

Activity Plan

Hamster care

ACTIVITY LOCATION:

- Anywhere

YOU WILL NEED:

- **Hamster care** worksheet
- Pens or pencils
- Information leaflets about hamsters or access to the Internet
- Pictures of hamsters cared for correctly
- **The 5 Welfare Needs** (click [here](#) to download a version for the wall, or [here](#) for individual cards to hand out)

PREPARATION

Collect leaflets about hamster care, or download and print information from petsathome.com or rspca.org.uk/hamsters.

Introduction

10 MINUTES

Give the children a few minutes to look at a picture of a hamster (or pair of hamsters) in an appropriate cage. Ask what they know about hamsters – and what can they find out from the one they are looking at? What do hamsters eat? What else do they (and all animals) need? What do they notice about the cage and the things in it? Do they know what all the things are and what they are for? Discuss the following:

- Toys stop pets from getting bored
- Hamsters tunnel in the wild, so they might like a deep floor covering to burrow in, and boxes or tunnels to hide in so they can feel safe
- Mineral stones contain seaweed, which provides minerals that might not be in the hamster's normal food. They're also something hamsters can gnaw to keep their teeth short
- Hamsters also need wooden blocks or sticks to gnaw
- A wheel in a hamster cage should be solid, not with open rungs, so they can't catch their feet
- Refusing food and water, dull eyes, sitting hunched up, and sneezing are all signs of ill health in hamsters

Activity

40 MINUTES

Divide the children into groups of four or five. Give each group of children a copy of **The 5 Welfare Needs** and tell them that anyone who keeps animals should provide all these. Explain that their task is to find out how to do this for hamsters.

(continued)

Hand out the worksheet **Hamster care**. Ask the children to think about what they have learned and say whether the things listed show good or bad hamster care.

They could then plan and write letters from Horace to Harry. If necessary they could finish these at home.

Discussion**10 MINUTES**

Invite children to show how they marked the pictures and to explain why.

**CURRICULUM LINKS**

- Science (KS2)
- English (KS2)
- Citizenship (KS2)

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