

How we assess for humane content

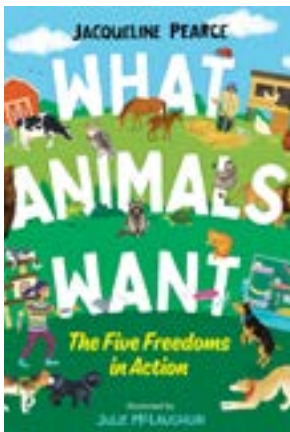
There is a wide range of children and young adult books that deal with animals. Animals take different roles in books. Books that show the human-animal bond and the intrinsic value of animals are the types of books we would like to recommend.

In order to promote animal welfare we ask ourselves these questions when assessing books to recommend.

1. Are the animals anthropomorphized (given human characteristics) or are they realistic?
2. Does the book promote positive or negative attitudes towards animals? (pets as family members)
3. Are the animals well cared for? (kept indoors, positive training methods, etc.)
4. Are animals stereotyped? (i.e. are rottweilers portrayed as mean and vicious)
5. Are the facts about the animals correct?
6. What lessons can be learned from the book to improve animal welfare?

Classroom Activity: Have students answer the above questions about books they read or books you ask them to review.

RESOURCE BOOKS & BIOGRAPHIES



What Animals Want: The Five Freedoms in Action by Jacqueline Pearce, illustrated by Julie McLaughlin

Reading level: Grades 4-8

What Animals Want is a new animal-care book with a difference. Everyone knows animals need food, water and shelter. But what about their social and emotional needs? Modern science tells us that animals experience a wide range of emotions – from fear and anxiety to friendship and happiness.

In *What Animals Want*, renowned Canadian children's book author Jacqueline Pearce introduces students to the Five Freedoms, an internationally recognized tool for evaluating the welfare of animals. The Five Freedoms were first developed in 1965 in response to the way farm animals were being treated on factory farms. Today, the Five Freedoms are being used by animal groups all over the world to help ensure animals experience good physical and emotional welfare.

What Animals Want is the first book about the Five Freedoms for youth. It helps young people apply the Five Freedoms to pets at home and to other situations where people keep animals. For example, what kind of habitat best meets the emotional and behavioural needs of a hamster, rabbit or guinea pig? How do farmers ensure their cattle have access to fresh water on the summer range? Are aquarium whales protected from sunburn? Do rodeo animals suffer from fear and distress and how would you know?

Using examples from animal welfare scientists, Pearce explores how we know what animals really want and need. The book also gives lots of inspiring examples of youth who are making a difference for animals in their communities all over the world. Providing a fresh, science-based perspective, while also encouraging empathy, the book challenges students to look critically at how our society treats and cares for animals.



The Sockeye Mother by Hetxw'ms Gyetxw (Brett David Hudson), illustrated by Natasha Donovan

Reading level: Grades 4-6

This artfully illustrated book is an exploration of the interconnectedness between animals, the natural landscape and its people. The author shares the cultural lens of the Gitksan people with the reader, describing the life cycle of the sockeye salmon and its significance to the animals, landscape and people of the Pacific Northwest Interior. Through strikingly illustrated pages, we are guided through the seasons as we follow the Sockeye Mother on the journey that is her life cycle. From her treacherous journey down the Xsan, or Skeena river to reach the ocean, to her later return upstream to nesting grounds where she experiences a “replenishing death,” each stage of her life cycle is brought to life for the reader.

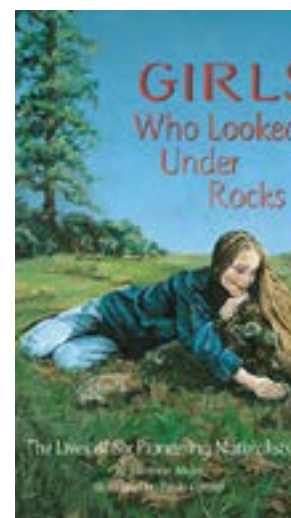
As the author guides us through this journey, we discover how the sockeye salmon is not simply a source of food for the Gitksan people, but an animal of cultural significance, and an important reminder of how people, animals and the landscape are all intertwined. With recent scientific research discovering the extensive loss of salmon habitat in British Columbia, the knowledge this book shares and the message it imparts in readers holds much value. Throughout the book, Gitksan terms for places, seasons and animals are accompanied by English translations, allowing the reader to glimpse how the Gitksan language is closely connected to the natural world.



The Grizzly Mother by Hetxw'ms Gyetxw (Brett D. Hudson), illustrated by Natasha Donovan

Reading level: Grades 4-6

Glimpse into the secretive lives of grizzly bears! *The Grizzly Mother*, written from the cultural perspective of the Gitksan people of Northwestern British Columbia, explores the interconnections between animals, people and the seasons within the headwaters of the Xsan (Skeena River). The story follows Nox Lik'i'nsxw, a grizzly mother, who must teach her cubs how to hunt, forage and survive on their own within their ecosystem. As a result, readers develop empathy and respect for the living beings in their environment. The author seamlessly weaves narrative, cultural teachings, ecology and the Gitksan language into a richly illustrated and educational text. This book is suitable for grades 4 to 6 and is an excellent starting point for lessons in ecology, cultural perspectives, or language arts (storytelling).



Girls Who Looked Under Rocks by Jeannine Atkins, illustrated by Paula Conner

Reading Level: Grade 7+

From the lesser-known Maria Merian to Anna Comstock to the well-known Jane Goodall, this book explores the lives of six women who would overcome sexism and gender biases to become world-renowned scientists, artists and writers.

From a young age, these women were drawn to a world filled with bugs, animals, plants and fossils. As their girlhood interest in nature turned to fierce determination to protect wildlife and their habitats, they went on to fight limitations placed on women to follow their dreams of protecting, researching and teaching about the natural world. Detailed illustrations accompany each story, helping to create a colourful look into the women and their experiences.

Inspiring and empowering, this chapter book encourages readers to connect with their surroundings while also starting an important dialogue and teaching others about the issues of gender, the environment and the importance of being unique. While a short read, the author provides a list of other resources to continue learning more about these remarkable women and the natural world.



Don't Let Them Disappear by Chelsea Clinton

Reading level: Grades 1-4

Did you know that tigers can jump over fifteen feet in one pounce? Or that a group of Polar Bears is called a celebration? We share the world with millions of unique animal species, but what can we do to ensure they don't disappear?

With scientific facts that will fascinate elementary-age children and vibrant, watercolour illustrations will appeal to everyone, *Don't Let Them Disappear* makes the topic of endangered and extinct species accessible to younger children. Focusing on 12 endangered animals, the causes of these animals' endangerment, including pollution and climate change, the story encourages children to take action by providing tips on how they can help.

Teachers should note, under “What You Can Do”, it states to support zoos. The BC SPCA is opposed to the permanent confinement of wild and exotic animals unless the Five Freedoms can be met in the captive environment. ultimately, the BC SPCA believes individuals and organizations should phase out collections of these animals.



The Lost Words by Robert Macfarlane, illustrated by Jackie Morris

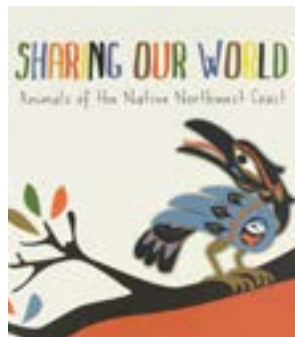
Reading level: All ages

Children who find a sense of wonder in nature and a connection to all of the plants, animals and other organisms found there will carry that wonder all of their lives. *The Lost Words* seeks to nurture that connection by encouraging children of all ages to turn off their devices and turn on their senses, to notice all the little wonders surrounding us.

This is a big, beautiful book that came about when a new edition of the Oxford Junior Dictionary – widely used in schools around the world – was published in 2007, and a sharp-eyed reader noticed around forty common words concerning nature had been dropped. Apparently, they were no longer being used enough by children to merit

their place in the dictionary. Words like acorn, adder, heron, kingfisher, newt, otter and willow were replaced with more “modern” terms like blog, broadband, bullet-point and voice-mail. Robert Macfarlane and Jackie Morris were inspired to create a “spell book” with some of these “lost words,” using poetry and gorgeous paintings to bring the reader into nature. This would be a lovely read-aloud book.

A wonderful project to do along with reading this book together would be an exercise like Sound Mapping. An art project inspired by the book might have children headed out into nature with pencils and paper to capture a plant or creature they see in their own world. So many beautiful possibilities!

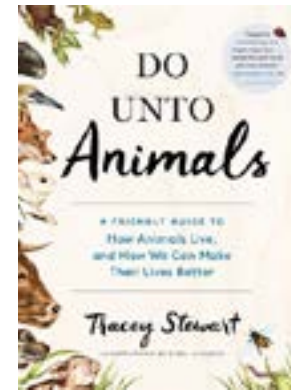


Sharing Our World: Animals of the Native Northwest Coast

Reading level: Grades K-2

Sharing Our World is an introduction to Indigenous Peoples’ rich connections and ways of knowing about local animals of the Pacific Northwest. Written for young readers (K-2), this book offers a window into the individual gifts, supernatural powers and cultural significance of an animal as told by Indigenous artists from the Nuxalk, Namgis, Coast Salish, Kwakwaka’wakw, Heiltsuk, Haida, Bella Bella, Tsimshian, Kwa Na Ki Nulth and Nuchatlaht Nations. From the wolf to owl, and frog to whale,

each special relationship and learning is shared through vivid drawings and colourful designs, and would be an excellent starting point for a curricular unit on language arts (recording personal, family and community histories), social studies (stories and traditions), art and design (works of art and artistic traditions) or science (features and behaviours of living things).



Do Unto Animals: A friendly guide to how animals live and how we can make their lives better by Tracey Stewart

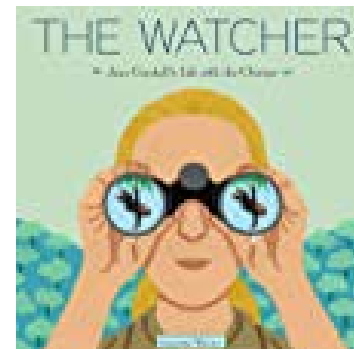
Reading level: Grades 5+

When you see *Do Unto Animals* on a library or bookstore shelf, the first thing that pulls you in is the beautiful cover. The gorgeous illustrations by Lisel Ashlock continue throughout the book—they are impressively realistic portraits that truly capture the intelligent and emotional expressions on animals’ faces.

In addition to these beautiful pictures, this book is full of fascinating information and food for thought to really inspire adults and youth alike to think more deeply about the creatures around us. Author and animal advocate Tracey Stewart is truly knowledgeable about animals, covering topics ranging from backyard wildlife to companion animal body language and farm animal welfare to respect for nature, all in an empowering way.

Young animal lovers will also find plenty of inspiration in this book which includes project ideas such as building bee houses, crafting cat and dog toys, and baking healthy treats. They will also discover information about animal shelters, animal welfare issues, the importance of spaying and neutering and so much more.

Stewart has a wide range of sources for her information from groups like the ASPCA, the Jane Goodall Institute, and the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association. *Do Unto Animals* will make a beautiful addition to your classroom library. It is more than a pretty package, one that will entice students to care more, learn more and DO more for animals.

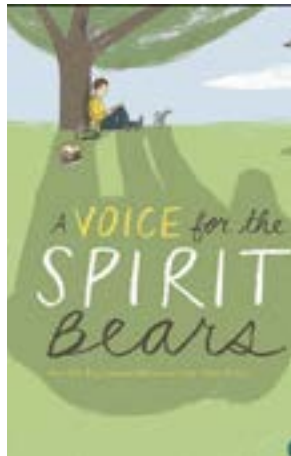


The Watcher by Jeanette Winter

Reading level: Grades K-3+

Every child who is fascinated by watching animals around them will be inspired by reading *The Watcher* by Jeanette Winter. This beautifully illustrated picture book biography tells the story of a young Jane Goodall and how she went from a “watcher” to a world-renowned primatologist who has dedicated her life to learning from and protecting primates.

This book is a simple read for beginner readers, with illustrations that tell the story as well, but will also appeal to children of all ages. There is much to talk about with older children, who can discuss young Jane’s methods of getting close to the chimps. Her patience in waiting for them to come to her is a lesson for children who wonder how to best interact with their own pets and other animals in the world. Most of all, children can see themselves in young Jane and be inspired to make a difference in their own way, as the story humanizes the almost mythical Dr. Jane Goodall and turns her into a curious child to which they can relate. This award-winning book belongs in every animal-loving classroom!



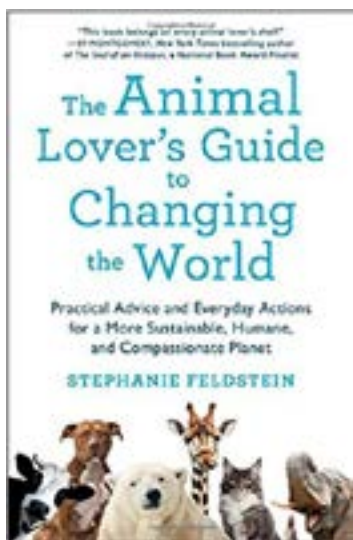
A Voice for the Spirit Bears by Carmen Oliver, illustrated by Katy Dockrill

Reading level: Grades 1-4

This is the inspiring true story of Vancouver native, Simon Jackson, and his perseverance in his quest to save the Spirit Bears.

Struggling with a debilitating stutter and bullying by other kids in school, Simon starts to find his voice and confidence through advocating for animals. At 13, Simon learns about the rare white Kermode, or “spirit bear”, found only in B.C., and the threats to their rainforest habitat. He knows he must do something to help them and rallies those around him to action. Simon goes on to create the Spirit Bear Youth Coalition and see his favourite animal in the wild.

A Voice for the Spirit Bears shows how one child can be the catalyst for change, and that together we can make a big difference. It also shows how advocating for those who are more vulnerable can help us develop our own confidence and overcome personal obstacles. Featuring a supplementary biography and suggestions to young readers on how to make a difference of their own, this book is part of the CitizenKid book collection, which aspires to make global issues understandable for younger readers and encourage them to action.



The Animal Lover's Guide to Changing the World: Practical Advice and Everyday Actions for a More Sustainable, Humane, and Compassionate Planet by Stephanie Feldstein

Reading level: Grade 9 to Adult

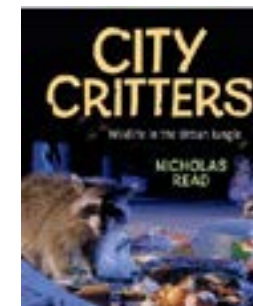
Any book that has “changing the world” in the title has big boots to fill, but in the case of *The Animal Lover's Guide to Changing the World*, those boots fit just fine. Stephanie Feldstein's book is an accessible read not just for adults but for older students as well, providing empowering advice on how each human can use their day to day actions to make a difference for all of the other animals with which we share the earth. Not everyone can become vegan, adopt six cats and a dog or save the rainforest, but Feldstein inspires and encourages all of us to really think about other animals, how they think and feel, and how our actions create a ripple effect.

This book is the perfect read for teachers who want to inspire their students. A chapter on “Compassion in the Classroom” talks about finding teachable moments in the everyday to encourage students to think about animals and how to make the world better for them. “Kids have powerful voices and it is never too soon for them to learn to use them,” Feldstein writes.

This is a well-written, well-researched and thoughtful read that makes changing the world seem like something to which we really can each contribute, simply by having empathy for our fellow creatures.

“Elephants live in a world rich with emotion and empathy, where they know their actions affect those around them. We should all be more like elephants.” ~ Stephanie Feldstein

*May not be appropriate for younger students due to some content like “Let's talk about sex.”

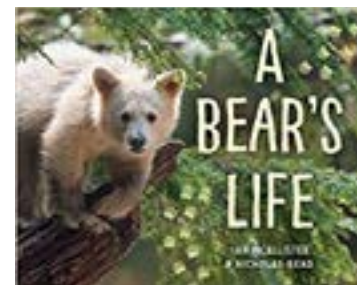


City Critters by Nicholas Read

Reading level: Grades 4+

When we think of wildlife we think of forests, oceans and rural areas but if we take a closer look there are many critters we share spaces with in urban centres too. Discover why these animals choose to live in urban spaces and how they survive in areas we consider inhospitable to their wild behaviours and needs.

This book is full of amazing, colourful pictures of mammals, birds, aquatic animals, reptiles and insects as well as informative facts. It makes one ponder what responsibilities humans must accept since we must share our space with these animals whose ancestors once ruled the wild space our cities used to be.



A Bear's Life by Ian McAllister and Nicholas Read

Reading level: Grades 3+

Located on the west coast of Canada, The Great Bear Rainforest has everything black bears, grizzly bears and spirit bears need to live rich, full lives.

This educational book by Ian McAllister and Nicholas Read combines stunning real-life footage with informative information on the life of bears. From the important bond between mother bears and cubs, the beach buffet that fulfills many dietary needs, and the mysterious of the rare spirit bear, each page dives into fascinating details of how bears live. Classes will get an inside perspective to the majestic creatures that share our home region. Discussion questions to have with your class may include how we as humans effect bears, their habitat, food sources and population numbers, as well as ways to build awareness for these issues.

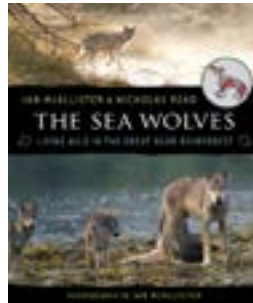


The Great Bear Sea: Exploring the Marine Life of a Pacific Paradise by Ian McAllister and Nicholas Read

Reading level: Grades 3+

Prepare for an expedition into an often mysterious but always breathtaking underwater world!

The Great Bear Sea is an informative and inspirational look at life within the ocean off the coast of the Great Bear Rainforest. This book is an excellent resource for class discussions on life cycles, food webs and human impacts on wildlife and the environment. For students eager to see the spectacular images from *The Great Bear Sea* in motion, check out the accompanying video at greatbear-sea.com.



The Sea Wolves: Living Wild in the Great Bear Rainforest
by Ian McAllister and Nicholas Read

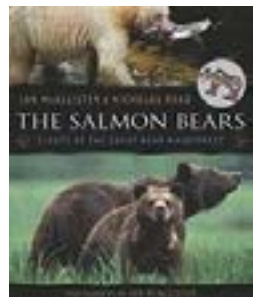
Reading level: Grades 3+

The Sea Wolves takes readers on a journey into a little-known world where wolves can swim like otters and fish like bears.

The world of the coastal wolf is unique. Unlike any other wolves on the planet, coastal wolves have adapted to a life on land and at sea. They hunt the beaches for crabs, clams and mussels, and wade out into the rivers to catch salmon. They even brave the ocean waves to paddle from one island to another in search of food.

But the world of the coastal wolf is also fragile. Coastal wolves are only found in the Great Bear Rainforest. When the rainforest comes under threat, the wolves are put in danger too since all life in the forest is connected.

The Sea Wolves is ideal for class discussions on life cycles, food webs and human impacts on wildlife and the environment. With breathtaking photos and page-turning facts, the world of the coastal wolf is brought to life.



The Salmon Bears: Giants of the Great Bear Rainforest
by Ian McAllister and Nicholas Read

Reading level: Grades 3+

Through magnificent photos and descriptions of the interconnectedness of bears, salmon and the rainforest, McAllister and Read bring readers closer to these amazing creatures. The journey of the bears through the seasons is informative and fascinating.

In the last chapter, the authors encourage readers to consider the future of the bears. Even though a large section of land has been preserved, it represents only 30 per cent of the bears' range. The other 70 per cent remains open to logging and other industrial pursuits. Much of the protected area is inhabitable for bears and therefore much more needs to be done if the bears are to survive for future generations to admire.



Trash Talk by Michelle Mulder

Reading level: Grades 4-5

Most of us recycle but, unfortunately, that alone won't solve the world's pollution problem. Finding ways to use less and to make something useful from what others consider trash is a better means of helping the planet. *Trash Talk* is all about people from around the world who are doing just this in surprisingly easy, creative and artistic ways. This book takes the phrase "One man's junk is another man's treasure" seriously! From composting, reusing or fixing items other people are finished with to using "trash" to build new houses or musical instruments, there are so many ways to reduce waste. The result will be friendlier communities, cost savings and – most importantly – a healthier Mother Earth. There is a take-away lesson for everyone in this book.

Use *Trash Talk* as an introduction to study the environmental impact of trash and to spark creative solutions to overconsumption and our 'trashy' habits.



What's the Buzz? Keeping Bees in Flight by Merrie-Ellen Wilcox

Reading level: Grades 4-7

Not all buzzing yellow and black insects are bees and not all bees sting. These are just a couple of the myths dispelled in this thorough introduction to bees.

What's the Buzz? author Merrie-Ellen Wilcox is an experienced B.C. apiculturist (bee-keeper). She shares her knowledge and passion for bees in this informative, accessible book that is filled with bee facts and tips on how to help bees survive. The photos and diagrams throughout the book add visual appeal and will engage students to read on and take action for the planet.

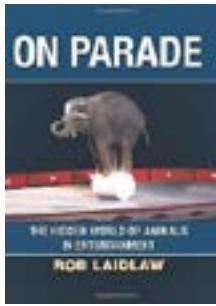


Explore a Frog by Aimee Bakken

Reading level: Ages 8 and up

Layer by layer, *Explore a Frog* reveals how a frog's anatomy allows it to leap, swim, catch food, and more. This wonderfully illustrated, full colour book and model, explores the skeletal, nervous, respiratory, digestive, circulatory, reproductive, muscular and integumentary (skin) systems of the frog, peeling away each system with each page. It's clear and structured layout allow it to be read in any order that most interest the reader. Start with the skeletal system or jump right to the frogs that eat bats and the poison dart frogs of South America!

No frogs were harmed in the reading of this book! The plastic model at the center of this books allows readers to turn over, touch, and peel away the different parts of the frog to see how it does all of it's amazing feats, while keeping the real frogs hopping happily along.

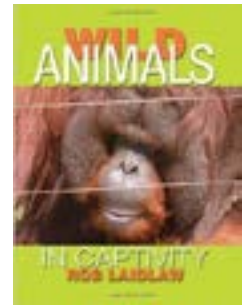


On Parade: The Hidden World of Animals in Entertainment by Rob Laidlaw

Reading level: Grade 5+

Using compelling non-fiction narratives and first person accounts from the author, *On Parade* shows young readers the many troubling aspects of using animals for entertainment. This intelligent book explains the welfare needs of animals and delves into different types of entertainment in which animals are often harmed, including circuses, film and television, zoos, rodeos, magic shows, animal racing, animal fighting and more.

Despite its saddening subject matter, *On Parade* allows all readers – youth and adult – to come away with hopeful ideas for alternatives to animals in entertainment and ways that they can start making a difference right away. Featuring a list of ten ways to help animals in entertainment, *On Parade* offers opportunity for student action both in the classroom and at home.



Wild Animals in Captivity by Rob Laidlaw

Reading level: Grades 6+

Rob Laidlaw is a chartered biologist and the founder of the wildlife protection organization Zoocheck Canada.

Wild Animals in Captivity provides information on the welfare of animals in zoos. It looks at a wide range of animals that are kept in captivity and examines what happens when wild animals live in unnatural spaces. The photos are compelling and will leave the reader

asking, Should these animals be here at all? What is it like for the animals who live in the same enclosures day after day?

Laidlaw also includes questions to think about if you do go to a zoo and a list of ways to help animals in captivity.



Saving Lives & Changing Hearts: Animal Sanctuaries & Rescue Centers by Rob Laidlaw

Reading level: Grades 4+

This moving and informative book begins by addressing the question, “What is an animal sanctuary?” and establishing the differences between sanctuaries and rescues. Each subsequent chapter features the personal story of an animal or animals’ journey from suffering to sanctuary or rescue, with specific details about the individuals and organizations that have saved them. The book touches on potential animal welfare concerns when a

facility isn’t set up properly and also offers readers eight action steps they can take to help animals in need of sanctuary.

Featuring plenty of colour photographs and an engaging design, *Saving Lives & Changing Hearts* can be used effectively in the classroom for independent student reading, research projects and group discussion.



No Shelter Here: Making the World a Kinder Place for Dogs by Rob Laidlaw

Reading level: Grades 3-6

No Shelter Here: Making the World a Kinder Place for Dogs offers a well-rounded look at dog welfare at home and in countries across the globe and gives youth a starting point to create positive change for our canine friends.

Topics include welfare issues such as puppy mills, street dogs, cosmetic surgeries, in-breeding, dog racing, dog fighting and scientific testing, to name a few. *No Shelter Here* features a strong focus on dogs as companions and encourages adoption from animal shelters. Readers learn about dogs’ needs as well as the process of adopting a new furry family member.

Perhaps best of all, *No Shelter Here* tells the stories of dozens of young “Dog Champions” who work to make the world a more humane place for dogs. From a 10-year-old who formed a charity to protect police dogs to a 15-year-old whose efforts changed the laws on devocalization surgery in Massachusetts, the youth featured in *No Shelter Here* are an inspiration to animal lovers of all ages.

Readers of *No Shelter Here* will have a deeper knowledge of the challenges dogs face and how they can help. Teachers can encourage students to take the Dog Lover’s Pledge, at the end of the book, and get started today on making a difference for dogs.

Cat Champions: Caring for our Feline Friends by Rob Laidlaw

Reading level: Grades 3-6



In *Cat Champions*, award-winning author and activist Rob Laidlaw once again informs and inspires young readers to make a difference for animals, this time with a focus on cats.

A well-balanced book, *Cat Champions* addresses some of the most important cat welfare concerns, such as overpopulation and spay/neuter, indoor vs. outdoor cats and the importance of identification. It also provides straightforward information about adopting and caring for cats, explains the role of animal shelters and tells the stories of fantastic felines like Tuxedo Stan, a former stray who became a spokescat for animal issues.

Most importantly, though, *Cat Champions* introduces readers to the cat champions themselves – ordinary youth who are taking action in a variety of ways, including volunteering, fostering, adopting, fundraising and educating others about the cat welfare issues that matter to them. The profiles of these young animal advocates can serve as inspiration for other kids to be the change they want to see in the world.

Featuring a special Cat Lover’s Pledge and extra resource listings, *Cat Champions* is an excellent book to ignite and enhance classroom discussions around animal issues and social responsibility.



Animals at Play by Marc Bekoff

Reading level: Grades 3-5

Animals play, wrestle and sometimes fight, but they learn the rules of the game in the process. Biologist and ethologist (expert in animal behaviour), Marc Bekoff has written his first children's book to help kids understand animal communication and pique their interest in animal observation. We can learn about ourselves by observing animal behaviour and it is a great way to build empathy skills.

Dr. Jane Goodall wholeheartedly endorses this book. She writes, "Marc Bekoff's ideas about fair play stress the significance of cooperation and justice, aspects of behaviour desperately needed in the world today. Read this book, share it with the children in your life and incorporate its lessons into your classroom, family room or board room."



The Case of the Vanishing Honeybees: A Scientific Mystery by Sandra Markle

Reading level: Grades 4-7

Honeybees are dying in vast numbers around the world. Can scientists find the culprit in time to save them?

An intriguing combination of science and mystery, *The Case of the Vanishing Honeybees* manages to make a complex issue both accessible and relevant to a young audience. Students are bound to come away with a new appreciation for bees. This

book is a great source for student reports, and can spur children on to further research and action with recommended readings and ways to help honeybees.



Welcome to the World of Coyotes by Diane Swanson

Reading level: Grades 3-5

Welcome to the world of coyotes! When students delve into this engaging non-fiction book, they will be amazed at what they didn't know about coyotes. From their eating habits and their communication methods to the ways they play and raise their young, there's a lot more to these smart, spirited, sensory-driven animals than many of us realize.

With colour photographs on every page and interesting complementary anecdotes, *Welcome to the World of Coyotes* makes a great resource for teachers looking to educate their students about the nature of coyotes, and can lead to further learning about human-coyote conflict and what kids need to know if they come across a coyote.



Every Human Has Rights by National Geographic

Reading level: Grade 4+

When a group of elder statesman (including Nelson Mandela, Jimmy Carter, Aung San Suu Kyi, and Kofi Annan), decided to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the UN Declaration of Human Rights, the National Geographic for Kids decided to support this by creating a book on the declaration for kids.

They held a contest through ePals (a pen pal site for kids). The contest consisted of a classroom lesson on the declaration (rewritten for kids) and student submissions responding to one of the rights. Sixteen of those entries are included in the book.

This book is accessible and intelligently designed for children.



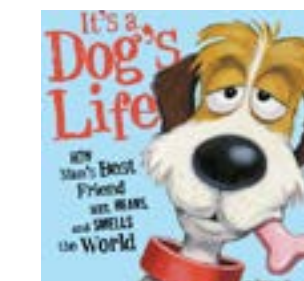
ER Vets by Donna M. Jackson

Reading level: Grades 5-8

From saving a tiny foal in a coma to untwisting a German shepherd's stomach, life in an animal emergency hospital can be dramatic and exciting. *ER Vets* gives you a behind-the-scenes look at what goes on in the animal ER.

Filled with stories and graphic photos which provide enough detail to give the reader insight without being overwhelming, this book will give budding young vets and vet techs a taste of what it takes to work in this fast-paced career.

The book includes a fairly comprehensive glossary and is suitable for grades 5-8.



It's a Dog's Life: How man's best friend sees, hears and smells the world by Susan E. Goodman

Reading Level: Grades 2-5

For kids who are keen to know more about their canine companions, *It's a Dog's Life* is the perfect introduction to the history and behavior of our doggy friends. Using fun, colourful illustrations and the "dog's-eye-view" Goodman's book tells us about the domestication of dogs over time and how exactly that happened, including the emergence of particular breeds and dog "jobs." This book looks like a humorous picture book but is surprisingly packed with information, fun facts included.

There is even a Woof/English Dictionary so kids can try to interpret what their dog is saying with a woof or just with body language. Goodman uses illustrations by David Slonim to depict the many ways dogs communicate with their bodies, including fearful and aggressive signs. The dog narrator closes by saying, "I figured if you know a little more about us, maybe you'll stop trying to turn us into humans. That's right, no more doggy Halloween costumes or nail polish at the groomers."

That is a message that students can also share with adults! *It's a Dog's Life* is a great introduction to dog behavior for the curious young reader.