



Ideas for Dog Learning Activities Advanced Level

Need more ideas for your dog project? There are hundreds of things you can do! This list is organized by topics that match the chapters in the 4-H *Dog Resource Handbook*. You are being asked to complete **at least five** activities each year. Use this list and your imagination, and then write your ideas in your *Dog Project and Record Book*. Have fun!

Characteristics of Dogs

- List the scientific classification of dogs.
- Select two species in the *Canis* group other than the domestic dog; identify five characteristics of each species.
- Explain evolution and domestication of the dog.
- Compare the characteristics of the domestic dog to those of the gray wolf.
- Chart the evolution of the dog.
- Compare the scientific classification of dogs to that of another species of animal.
- Name the five types of vertebrae in a dog's skeleton, show on a picture where each is located, and list how many of each type there are.

Breeds

- Select five breeds of dogs within one group and describe each breed's origin and characteristics.
- Select one breed of dog from each group and describe its origin and characteristics.
- Describe the function of a pointer and compare it to the functions of a setter, retriever, and spaniel.

Conformation

- Using correct terminology, describe your dog's conformation.
- Draw and label each type of bite.
- Name and describe the five ear types and find a picture of each.
- Name and describe the four eye types and find a picture of each.
- Name and describe the five kinds of tail carriage and find a picture of each.
- Select two breeds of dogs and explain what kind of topline they have.
- Name and describe the four kinds of dog's feet and find a picture of each.
- Describe the purpose of the dog's forequarters and hindquarters and the kind of front legs and rear legs your dog has.

Grooming

- Groom your dog.
- Groom at least one other dog with a coat type different from your own dog.
- Make a grooming kit.
- Teach another member how to groom their dog.

Selection

- Compare the factors you should consider when first owning a puppy versus owning an adult dog.
- Research information about two breeds of dogs and list the pros and cons of owning each breed.
- Build a dog house.
- Investigate local laws regarding dog ownership.

Communication and Behavior

- Describe socialization as it pertains to dogs.
- Explain why it is important to observe the complete picture of a dog's environment when attempting to interpret dog behavior.
- Observe the body postures of your dog over a period of one week and record those observations.
- List the similarities and differences between active submission and passive submission.
- List the similarities and differences between offensive threat and defense threat.
- Explain what your dog does to reduce stress and why these calming signals are important.
- Identify two responses you might get from staring at a dog.
- Describe the appropriate tones of voice to use when praising a dog and when correcting a dog.
- Describe how to humanely discipline a dog.
- Explain the purpose of the AKC Canine Good Citizen (CGC) Program® and name and describe the ten test items.
- Pass the CGC test with your dog.
- Teach another member how to perform the ten CGC test items.
- Help organize a CGC testing day in your county or community.
- Help organize a dog bite prevention program in your community.

Puppy Care and Socialization

- Teach another person how to crate train and housebreak a dog.
- Describe the six steps of how to start grooming as outlined in the *Dog Resource Handbook*.

Beginning Training Techniques

- Explain the four principles of operant conditioning.
- Show how to use negative punishment with your dog.
- Read one book about positive training and explain to another person how to use it.
- Subscribe to and read the *Whole Dog Journal*.
- Research training information written by Leslie Nelson.
- Teach another person how to use a lure and how to use targeting when training.
- Teach someone else the Name Game, the Attention Game, or the Set Up Game.

Obedience

- Show your dog in the appropriate obedience class.
- Enroll in an obedience class.
- Train your dog to do any of the advanced obedience and graduate novice exercises described in the *Dog Resource Handbook*.
- Train your dog to do any of the open class or graduate open exercises described in the *Dog Resource Handbook*.
- Train your dog to do any of the utility, brace, team, or rally exercises described in the *Dog Resource Handbook*.
- Show in a brace class, a team class, or a rally obedience competition.
- Help another member learn brace or rally.

Judging

- Learn the graduate novice, the open, the utility, or the rally score sheet.

Showmanship

- Show your dog in a showmanship class.
- Learn how to do the Down and Back Pattern with two dogs.
- Interview a showmanship judge to learn what he or she looks for when judging.
- Attend an AKC show that has Junior Showmanship.
- Name four questions a judge asks him/herself when evaluating a handler and dog.

- Keep a scrapbook of your showmanship activities this project year.

Performance Events

- Explain the importance of dogs eating a high-quality diet and being in good condition to compete in performance events.
- Join an agility association.
- Teach your dog the seesaw or teeter-totter.
- Build a broad jump and use it with your dog.
- Build a tire jump and use it with your dog.
- Compete in an agility trial or participate in a drill team.
- Assist with choreographing music for a drill team performance.
- Teach your dog a free style routine and perform it for your 4-H club.
- Compete in an Earthdog test, a coonhound event, a field trial, a herding trial, a hunting test, lure coursing, or tracking.

Working Dogs

- Invite a K-9 Unit or a Search and Rescue team to give a presentation at a 4-H club meeting or countywide event.
- Interview a K-9 police officer or a Search and rescue team member and report what you learned.
- Research the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), learn the terminology used in access laws in your state, and report to your club where assistance dogs have access to by law.
- Surf the Internet to find five organizations that do *not* belong to Assistance Dogs International, Inc. (ADI), their locations, and their contact persons.
- On the ADI website, review the standards and ethics regarding dogs and the standards and ethics regarding clients.
- On the ADI website, review ADI minimum standards for training guide dogs, hearing dogs, or service dogs.
- Tour an assistance dogs facility.
- Work with your local Lions Club to help raise money for blind people.
- Be a guest speaker at your Lions Club to help raise money for blind people.
- Identify three guide dog organizations, hearing dog organizations, or service dog organizations located in or near Ohio.
- Give a demonstration or show your assistance dog at your county judging or fair.
- Compare the similarities and differences of assistance dogs and therapy dogs.
- List the similarities and differences among three therapy dog organizations.

- Join a therapy dog organization.
- Join a 4-H PetPALS Club.
- If certified, visit a nursing home or healthcare facility with your dog.
- Fulfill the requirements to be certified by a therapy dog organization.

Showing Your Project Dog

- Plan to attend or organize a dog show.
- Name and describe four kinds of dog shows and the key people typically involved.

Anatomy and Physiology

- Explain the difference between the biology of anatomy and physiology.
- Explain the purposes of the axial skeleton and the appendicular skeleton.
- Compare the human skeleton to the canine skeleton and describe four major differences.
- Draw the three basic dog head shapes and identify and describe each.
- Draw the foot of a dog and label the parts.
- Draw and identify the different kinds of teeth in an adult dog's mouth.
- Select one system of the dog and compare and contrast its function to that of the same system of a human.
- Describe the function of each type of muscle fiber.
- Investigate why a puppy's heart beats faster than an adult dog and why larger dogs have slower heart rates than smaller dogs.
- Name the parts of the respiratory system.
- Discuss special considerations of the respiratory system, such as dogs with brachycephalic head shapes and reverse sneezing.
- Identify and describe the function of each major division of the nervous system.
- Chart the digestive process.
- Name three parts of the female dog's reproductive system and three parts of a male dog's reproductive system.
- Describe the nature of a dog's sense of smell and sense of taste and how the two work together.
- Explain how a dog sniffs.
- Describe how dog vision differs from human vision in terms of visual acuity, night vision, color, and movement.

Health

- Remove a tick from a dog.
- Select one species of mite, describe the symptoms it causes, and discuss how to treat a dog that is infested.
- Define the term zoonotic disease and name three zoonotic diseases.
- Teach another person how to brush their dog's teeth.
- Make a dog first aid kit.
- Take and record your dog's temperature, pulse, and respiratory rate; compare them to the normal temperature, pulse, and respiratory rate.
- Compare and record your dog's respiratory and heart rates at rest and after exercise.
- Describe the danger, symptoms, and action required for three first-aid situations outlined in the *Dog Resource Handbook*.

Nutrition and Exercise

- Explain what amino acids are and why essential amino acids must be in the dog's diet
- Identify the two types of vitamins found in your dog's food and explain the value in your dog's diet.
- Identify the macro-minerals and the micro-minerals found in your dog's food and explain their value in your dog's diet.
- Develop a one-month exercise plan for your dog that includes places in your community for dogs to exercise safely.
- Complete the reading Dog Food Labels activity and quiz in the Dog Care and Welfare section.

Reproduction

- Debate the pros and cons of breeding dogs.
- Name and describe the four stages of a bitch's estrous cycle.
- Describe at least two situations during delivery of puppies that require human intervention.
- Describe postpartum care of puppies, including the importance of colostrum.
- Describe what to feed puppies from 3 to 4 weeks of age through weaning.

Careers

- Shadow a person in a dog-related career for a day.
- Visit a pet hotel or boarding facility and interview the owner to learn more about this career.