

Choosing Compassion

OBJECTIVE:

To learn what "compassion" means and how to make compassionate choices.

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW:

Read the book, *Caesar: On Deaf Ears*, make a list of the compassionate choices that were made, analyze the problems and find solutions.

MATERIALS:

🐾 Book: *Caesar: On Deaf Ears*, by Loren Spiotta-DiMare and The Humane Society of the United States (if your librarian can't locate this book, you can order it through your local bookstore or through the publisher: The Benefactor, (847) 919-1703, www.readplay.com)

🐾 A large piece of poster paper

🐾 Worksheet: "Compassion for Caesar"

ACTIVITY:

Preliminary Discussion

- 🐾 What does it mean to be "compassionate?" Why is it important to be compassionate? How does having compassion help you make positive choices?
- 🐾 Ask for examples of how the students have made compassionate choices at school or at home, with people and/or animals. How did they feel after they made these choices? How did others benefit from their compassionate choices?
- 🐾 Explain that compassion is the same, whether it's shown toward people or animals.

Procedure

Read the story, *Caesar: On Deaf Ears* to the class. Tell the students that as you're reading it, they should listen for the compassionate choices that are made throughout the story. Pause at the end of each page, ask them to identify the compassionate choices and list them on a piece of poster paper. After you've finished reading the story, discuss all of the compassionate choices listed.

Discuss the problems that the people and animals in the story faced and the solutions. Ask the students how they would have handled the problems.

Read the words and definitions in the Glossary at the end of the book.

Have the students complete the worksheet, "Compassion for Caesar." After they've finished their worksheets, discuss them with the class.

Post-Discussion

- 🐾 Why do all living things deserve to be treated with compassion? What if we consider them to be strange or different?
- 🐾 Have you ever treated a person or animal, without compassion? What happened? How would you do things differently now?

EXTENSION ACTIVITY:

Find a book that demonstrates a lack of compassionate choices by the people in the story. Ask the students to identify the choices and tell the class what they would have done differently.

Compassion for Caesar

The book, *Caesar: On Deaf Ears*, tells the story of a deaf dog and his interactions with people. After reading the book, answer the following questions.

1. What were the compassionate choices that people made for Caesar, throughout his life?

2. Why did Penny choose to work with Caesar and train him?

3. What special gifts did Caesar have to offer others?

4. What did you learn about compassion from reading this story?
