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# DO THE BENEFITS OF RENTING A PET OUTWEIGH THE POTENTIAL HARM IT CAN CAUSE THE ANIMALS?

Word Generation - Unit 3.03

## Focus Words

whereas | capable | ongoing | compatible | notion

## WEEKLY PASSAGE



Davonte Reese wanted a dog, but his parents didn't think he was **capable** of taking care of one. Then they heard about a company that rents pets. Davonte's parents were glad the pet rental company gave them the chance to rent a Dalmatian for a day. Renting a Dalmatian helped them realize that Davonte was ready to own a dog. His parents then took Davonte to an animal shelter and adopted a mixed-breed dog named Lucky.

Some people say renting a dog should be illegal. They believe rental businesses are harmful to dogs. To be happy, they say, a dog needs ongoing contact with one person. People who are against pet rentals give several other reasons to support their position. For example, a dog likes to know its home. Dogs and people evolved together, so dogs depend on their human "family." They have some social skills that are like those of humans. People domesticated dogs to be socially **compatible** and live with humans. Therefore, people have a special responsibility to ensure dogs have stable homes. Dogs have a special right to a permanent home with **ongoing** companionship. Also, who will want rental dogs when they are sick or old?

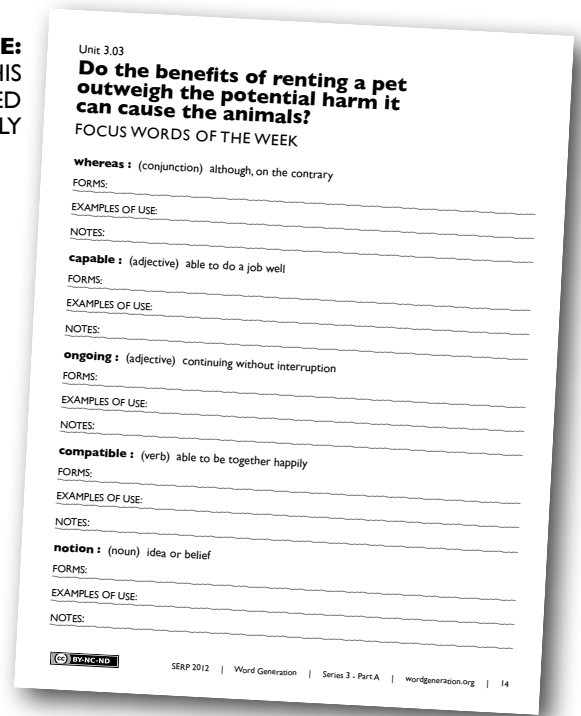
Marlena Davis disagrees with the **notion** that pet rental is bad for dogs. She has a pet rental business. She buys mostly purebred dogs and then rents them for \$50 or more a day. A dog can spend time with a different family every day of the week. **Whereas** people who own dogs leave them home alone, Marlena says people who rent dogs give the animals lots of attention. Also, families like Davonte's can use pet rentals to make an informed decision about whether to own a dog or not. Marlena's business also creates jobs.

Some states may make it against the law to rent pets. If you were going to write to a member of your state assembly, what would you say? Should it be illegal to rent a pet?

### TEACHER: Discussion Questions

- ▶ How did renting a dog help Davonte and his family?
- ▶ How does the owner of a rent-a-pet business argue in favor of renting dogs?
- ▶ According to the passage, why are some people against dog-renting businesses?
- ▶ If you wanted to start a rent-a-pet business, how could you ensure your business was good for dogs as well as people?

**PLEASE NOTE:**  
THE STUDENT VERSION OF THIS  
PAGE IS FORMATTED  
DIFFERENTLY



### Unit 3.03

## WORD CHART FOR TEACHERS

This chart is not in the student book. It is a resource for teachers to support students in the use of the focus words each. Students are provided one page in each unit immediately following the weekly passage with a basic definition printed and space for taking notes.

Word	Meaning	Forms			Related Words
		Inflectional	Basic Word Classes	Prefixes/ Suffixes	
whereas	(conj.) - although, on the contrary				
capable	(adj.) - able to do a job well			incapable capableness capability capabilities capably	capacity incapacitate
ongoing	(adj.) - continuing without interruption		go		
compatible	(adj.) - able to be together happily			incompatible compatibleness compatibility compatibly	compassion sympathy passion pathos
notion	(n.) - idea or belief	notions		notionless notional	



# Do the benefits of renting a pet outweigh the potential harm it can cause the animals?

## PROBLEM OF THE WEEK

**Option 1:** The **notion** of putting unwanted pets to sleep is a sad one, but millions of dogs and cats are put to sleep in shelters each year. People disagree about whether pet rental can help save these animals. Some people say that rescuing a shelter pet is better than renting, **whereas** others say pet rental keeps pets from going to the shelter in the first place. Pet renters can return a pet if it is **incompatible** with the renter's lifestyle, or if the renter is **incapable** of giving the pet **ongoing** care. This way, the unwanted pet goes back to the store instead of the shelter.

About 12 million pets are put to sleep in U.S. shelters each year. Which of the following shows 12 million written in standard form?

- A) 12,000
- B) 120,000
- C) 12,000,000**
- D) 12,000,000,000

**Option 2:** A fact found on the internet: "Two humans could produce a maximum of 6 babies in 6 years, **whereas** a pair of dogs and their puppies can produce up to 67,000 dogs in the same time period."

Could this possibly be true? How could you figure it out?

Some facts to help you:

- ▶ A dog's gestation period (pregnancy) is nine weeks.
- ▶ A typical litter contains 6 puppies.

Answer: Yes, this is possible.

One Possible Approach to the Problem:

Encourage students to start with the simplifying assumption that all litters consist of 6 female puppies. (Our goal is to see if a number like "67,000" is reasonable, not to arrive at a number, so we can cut a few corners.)

Begin by sketching a tree diagram. Although the branches will quickly become too numerous, the model may be a helpful entry point.

The first pair of dogs has six puppies. If each of those six puppies has six puppies, we have 36, or  $6^2$ . (Astute students may point out that we are leaving aside the original pair, and the original six puppies! This is okay. More corner-cutting.)

If each of these 36 puppies has six puppies, we have 216, or  $6^3$ .

Each time the members of a litter each have their own litters, our exponent increases by one.

$$6^6 = 46,656$$

$$6^7 = 279,936$$

So, if it's reasonable for the reproductive cycle to happen 7 times in six years (and a nine-week gestation suggests that it is), it is certainly reasonable to estimate that, in 7 years, two dogs can become 67,000.

**Discussion Question:** Pets are **incapable** of defending their rights. **Whereas** people have many rights, pets have very few. Do pets have a right not to be put to sleep? A right to be spayed or neutered? A right to **ongoing** care? Does the **notion** of pets' rights make sense, or are rights something that only people have? If pets have rights, are those rights **compatible** with pet rental?

## Do the benefits of renting a pet outweigh the potential harm it can cause the animals?




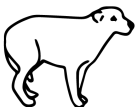



### THINKING SCIENTIFICALLY

People think dogs are happy when they are wagging their tails, **whereas** they think dogs are afraid when they lower their body and look down. Ms. Kahn's student Shatara agreed with this **notion**. She shared, "Our poodle, Toots, wags his tail whenever we take him for a walk around the neighborhood. But Rusty, our sheepdog, always cowers and is never happy about going for walks. My mom says that Rusty's fear of city noises has been an **ongoing** problem since Rusty was a puppy."


Ms. Kahn chimed in, "My family's dog, Rex, is totally **compatible** with urban life, but he is afraid of new people inside our apartment. He'll actually hide when we have guests."

→ This got Shatara thinking about observing the behaviors of dogs. She sketched different ways that dogs held their bodies as she observed them. She was curious about how much she could infer from the posture of dogs. Examine Shatara's sketches to see if there is enough information for you to make an inference. If so, write it down.

Here are some of Shatara's sketches:

	Possible Dog Feeling	Inference Statements
1 	<input type="checkbox"/> submissive <input type="checkbox"/> fearful <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> neutral/relaxed <input type="checkbox"/> aggressive <input type="checkbox"/> playful	Example: I think that sketch #1 shows a neutral/relaxed posture because the ears and tail are drooping down instead of pointing up.
2 	<input type="checkbox"/> submissive <input type="checkbox"/> fearful <input type="checkbox"/> neutral/relaxed <input type="checkbox"/> aggressive <input type="checkbox"/> playful	Your inference: _____ _____ _____
3 	<input type="checkbox"/> submissive <input type="checkbox"/> fearful <input type="checkbox"/> neutral/relaxed <input type="checkbox"/> aggressive <input type="checkbox"/> playful	Your inference: _____ _____ _____
4 	<input type="checkbox"/> submissive <input type="checkbox"/> fearful <input type="checkbox"/> neutral/relaxed <input type="checkbox"/> aggressive <input type="checkbox"/> playful	Your inference: _____ _____ _____
5 	<input type="checkbox"/> submissive <input type="checkbox"/> fearful <input type="checkbox"/> neutral/relaxed <input type="checkbox"/> aggressive <input type="checkbox"/> playful	Your inference: _____ _____ _____

Answers will vary. Though there are some generally accepted postures associated with dog postures, these sketches do not provide enough information to make an accurate inference. For example, many students will say that the sketch in #3 can be both aggressive and playful.

 Some people might say that sketching is not a very scientific way for Shatara to take notes about her observations. What do you think?

# Do the benefits of renting a pet outweigh the potential harm it can cause the animals?



## DEBATING THE ISSUE

### Get ready...

Pick one of these positions (or create your own).

**A** Dog rental is not good for dogs. All rent-a-pet businesses should be against the law.

**B** Dog rental is good for dogs and people. All rent-a-pet programs should be allowed.

**C** Rent-a-pet businesses should be allowed, but there should be rules to ensure that rental dogs are treated well.

**D** Rent-a-pet businesses should be allowed, but if a family likes a dog it rents, the family should have the right to adopt it.

**E** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### TEACHER

Whatever debate format you use in your class, ask students to use academically productive talk in arguing their positions. In particular, students should provide reasons and evidence to back up their assertions. It may be helpful to read these sample positions to illustrate some possibilities, but students should also be encouraged to take their own positions on the issue at hand.

### Get set...

Be ready to provide evidence to back up your position during your class discussion or debate. Jot down a few quick notes:

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# GO!

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these.

*You make a good point, but have you considered...*

*I believe that...*

*I agree with you...*

*Can you show me evidence in the text that...*

## WRITE ABOUT IT

## Focus Words

whereas | capable | ongoing | compatible | notion

Put the writing prompt on the overhead projector (or the board) so that everyone can see it. Remind students to refer to the word lists in their Word Generation notebooks as needed.

[illegible]

Smartdogs Weblog. (2008, May 21). Is the dog our closest kin? Message posted to <http://smartdogs.wordpress.com/2008/05/29/is-the-dog-our-closest-animal-kin/>