

# Animals Can Teach Us Compassion

## OBJECTIVE:

To learn how to turn difficult situations into positive ones by having compassion for others.

## ACTIVITY OVERVIEW:

Read the book, *Norman to the Rescue*. Ask the students to take notes during the story and write a summary afterwards.

## MATERIALS:

🐾 Book: *Norman to the Rescue*, 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 Benefactory, (847) 919-1703, [www.readplay.com](http://www.readplay.com))

## ACTIVITY:

### Preliminary Discussion

- 🐾 Define "compassion" and discuss why it's important.
- 🐾 Think of a time when you were compassionate toward a person and another time when you were compassionate toward an animal. What happened and how did it make you feel?
- 🐾 Why is it important to be compassionate toward animals? What can it teach us?
- 🐾 What if people didn't have compassion for others? What would the world be like?

### Procedure

Read the book *Norman to the Rescue*. Ask the students to take notes while you're reading it. They should focus on: the main characters, the difficult situations they encounter and how they turned out to be positive, what the compassionate choices are, how Norman teaches compassion to the people in the story and how he changes their lives. After reading the story, discuss the students' notes, then have them write a summary of the story, using their notes.

### Post-Discussion

- 🐾 What are some ways you can be more compassionate toward people and animals?
- 🐾 What prompted the people in the story to make the compassionate choices they made?
- 🐾 What are some compassionate choices your parents have made?

## EXTENSION ACTIVITY:

Ask the students to keep a "Journal of Compassion." Whenever they make a compassionate choice or observe a compassionate situation, they should record it. Once a week, have the class share their journal entries.