choose humane traps if rats find their way into the house. If your family is ready to adopt a companion rat, be sure to find one at an animal shelter. Buying a rat from a breeder or pet store means that a rat in a shelter doesn't get a home, so don't do it. And consider adopting two rats—remember, they need companionship in order to be happy and healthy.



Bianca and Bettina



Teddy



A humane mouse or rat trap

Name _____ Date _____

Comprehension Questions: Rescued Rats Find New Home

1. What are some things that rats and humans have in common?

2. What will happen to rats if they don't have companionship?

3. What else do you think rats need to be happy and healthy?

4. Do you think it's fair to use animals in experiments?

Explain your answer.

Answer Sheet: Rescued Rats Find New Home

1. What are some things that rats and humans have in common?

Answer: Both rats and humans giggle when tickled, fall in love, and risk their lives to save their family members. Rats, humans, and all other animals can also suffer and feel pain. (Literal)

2. What will happen to rats if they don't have companionship?

Answer: Rats who don't have companionship will become lonely and stressed. (Literal)

3. What else do you think rats need to be happy and healthy?

Possible answer: Like all animals, rats need food, water, and a safe, clean place to live. They also need veterinary care, just like cats, dogs, and other companion animals. (Inferential)

4. Do you think it's fair to use animals in experiments?

Explain your answer.

Possible answer: I don't think it's fair to use animals in experiments because they're forced to live in small cages, are experimented on, and don't get to play, cuddle, eat their favorite foods, or do anything else they enjoy. People should just buy products that haven't been tested on animals. (Evaluative)

Name _____ Date _____

Key Vocabulary

slaughterhouse	place where animals are killed for food
activist	person who works to make the world better
sanctuary	place where animals are safe and cared for

Freddie on the Run

Freddie the cow became famous after he ran away while being unloaded from a truck at a **slaughterhouse** in New York City. Police caught up with him in less than an hour and took him back to the slaughterhouse. But by then, videos of Freddie running through the busy city streets had quickly spread online, and people were asking for him to be rescued.

An **activist** shared Freddie's story with PETA workers, who contacted nearby **sanctuaries** to see if any of them could give the brave cow a safe new home. Mike Stura from Skylands Animal Sanctuary & Rescue drove his truck and trailer all the way from New Jersey to rescue Freddie. But when he arrived at the slaughterhouse, everyone had already left for the day.

Mike was determined to save Freddie, so he spent the night in front of the slaughterhouse in his truck. The next day, after talking with the slaughterhouse owner, he loaded Freddie into his trailer and took him straight to the vet to make sure he was healthy.

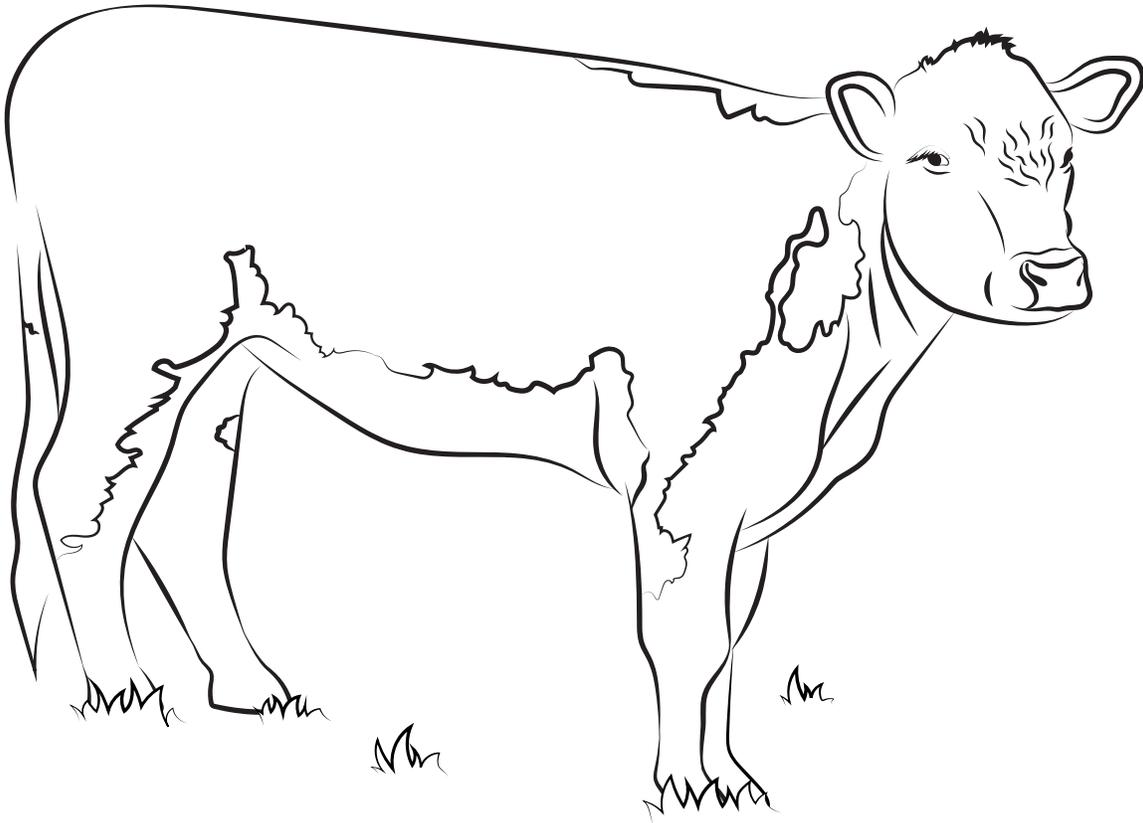
Freddie now lives at Mike's sanctuary with other rescued animals, like pigs, turkeys, and sheep. There, he's safe and free to roam and do as he pleases. He won't have to run away from anything for the rest of his life.

In nature, cows spend their lives with their families, but Freddie was probably taken away from his mother when he was just 1 or 2 days old so that her milk could be sold in stores instead of given to him. Cows produce milk to feed their babies, not humans.

Like all animals, cows can feel happy, sad, and scared and they want to live. They will do amazing things to save their own lives, just as we would.

You can be kind to cows while still eating your favorite foods—there are loads of healthy, delicious options that don't contain meat or dairy. Learn more about helping cows like Freddie at **PETAkids.com**.

Visit **SkylandsSanctuary.org** to read more about Freddie and his friends!



Comprehension Questions: Freddie on the Run

1. How did Freddie become famous?

2. Why do you think Mike helped Freddie?

3. How do you think Freddie felt before being rescued and then afterward? What makes you think so?

4. What can you do to help cows like Freddie?

Answer Sheet: Freddie on the Run

1. How did Freddie become famous?

Answer: Freddie escaped from a slaughterhouse in New York City. Videos of him running through the busy streets quickly spread online. (Literal)

2. Why do you think Mike helped Freddie?

Possible answer: He cares about animals and thought that he could persuade the slaughterhouse owner to let Freddie go with him to his sanctuary. (Evaluative)

3. How do you think Freddie felt before being rescued and then afterward? What makes you think so?

Possible answer: Before being rescued, Freddie was probably afraid. He ran away from the slaughterhouse and through the busy, noisy streets of New York City. After being rescued, he probably felt safe and calm because he was no longer in danger. (Evaluative)

4. What can you do to help cows like Freddie?

Answer: You can choose to eat dairy- and meat-free versions of your favorite foods. (Literal)

Name _____ Date _____

Saving Samson

Key Vocabulary

breed	make animals have babies and then sell them
laboratory	a place used for scientific research
experiment	a plan for testing an idea
investigator	a person who carefully searches for information
undercover	hidden or secret
suffer	experience something painful
adopt	make someone part of the family

Samson didn't have a bed or any toys. His teeth were rotting. He had ear infections. For eight years, he wasn't treated with the kindness that a dog deserves. He was treated more like a **breeding** machine at a place called Envigo. Envigo bred and sold puppies to **laboratories** around the world. Samson was born and raised in this place. He was the father of about 200 puppies. Those puppies were shipped off to be used in painful, deadly **experiments**.



Before



After

A PETA **investigator** worked **undercover** at Envigo to see how the dogs were treated. Almost 5,000 dogs and puppies were kept in cages all day every day at Envigo. They weren't allowed to run, play, or do other things that dogs like to do.

As workers cleaned his cage, they often sprayed Samson with water from a hose. They did this to other dogs, too, even mother dogs who were nursing their puppies. They couldn't move out of the way, so they got soaking wet and were scared.

PETA's investigator found a way to get Samson out. Today, he is finally enjoying his life. He goes for walks, chases leaves, watches birds and squirrels, and tries new foods. He sleeps well in a soft bed.

PETA showed officials that dogs were **suffering** at Envigo, and it closed down. In a few months, almost 4,000 dogs and puppies were taken out of there. Many were **adopted** into loving families. No more dogs will be bred or born at that miserable place. But there are still many places like this that sell animals to laboratories to be experimented on.

Experimenting on animals hurts them. It doesn't need to be done to keep humans safe. Millions of animals are suffering right now in tests for things like cosmetics, sunscreen, and other products. Luckily, more companies are choosing not to test their products on animals. It's easy to figure out which companies never test on animals. Simply look for the bunny logo on the product packaging. You can let your family and friends know that they should only buy products made by companies that never test on animals.



**Watch Samson's rescue video at
[PETAKids.com/Samson](https://www.petakids.com/Samson).**

Comprehension Questions: Saving Samson After Eight Years in a Beagle-Breeding Nightmare

1. What did Envigo do with the dogs it bred?

2. Describe what life was like for Samson and the other dogs at Envigo.

3. How do you think Samson felt before he was rescued and then afterward? What makes you think so?

4. Do you think it's fair to use animals in experiments? Explain your answer.

5. What can people do to help animals used in experiments?

Answer Sheet: Saving Samson After Eight Years in a Beagle-Breeding Nightmare

1. What did Envigo do with the dogs it bred?

Answer: Envigo sold dogs to laboratories to be used in painful experiments. (Literal)

2. Describe what life was like for Samson and the other dogs at Envigo.

Answer: Dogs at Envigo were kept in cages. They weren't allowed to run, play, or do other things that dogs like to do. They were often sprayed with water hoses when workers cleaned their cages, which left them soaking wet and scared. (Literal)

3. How do you think Samson felt before he was rescued and then afterward?

What makes you think so?

Possible answer: Samson was probably scared, confused, and lonely at Envigo because he didn't have any toys or a soft bed, and no one was caring for him. He probably felt safe and happy after being rescued because he finally had a loving family who gave him what he needed and allowed him to have fun. (Inferential)

4. Do you think it's fair to use animals in experiments? Explain your answer.

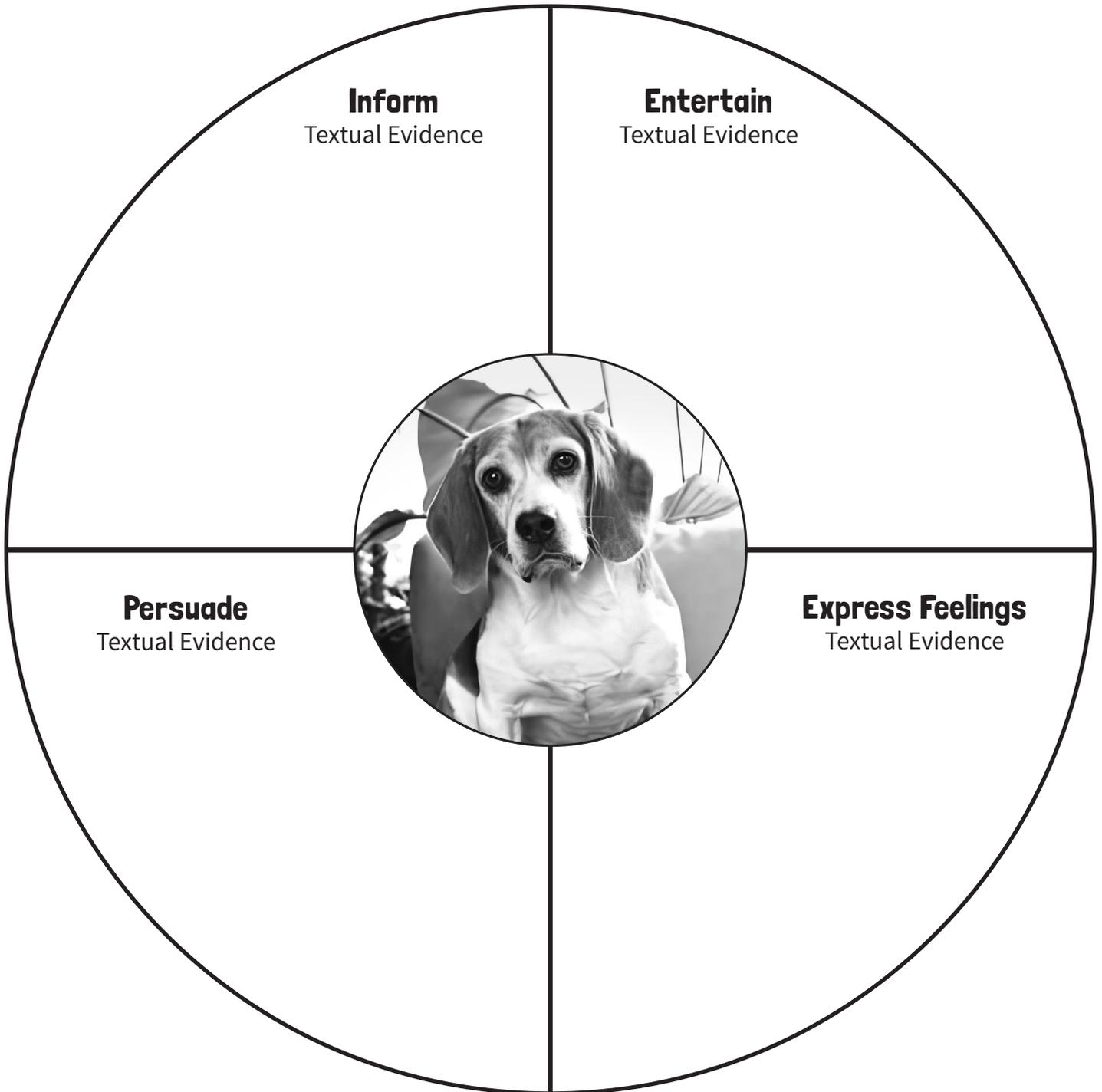
Possible answer: I don't think it's fair to use animals in experiments because they don't get to play, cuddle, eat their favorite foods, or do anything else that they enjoy. People should buy products that haven't been tested on animals. (Evaluative)

5. What can people do to help animals used in experiments?

Answer: People can buy products that haven't been tested on animals. They can look for the bunny logo on product packaging—that means the product is animal test-free. (Literal)

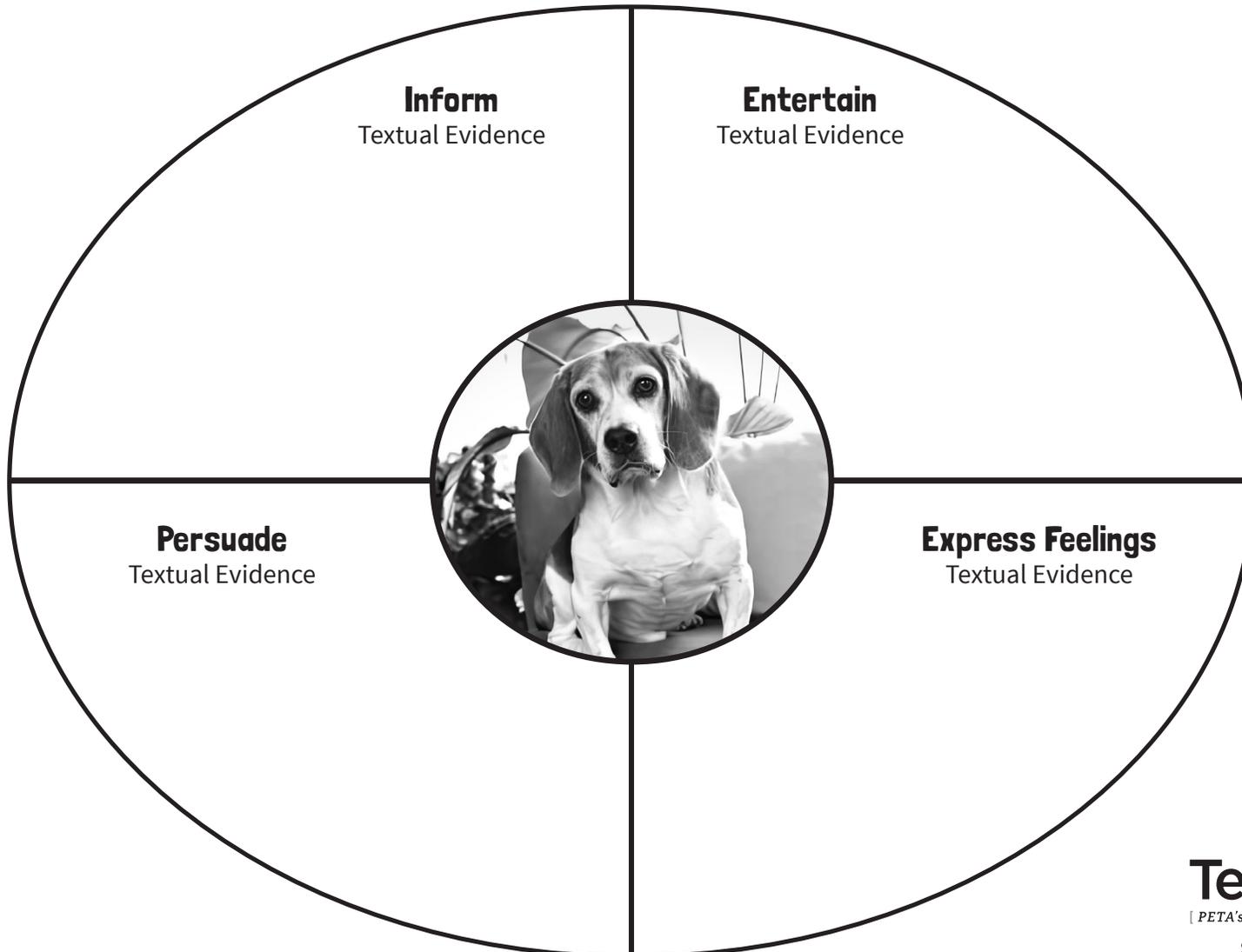
Name _____ Date _____

What is the author's purpose in writing this text (i.e., to inform, entertain, persuade, or express feelings)? Use details from the text to support your answer.



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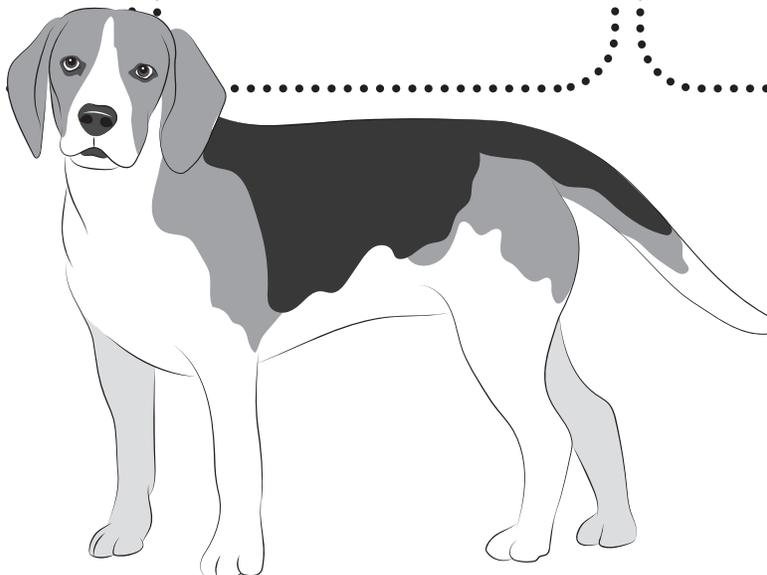
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TeachKind

[PETA's Humane Education Division]

Saving Samson (3-5)

Name _____ Date _____

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