

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

This Study Guide is based on chapters of *The Complete Dog Book for Kids* published by the American Kennel Club. Information from this book is used in the SKILLATHON competition at the State 4-H Dog Show. Read, the re-read one chapter at a time in *The Complete Dog Book for Kids*. Then practice the questions, shown here, for that chapter. Cover the answers to practice. Practice until you answer the chapter questions correctly. Repeat this process with each chapter of *The Complete Dog Book for Kids*. Use this STUDY GUIDE as a review or quick practice while on the road or at the dog show.

### CHAPTER 1: "Before You Buy a Dog"

#### SKILLATHON QUESTIONS

1) How long does an average dog live?

ANSWERS: *The Complete Dog Book for Kids*  
Six to sixteen years or more

2) What kind of care does a dog need from its owner?

A young dog needs to be house-trained. Dogs need to be fed, watered, and exercised daily. A dog needs a yearly veterinary health check and vaccinations. Unless you plan to breed a dog, it should be spayed or neutered, preferably in its first year before it learns to roam in search of a mate and before it becomes aggressively territorial.

3) When is the right time to get a dog?

- \* When everyone in the family wants one.
- \* When you have enough time for the dog.
- \* When you have enough space for a dog.
- \* When the family can afford dog food, equipment, veterinary care, and the initial fee to obtain the dog.

4) What kind of equipment does a dog need?

A crate, fencing, dog house, food and water bowls, food storage bin, a place to stay when you are away on vacation, etc., heartworm preventive, and regular worming for other parasites.

5) What is the most important trait to consider when selecting a dog?

Personality (Yes, bloodlines are important, but reproducing a bad personality is not desirable.)

6) What kinds of personalities will you find in average litter?

Bold and friendly, shy and sensitive, and pups that range in between.

7) What is one advantage to buying a purebred dog?

Purebred dogs have specific traits common to their breed. You can predict personality and looks.

8) What is a "heat cycle" in a female?

A female dog has small round ovaries inside her that release microscopic eggs to the

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 1 continued

8)

uterus (which is like a pocket inside her). When fertilized, these eggs attach to the wall of the uterus and puppies begin to form. A female dog (or bitch) is "in heat" when the eggs are released from the ovaries. She will search for a mate to fertilize the eggs. Many dogs will follow her and fight other dogs for the right to be her mate.

9) How often do female dogs (bitches) come into heat?

Approximately twice a year (once every 6 months).

10) When do female dogs first come into heat?

Small breeds may come into heat at age 6 months. Larger breeds do so at 8-12 months.

11) Why should you spay a female dog?

- \* Only the genetic best of the purebred dogs should be bred. Undesirable genetic faults are found in many dogs, whether purebred or not.
- \* Raising a litter of pups is expensive. Plan to spend more than \$100 per pup in vet care (worming, puppy vaccinations, puppy food and other care) before you are able to find homes for them. You could spend \$1000 or more if the female has birthing problems.

12) Why should you neuter a male dog?

- \* Dogs not neutered wander in search of females in heat. Your dog will likely get into a fight with other male dogs that could hurt him.
- \* Some homeowners shoot or poison dogs that wander into their yards.
- \* Your dog could become aggressive to handle.

13) In choosing a puppy, or raising pups, what is a critical factor in the normal development of a puppy?

Positive interaction with people is critical to the normal development of a puppy. Puppies need to be handled and played with for short periods (30 minutes) 10-15 times a day to be a well-socialized animal that will be safe to have around people.

14) Why is it sometimes better to get an older dog instead of a puppy?

- \* It is difficult to tell what a puppy will be. It might grow into a dog not suited for you or your family. A mature dog already has a developed body and personality.
- \* Small children might injure a puppy or

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 1 continued

14) continued

unknowingly teach it bad habits. An older dog that is quiet and easy-going is probably better suited for a family with smaller children.

\* Raising a puppy takes a lot more time, money and effort for your parents than does a mature dog.

15) What are "hereditary problems".

In dogs, hereditary problems are genetic faults that cause health problems in the dog. Dalmatians with poor genes are born deaf. German Shepherds suffer hip dislocations. Cocker Spaniels suffer detached retinas. Boston Terriers may be born with hair-lip.

16) How can you be sure the dog you buy will not develop some problem it inherited from the parent dogs?

Reputable dog breeders do not breed dogs that are prone to genetic problems. You should ask for a certificate guaranteeing the genetic health of your puppy.

17) When choosing a dog, should you get a long-haired or short-haired one?

Most dogs shed. Females shed twice a year. Males shed once a year. Many dogs have two coats of hair: an undercoat and a longer outer coat. Dog with single coats have fewer tangles and less hair to shed. But all dogs need daily brushing to keep their hair and skin healthy.

18) What does "AKC" stand for?

The American Kennel Club

19) When a kennel has an "AKC" by its name, what does that mean?

It means that no other breeder can use the kennel's name to register or show their dogs.

20) Does the AKC register or approve dog breeders and kennels?

No, it does not. It governs the registration of dogs to be shown at AKC dog shows.

21A) How do you register your dog with the American Kennel Club?

The breeder or seller must give you a form that is partly filled-out by the breeder. You fill-in the rest and mail it to the AKC.

21B) What kind of information is on the registration form?

If the breeder has no application, a simple note will do if it names the breed, gender and color of the dog as well as its date of birth, registered names of its parents, and the name of the breeder.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 1 continued

- 22) What does "AKC-registered" mean? "AKC -registered" is a purebred dog listed in the records of the American Kennel Club.
- 23) How old must a puppy be to leave its mother? 8 weeks. By that age a puppy is off the mother's milk and old enough to eat puppy food.
- 24) What important behaviors does a puppy learn in its first 8 weeks? A puppy learns canine behavior from its mother and litter mates.
- 25) Why might a nice dog growl or bite? Biting is a dog's natural way of defending himself. Some dogs see children and even owners as equals. They growl or nip to send a warning, doggy-style, when things get tense.
- 26) When is a dog most likely to bite? When it is eating or defending its owner or its territory.
- 27) How should you approach a strange dog?
- \* Ask its owner if you may pet the dog.
  - \* Approach the dog from the front or side.
  - \* Hold the back of your hand low and speak softly. If the dog sniffs and accepts you, you may pet it.
- 28) How do you know if a dog does not accept your presence?
- Dogs normally resort to biting only when they think you haven't listened to their warnings.
- \* Beware a dog that is barking or growling.
  - \* Beware if the ears are back, legs stiff, tail is up and stiff, or if the hair stands up on its neck or back.
- 29) How do you escape an angry dog?
- \* Slowly back away while saying "NO!" firmly.
  - \* Do not scream or stare into the dog's eyes.
  - \* Keep your arms at your side.
  - \* Once you are far from the dog, walk away. If you run, the dog may chase or attack you.
- 30) How can you keep any dog from becoming aggressive with you?
- \* Don't handle it while it is eating.
  - \* Don't take its "special" toys.
  - \* Don't tease, rough wrestle or play tug-of-war games because the dog does not always want to quit when you do, or the dog may misread your intentions and think you want to fight.
  - \* Respect a dog's "space". Don't stick your hand into its pen, its car, its dog house, etc.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 2: "The American Kennel Club"

#### SKILLATHON QUESTIONS

1) When was the American Kennel Club formed?

ANSWERS: *The Complete Dog Book for Kids* 1884.

2) Why was the American Kennel Club formed?

To advance the interests of purebred dogs.

3) What is the job of the American Kennel Club?

The AKC is a non-profit organization that employs over 500 people who work on matters related to the study, breeding, showing, health, and welfare of purebred dogs.

4) How many dog breeds are recognized by the American Kennel Club?

The AKC, which recognizes over 140 breeds, is the largest purebred registry in the world.

5) What sort of events does AKC sponsor?

Conformation show, obedience trials, performance events such as hunting tests, field trials, tracking, lure coursing, agility as well as educational programs.

6) Why was the *AKC Canine Health Foundation* (1995) established?

To fund research and provide educational Programs dealing with the health of dogs.

7) On what aspect of dog health does the *AKC Canine Health Foundation* focus?

Dog genetics.

8) What does AKC's *Veterinary Studies Program* offer?

Scholarships to students who want to study companion animals in vet school.

9) What is the purpose of the *AKC Animal Recovery Program*?

It helps owners find lost dogs that have been tattooed or that have a microchip implant.

10) What does *The Canine Legislation Department* do?

Works for laws that protect the rights of dog owners.

11) What does the AKC department of *Public Education* do?

It promotes responsible dog ownership.

12) What is the AKC *Best Friends* program?

AKC dog owners take their dogs to over 30,000 elementary schools every year to promote a better understanding of dogs as companion animals.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 2 continued

- 13) What is the *Canine Ambassador Program*? This program sponsors local dog clubs that give demonstrations in schools to teach young children the responsibilities of owning a dog.
- 14) What does AKC's *Public Relations Department* do? It gives information about purebred dogs and AKC activities to newspapers and TV stations.
- 15) What does the *Club Educational Services Department* do? It takes a booth with videos and brochures to major dog shows.
- 16) What does AKC's *Publishing Dept.* do? It tells the story of purebred dogs in print. It makes the *AKC Gazette*, a monthly dog magazine that is full of information about purebred dogs. (See also Question #17).
- 17) Inside the *AKC Gazette* is an *AKC Events Calendar*. Why is it there? To list all upcoming AKC events so that readers can plan ahead to attend shows, trials or seminars.
- 18) What other magazine does the *AKC Publishing Dept* print? It publishes *Puppies* magazine.
- 19) What official books are offered by the American Kennel Club? *The Complete Dog Book for Kids*, *The Complete Dog Book*, *American Kennel Club Dog Care and Training*.
- 20) What does the AKC's *Communications Division* do? It produces videos about dog breeds, training, performance events and responsible dog ownership.
- 21) What is an AKC "parent club"? Every breed of dog recognized by the AKC has a national or parent club of voting members who help make AKC rules and elect AKC directors from the member clubs.
- 22) How many kinds of member clubs does AKC recognize? Eleven. All the breeds of dogs are divided into these member clubs: All-breed, Specialty Obedience, Tracking, Field Trial, Hunting test, Herding, Coonhound, Lure Coursing, Agility, and Earthdog.
- 23) What is a *Breed Rescue Program*? It is an effort by AKC member clubs to find good homes for unwanted or abandoned dogs.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### Chapter 2 continued

- 24) What does the AKC library contain? 16,000 books and famous artwork about dogs.
- 25) Where is the AKC library? At the AKC headquarters in New York City.
- 26) Where are AKC headquarters? In New York City.
- 27) Where is the AKC *Dog Museum of America*? It was originally in New York City, but moved to St. Louis, Missouri in 1987 as an independent museum. In 1995, the *Dog Museum* re-affiliated with the AKC.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 3: "The Sport of Dogs"

#### SKILLATHON QUESTIONS

1) What two categories of dog events does AKC sanction?

ANSWERS: *The Complete Dog Book for Kids*  
AKC Dog Shows &  
AKC Performance Events

2) What do **AKC Dog Shows** judge?

A dog's conformation, how closely its physical structure conforms to the standard of its particular breed.

3) What is a breed standard and who makes it?

A standard is a detailed description of a breed written by the breed's parent club.

4) In judging conformation, what does the judge consider?

- \* the dog's general appearance
- \* head—expression, eyes, ears, skull, muzzle, and bite (the way the teeth come together),
- \* neck, top line and body (including tail),
- \* forequarters,
- \* hindquarters,
- \* coat,
- \* color,
- \* gait (how the dog moves)
- \* temperament

5) AKC Dog Shows have how many levels?

Five.

6) Name the 5 Dog Show levels.

First Level: Classes  
Second Level: Winners and Reserve Winners  
Third Level: Best of Breed, Best of Opposite Sex and Best of Winners  
Fourth Level: Groups  
Fifth Level: Best in Show

7) Describe First Level: Classes.

Dogs are separated by breed, then by gender. Each breed's males and females are then divided into these classes: Puppy, Novice, Bred by Exhibitor, American Bred, and Open.

8A) Describe Second Level: Winners and Reserve Winners.

There are only 3 classes at this level. All winners from First Level Classes go into

- \* Winners class for bitches or
- \* Winners class for dogs.

The top male and female receive points toward their championship titles.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 3 continued

- 8B) How are the Reserve Winners selected?  
The 10 second-place dogs and bitches from First Level Classes compete for male and female Reserve Winners (and championship points).
- 8C) How many points must a canine earn to become a Champion?  
Canines must earn 15 points accumulated over several shows.
- 9) Why are Reserve Winners selected?  
Just in case the Winners Dog or Winners Bitch is disqualified for some reason.
- 10) What are Champion Dogs and Bitches?  
These are canines that have won 15 points at Second Level. They may now compete at Third Level: Best of Breed, Best of Opposite Sex, and Best of Winners.
- 11A) Describe Third Level: Best of Breed, Best of Opposite Sex, and Best of Winners.  
This level is for canines with a champion title. Males and females compete together for the Best of Breed title.  
Two other awards are made as well:  
\* Best of Opposite Sex  
\* Best of Winners
- 11B) How is Best of Opposite Sex chosen?  
This is the canine that is opposite sex of the one that won Best of Breed.
- 11C) How is Best of Winners chosen?  
The judge chooses Best of Winners from the male and female Winners of level two.
- 12) Describe Fourth Level: Groups.  
This class brings together the Best of Breed winners from all the breeds. These are sorted into 7 Groups: Sporting, Hound, Working, Terrier, Toy, Non-Sporting, and Herding. In each group, 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> place is awarded.
- 13A) Describe Fifth Level: Best in Show  
First-place winners in each of the 7 Groups move into Fifth Level: Best in Show.
- 13B) How many canines will compete for Best in Show?  
Seven, one from each of the Fourth Level Groups.
- 14) **AKC Performance Events** include what competitions?  
Obedience Trials, Agility Trials, Tracking, Field Trials and Hunting Tests, Herding, Lure Coursing and Earthdog Tests.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 3 continued

- 15A) Describe the Obedience Trial. You and your dog work as a team to complete a set of exercises which the judge scores.
- 15B) Obedience is divided into what levels?  
Novice—Companion Dog (CD title)  
Open—Companion Dog Excellent (CDX title)  
Utility—Utility Dog (UD title)  
Utility Dog Excellent (UDX title)  
Obedience Trial Champion (OTCh title)
- 16) What 6 exercises are performed in Novice-level Obedience Trials?  
\* Heel on lead  
\* Stand for Examination  
\* Heel Free  
\* Recall  
\* Long Sit  
\* Long Down
- 17) What 7 exercises are performed in Open-level Obedience Trials?  
\* Heel free  
\* Drop on Recall  
\* Retrieve on the flat  
\* Retrieve over the high jump  
\* Broad Jump  
\* Long Sit  
\* Long Down
- 18) What 5 advanced exercises are performed in Utility-level Obedience Trials?  
\* A signal exercise  
\* Two scent-discrimination tests  
\* Directed retrieve  
\* Directed Jumping  
\* Group examination
- 19) What must a dog earn to become an Obedience Trial Champion (OTCh)?  
170 points of 200 points plus score 50% on each exercise in Novice, in Open, and in Utility classes.
- 20) What obstacles are in Agility trials?  
Jumps, weave poles, tunnels, A-frame, tire, dog walk, pause-bench, etc.
- 21) How old must a canine be to enter Agility?  
12 months
- 22) Can any dog be in Agility?  
To participate in AKC Agility, a dog must be purebred and registered with the AKC.
- 23) Can spayed or neutered purebreds participate in AKC Agility?  
Yes, as long as they are registered with the American Kennel Club.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 3 continued

- 24) How are dogs divided in Agility? By size. The smallest dogs show against the smallest dogs, etc.
- 25) What must a dog do to move from one level to another? At each level, a dog must pass the test 3 times under 2 different judges.
- 26) What must a dog do to earn the highest Agility rank? To earn the Master Agility Excellent title, the dog must pass the test at Agility Excellent level 10 times.
- 27) What is required of a dog in the Tracking test? The canine must follow a trail by scent, retrieve the items, and return them to the judge.
- 28) What Tracking tests are used? Tracking Dog (TD), Tracking Dog Excellent (TDX), Variable Service Tracking test (VST), and Champion Tracker.
- 29) What do Field Trials demonstrate? The sporting dog's ability to find game.
- 30) What is the difference between Field Trials and Hunting Tests? In field trials the canines are judged against each other. However, in a hunting test, the Competitors are judged against a standard of performance set up for that particular breed. Field trials are more competitive than hunting tests.
- 31) Name the Field Trial levels and ranks. Field Champion (FC)  
Amateur Field Champion (AFC)
- 32) Name the Hunting Test levels and ranks (titles). Junior Hunter (JH)  
Senior Hunter (SH)  
Master Hunter (MH)
- 33) What sort of canines can compete in field trials and hunting tests? The pointing and retrieving breeds, the spaniels and beagles, Bassett Hounds and Dachshunds.
- 34) The herding program is divided into what two sections? Testing and trial.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### Chapter 3 continued

- 35) At what 2 levels do young dogs begin? \* Less experienced dogs can earn the Herd Testing title (HT) if they show an inborn ability to herd and are trainable.  
\* Dogs that have had some herd training compete for the Pre-Trial Tested or (PT) title.
- 36) At which of the two herding testing levels does the dog actually move a group of animals through a simple course? At the Pre-Tested (PT) hunting level.
- 37) Which is more difficult: herd testing or trial levels? Trial levels are more difficult.
- 38) Name the 4 herd trial levels and their titles.  
Herding Started (HS)  
Herding Intermediate (HI)  
Herding Excellent (HX)  
Herding Championship (HCh)
- 39) How is the competition in Herding Championship different from the previous three levels? Canines herd different kinds of animals, including uncooperative ones, in a variety of settings.
- 40) How is the Herding Championship title earned? Competitors must earn a total of 15 points Moving animals over three different courses.
- 41) What is the purpose of luring courses? Luring courses test the hunting abilities of sight hounds (canines that depend on their eyes rather than their noses to hunt prey).
- 42) How are luring competitions conducted? Canines give chase to artificial bait, usually a plastic bag made to look like a rabbit. It is attached to a mechanical arm that always stays just ahead of the competitors, no matter how fast they run.
- 43) How are the sight hounds judged? In Lure Coursing, sight hounds are judged for overall ability, ability to follow the prey, speed, athletic agility, and endurance.
- 44) Name the 3 levels and titles in Lure Coursing. Junior Courser (JC), Senior Courser (SC), and Field Champion (FC).

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 3 continued

- 45) What are the Earthdog Tests designed to measure? They test the natural hunting abilities of Canines that run their prey "to ground" or into tunnels or burrows.
- 46) What dog breeds are known as earthdogs? Small terriers and Dachshunds.
- 47) From what Latin word does the word terrier come? "terra" which means earth or ground.
- 48) At what competition do earthdogs begin testing? In Introduction to Quarry, no title is Awarded and dogs with no training may participate.
- 49) What does the word "quarry" mean to a hunter? "Quarry" means "the animal being hunted".
- 50) Describe the test for Introduction to Quarry. Two rats, safe in a cage, are placed in a Long, narrow tunnel in the ground. Dogs must find the quarry within 3 minutes and then must show interest in it by digging, growling, or barking at it.
- 51) Name the 3 levels and ranks (titles) for earthdog competition. Junior Earthdog (JE)  
Senior Earthdog (SE)  
Master Earthdog (ME)
- 52) How are titles for **AKC Dog Shows** and **AKC Performance Events** recorded? Titles become part of your dog's AKC record. Titles are added to your dog's registration papers and to its listing in the AKC Registry.
- 53) What 2 titles are given to hunting dogs that are champions in their breed as well as in performance?  
\* The **DC** title (Dual Champion) is awarded a dog that is both a **breed champion** and **field or lure coursing champion**.  
\* The **TC** title (Triple Champion) is awarded a dog that excels in **breed, field or lure coursing** and **obedience**.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 4: "You and Your Dog ? Programs for Kids and Dogs"

#### SKILLATHON QUESTIONS

1) The American Kennel Club offers what what 2 special programs for kids/dogs?

ANSWERS: *The Complete Dog Book for Kids* Junior Showmanship and Canine Good Citizen (CGC).

2) How are Junior Showmanship classes judged?

Junior Championship is judged only on the ability of the exhibitor to handle the dog. Conformation or quality of the dog is not judged.

3) Who can enter Junior Showmanship?

Kids age 10 through 18.

4) Describe the 2 Junior Showmanship classes.

\* Novice (first-time competitors and those who have not qualified for the next level),  
\* Open (juniors who have won 3 first-place wins in Novice).

5) What showman skills are judged in Junior Showmanship?

Proper breed presentation, skill in presenting the individual's dog, knowledge of show ring procedures, and the exhibitor's appearance and conduct.

6) In Junior Showmanship, what are exhibitors asked to do?

\* Move the dog with the rest of the class.  
\* Present the dog in the proper standing position (to use an examining table if the breed is usually judged on one).  
\* Move the dog individually in a regular pattern.

7) What championship class follows the Junior Showmanship classes?

Best Junior Handler.

8) What are key elements of a dog that earns its **CGC** for Canine Good Citizenship?

It gets along with humans and other dogs. It is obedient.

9) What 10 basic manners/conditions does Canine Good Citizenship require of your dog or you?

- 1) Accepting a friendly stranger.
- 2) Sitting politely for petting.
- 3) Tidy appearance and good grooming.
- 4) Walking on a loose lead.
- 5) Walking through a crowd.
- 6) The commands **sit**, **down**, and **stay**.
- 7) Come when called.
- 8) No reaction to another dog.
- 9) No reaction to distractions,
- 10) Behave during supervised separation.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

**CHAPTER 5: "Anatomy and Measuring a Dog"** Trace the dog drawing from Chapter 5 of the *Complete Dog Book for Kids*. Label as many of the parts and pieces of the dog as you can without using your book. Then check your answers. Add any that you did not know and correct the ones you missed. Do this several times on several sheets of paper, until you can point to your own dog and name all its parts correctly.

ANSWER CHOICES: *The Complete Dog Book for Kids*

Crest	Hip	Muzzle	Skull	Withers
Back	Digits	Lip	Point of Rump	Stifle or knee
Brisket	Elbow	Loin	Point of Shoulder	Stop
Carpus or wrist	Flew	Metacarpus or pastern		Tarsus or hock
Cheek	Forearm	Metatarsus	Shoulder	

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

**CHAPTER 5: "Anatomy and Measuring a Dog"** Trace the skeleton drawing of the dog from Chapter 5 *The Complete Dog Book for Kids*. Label as many of the bones of the dog as you can without using your book. Then check your answers. Add any that you did not know and correct the ones you missed. Do this several times on several sheets of paper. Feel your own dog's skeleton beneath its skin and name its bones.

ANSWER CHOICES: *The Complete Dog Book for Kids*

Atlas

Axis

Carpus

Cervical Vertebrae

Eye Socket or Orbit

Femur

Fibula

Humerus

Lumbar Vertebrae

Metacarpus or pastern

Metatarsus

Pelvis

Radius

Ribs

Shoulder Blade or Scapula

Tarsus or Hock

Tibia

Thoracic Vertebrae

Occiput

Ulna

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 5: "Anatomy and Measuring a Dog"

#### SKILLATHON QUESTIONS

1) Why is height and length important in a purebred dog?

ANSWERS: *The Complete Dog Book for Kids*

It is a disqualifying fault for a dog to be taller or longer than the breed standard.

2) What is a "wicket"?

The measuring device a judge uses to check the height and length of dogs.

3) How long and how tall is your dog?

\_\_\_\_\_ " length ; \_\_\_\_\_ " height

Trace the dog for "Measuring Height and Length" from Chapter 5 *The Complete Dog Book for Kids*. Using a rule and pencil, mark the standards for measurement. Do this several times, if necessary. Then find these measurement places on your own dog.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 6: "Basic Health Concerns"

#### SKILLATHON QUESTIONS

1) Describe healthy skin (on a dog).

ANSWERS: *The Complete Dog Book for Kids*  
Flexible, smooth, without scabs, growths, white flakes, or red areas.

2) What colors may a dog's skin be?

Pale pink to brown or black; may be spotted.

3) What is "black dirt" on a dog?

Flea droppings; an indicator that your dog has fleas.

4) Describe a healthy dog's coat.

Glossy and pliable whether short or long; no dandruff, bald spots, or excessive oiliness.

5) Describe a healthy dog's eyes.

\*Bright and shiny. Mucus or watery tears are clear and minimal (not much of it).  
\* Pink lining of eye not irritated, swollen or having a yellow discharge.  
\* Whites of eyes should not be yellowish.  
\* Eyelashes should not rub the eyeball.

6) Describe a healthy dog's ears.

\* The ear skin is light pink and clean.  
\* Some yellowish/brown wax will appear and should be removed.  
\* No redness, heat or swelling in the ear or on the flap.  
\* Dog should not shake head or scratch ears.

7) Is a healthy dog's nose always cool and moist?

No. It may also be warm and dry at times.

8) What colors may a dog's nose be?

Black, pink, or self-colored (same color as hair coat). Most breeders fault a parti-colored nose).

9) How does a nose indicate a sick dog?

When the liquid coming out is not clear, but yellowish, thick and bubbly, or foul smelling.

10) What colors may a dog's gums be?

Pink, black or spotted like the dog's skin.

11) Describe healthy gums in a dog.

Firm; not red or inflamed.

12) How do healthy dog teeth look?

Young dogs have smooth white teeth that tend to darken to yellow with age.

13) What are the indicators of tooth disease?

Look for soft white matter or hard white yellow, or brown matter stuck to the teeth or gums. Plaque & tartar should be removed.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 6 continued

- 14) How many teeth does a puppy have? 23 baby teeth
- 15) How many teeth does an adult dog have? 42 permanent teeth, depending on the breed.
- 16) Should a dog have an extra row of teeth behind his teeth? No. This is a genetic fault. You can have these pulled by a veterinarian if they interfere with the dog's "bite" (the way his teeth meet).
- 17) The human body temperature is 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit. What is a dog's temperature? A dog's temperature ranges between 101 to 102.5 degrees Fahrenheit.
- 18) How does an adult "take" a dog's temperature? By using a rectal thermometer. Tie a string to the glass loop on the end so you don't lose it when you place it inside the dog up under his tail. Wipe it with petroleum jelly before inserting it. Leave it in for 3 minutes. Wipe it clean to read it.
- 19) How many times a minute does a dog's heart beat? Because dogs vary in size, heartbeats differ. A healthy heart, then, will be as slow as 50 beats per minute in large dogs in peak condition and as fast as 150 beats a minute for very small dogs. Puppies also have a faster heartbeat than adult dogs.
- 20) How do you check the heartbeat? Place your fingertips over the left side of the dog's chest. Feel for the steady thumping. Use a watch with a minute hand and count the beats for one minute.
- 21) How do you check the pulse rate? Place your fingertips inside the top of the hind leg. The pulse should be the same as the heartbeat unless there is some sort of blockage in the blood vessels.
- 22) How often does a dog have a bowel movement? One or two times a day, usually after eating.
- 23) Why should you check a dog's poop? A healthy "stool" or bowel movement is brown and firm. If your dog's stool is watery and reddish, your dog could very ill. If your dog strains when pooping, it may be constipated. Call your veterinarian.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 6 continued

- 24) Why should you know how much your dog urinates?
- Too much or too little urination can be a sign of kidney problems.
- 25) How can you tell if your dog is overweight?
- Feel the rib-cage area. If there is a bit of padding over the bones, your dog has excess fat. Look at the dog from above. Is the area over his ribs and down the back lean or does it bulge? Bulge is fat.
- 26) How often should you brush a dog?
- Several times a week is adequate, but daily is better.
- 27) How should you brush the coat?
- Brush the coat flat, toward the dog's tail. Then brush the coat backward toward the head. Brush the coat once more toward the tail.
- 28) What kind a grooming tools should be used on a dog?
- Longhaired dogs need a brush with "pins" instead of bristles. Bristles pull out the long hair needed for show and for protection. Round-tipped pins made of metal are gentle on long hair. Other tools include slicker brushes that remove mats and dead hair, curry combs to polish smooth coated dogs. Clippers, stripping knives and hair dryers are also standard tools for grooming your dog.
- 29) How do you get sticky stuff or gunk out of your dog's hair?
- For mud, salt, tree sap, burrs, and paint apply mineral or vegetable oil to the spot for 24 hours. Then wash with soap and water. Or clip the tangled air.
- 30) Why should you NEVER use paint thinner or gasoline on a dog?
- These chemicals are extremely harmful to your dog's health. They cause severe burns.
- 31) How often should you bathe a dog?
- Frequent washing removes natural oil from the skin and hair, leaving the dog dry and itchy. When necessary (once a month if necessary), or before a dog show, wash your dog. It is very important to remove all the soap from its skin and hair! Use only shampoo that is pH-balanced for dogs.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 6 continued

- 32) How do you bathe a dog?
- Choose a shampoo formulated for dogs. Place cotton in the dog's ears and a drop or two of mineral oil in its eyes. Use warm water, not hot. Apply shampoo to the neck and work it back toward the tail. Work it into a lather. Be sure to wash where the legs attach to the body, as well as under and over the tail. Rinse thoroughly as leftover soap can irritate the dog's skin when dry. Towel dry and blow dry the dog. Brushing helps.
- 33) Why should you trim a dog's toenails?
- If your dog lives in the house or kennel, it might not get enough exercise to wear down toe nails. Long nails can curl and grow into the footpad.
- 34) How do you know if your dog's toenails are too long?
- If you hear them clicking on the floor as the dog walks.
- 35) How should you trim a dog's nails?
- Length is important. Trim the nail so that it just clears the floor. Trim just the end before the "quick" or blood supply. Clip the hook part of the nail.
- 36) What should you do if you cut the nail into the quick and the dog bleeds?
- Avoid doing so, but if you do cut into the quick, stop the bleeding with a styptic pencil. (It is usually part of a man's shaving kit.)
- 37) What is the safe way to clean a dog's ears?
- Clean a dog's ears at least once a month and more often if the dog has drooping ears. Use a damp towel or cotton swab soaked in mineral oil. Clean only the outer ear. Never push the wax back down into the ear canal. Your dog may need the ear hair plucked to keep air circulating and infections down.
- 38) How are the eyes of a dog safely cleaned?
- Avoid using irritating substances in the eyes. Use a cotton ball moistened with water. Check the eye pockets for grass seeds if the eyes appear irritated. Your vet may need to help remove debris that is too deep into the eye pockets.
- 39) Should you use human toothpaste on a dog's teeth and gums?
- No.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 6 continued

- 40) Describe how to keep a dog's teeth Clean.  
Use a special toothpaste formulated for dogs. Make sure he gets crunchy foods and treats that help clean his teeth. If the tartar or plaque is severe, a veterinarian should remove it as it will rot the teeth and cause gum disease.
- 41) What if your dog won't let you brush his teeth?  
Try rubbing his teeth and gums with his toothpaste on your finger. It is usually chicken or beef-flavored. Put some on your finger and allow him to lick it off. Put some on the toothbrush and allow him to lick it off. You should be able to gently brush his teeth the first time or two. Then you can scrub them as normal.
- 42) Why does a dog rub its bottom on the ground or on the rug?  
Either it has worms, is constipated, or most likely, it has impacted anal sacs.
- 43) What are anal sacs?  
These are glands that mark your dog's bowel movement with scent. These glands also express themselves when the dog is frightened, angry or fighting.
- 44) What do you do if the glands are impacted, causing the dog to rub its bottom on the rug?  
Your veterinarian must "express" these glands by causing them to let out the scent. It is a messy, stinky job. Usually only the male dog has this kind of trouble.
- 45) Why should you feed dry, kibbled dog food instead of soft or canned?  
Dry chunks clean the teeth and exercise the chewing muscles. The dog's stools will be firm and easier to clean up. Semi-moist dog food is missing some nutritional value found in dry and canned dog food.
- 46) Who needs more calories: a puppy or a mature dog?  
The puppy.
- 47) Why should you feed a puppy puppy food and an adult dog dog food?  
Each food is formulated to meet the nutritional needs of that animal. Adult dogs get too fat on puppy food. A puppy's growth can be stunted by regular dog food.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 6 continued

- 48) How often should you feed a dog or puppy?
- Puppies under 6 months should get 3-4 meals a day because they are growing rapidly and the stomach is small. After 6 months, feed a puppy 2-3 meals a day until it is 1 year old. Most adult dogs do well on 2 feedings a day.
- 49) Why is fresh water important to a dog's health?
- Cool, fresh water should be available AT ALL TIMES because a dog's slobber can cause bacteria to grow in the water he drinks. Fouled water can make a dog sick and can contaminate the owner's environment as well. Without adequate water, the dog's health will suffer; it may dehydrate and die or suffer kidney failure.
- 50) Should you feed your dog table scraps?
- No. It makes the dog fat. It causes an imbalance in the essential nutrients a dog needs. Your dog CAN be fed vegetables and fruits on a moderate basis. Too much can cause diarrhea.
- 51) What foods should you NEVER give a dog?
- \*Chocolate is toxic to a dog; it can kill him.
  - \*Tomatoes upset and cause diarrhea.
  - \*Chicken pork and deer bones splinter easily and will puncture a throat or stomach. Large, hard bones like beef joints or knuckles are good if parboiled to kill parasites that live in them.
  - \*A dog should not be allowed to "eat" bones, only chew on them.
- 52) What chemical in chocolate is toxic to dogs?
- Theobromine

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 7: "Preventive Care"

#### SKILLATHON QUESTIONS

- 1) What are parasites? **ANSWERS:** *The Complete Dog Book for Kids*  
Parasites are creatures (visible or microscopic) that survive by feasting on another living animal.
- 2) What kinds of parasites does a dog have? Internal and external.
- 3) What are some of the external parasites? Fleas and ticks, and mites that cause various types of mange or skin irritations.
- 4) Name some of the internal parasites common to dogs and puppies. Worms: hookworms, roundworms, pinworms, tapeworms, whipworms and heartworms.
- 5) How serious are worms? They can kill a puppy in a day. Dogs might tolerate worms longer, but eventually, they too will die.
- 6) How often should you worm a dog or puppy. Your veterinarian can determine that. Dogs need only be treated when eggs show up in the stools. Puppies need regular worming.
- 7) How are typical worms spread? You may live in an area that has a high infestation in the dirt. Neighbor's dogs shed eggs in their feces that your dog can pickup through the pads of his feet.
- 8) How are heartworms different from the other worm parasites? Heartworms are spread by mosquitoes. The microscopic larvae travel in the blood to the heart where they grow into worms up to 12 inches long. These clog the dog's heart and cause him to die a very painful death.
- 9) How are heartworms treated? The trick is to prevent heartworms because once your dog has them, he could easily die from the treatment that kills the heartworms. Heartworm preventive tablets, liquid or shots are available.
- 10) Why are external parasites dangerous? They can rob your dog of good health, kill him and even kill you. Fleas can cause hair loss from intense scratching, skin infections, allergic reactions and worms (tapeworms). Ticks carry Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, Lyme Disease and other diseases harmful to you and your dog.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 7 continued

- 11) How are lice, mites and mange harmful? These microscopic organisms feed on your dog's skin, causing extreme itching and infection from scratching. Lice live in the hair. Ear mites are found in the ear canals. Scabies (which attack people, too) affect the ears, elbows, legs and face. Demodectic Mange causes hair loss around the forehead, eyes, muzzle, forepaws. A mite that causes "walking dandruff" lives on a dog's head, neck, back.
- 12) How are external parasites treated?
- \* Flea combs are good for occasional fleas on a regularly-treated house pet. Dips and drops are also effective against fleas and ticks.
  - \* Remove ticks with rubber gloves that prevent your being contaminated by tick body fluid. Avoid leaving the tick head in the dog's skin.
  - \* Special body dips are needed to treat mange and some mites.
  - \* Ear oil can kill ear mites.
- 13) How do you give medicine to a dog? Put it in his food. If he won't eat it, open the mouth by squeezing gently the upper lips against the teeth. When the dog's mouth opens, pop the pill or liquid to the back of the throat. Or push it down the throat with a finger or thumb. Hold the mouth shut and blow once into the dog's nose, and/or stroke the throat area to encourage the dog to swallow.
- 14) Why should you have a female dog spayed?
- \* So she won't come into heat 2-3 times/year
  - \* So she won't have to be penned up to keep unwanted male dogs from mating with her.
  - \* So your show schedule won't be sidelined while you wait for a week or so for the heat to pass.
  - \* So your dog's health won't be ruined by having puppies too soon in life or too often.
  - \* To avoid common uterine infections and mammary cancers that kill many female dogs.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 7 continued

15) Why should you have a male dog neutered?

- \* To reduce his tendency to roam.
- \* To lessen his aggressive tendencies as he matures.
- \* He will be less susceptible to prostate cancer (which kills many dogs in America).

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 8: "Illness and First Aid"

#### SKILLATHON QUESTIONS

1) How can you tell if something is physically wrong with your dog?

ANSWERS: *The Complete Dog Book for Kids*  
Only by being around your dog enough to know what "normal" is, will you then be able to tell when your dog is not feeling well. Sometimes it is not clear that something is seriously wrong with a dog until it is too late. The first sign is that the dog is not his usual self: like an active dog that becomes listless and quiet, or a quiet family pet that becomes easily agitated or restless.

2) What are "congenital disorders"?

These are defects that a dog is born with, such as a damaged heart. Another name for congenital disorder is "hereditary defect" or "genetic fault". (See CHAPTER 1: Question #15).

3) What is the American Kennel Club doing about congenital disorders?

The AKC has launched the *Canine Genome Project* which is an attempt to map the DNA molecule in dogs. This molecule is what determines heredity: what a dog looks like, its personality, whether it will be healthy or sickly.

4) What is the goal of the AKC's *Canine Genome Project*?

To eliminate genetic faults that cause health problems in purebred dogs.

5) Name warning signs of serious illness in a dog.

- \* Vomiting, diarrhea, excessive urination for more than 12 hours.
- \* Fainting.
- \* Loss of balance, staggering, or falling.
- \* Constipation or straining to urinate.
- \* Runny eyes or nose.
- \* Persistent scratching of eyes and ears.
- \* Thick discharge from eyes, ears, nose or sores.
- \* Coughing or sneezing.
- \* Breathing difficulty, prolonged panting.
- \* Shivering.
- \* Whining for no apparent reason.
- \* Loss of appetite for 24 hours or more.
- \* Weight loss.
- \* Dramatic increase in appetite for 24 hour or more.
- \* Increased restlessness.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 8 continued

5) continued

- \* Excessive sleeping or unusual lack of activity.
- \* Limping, holding or protecting body part.
- \* Excessive thirst for water; excessive drinking of water.

---

NOTE: MANY OF THE SYMPTOMS AND HEALTH PROBLEMS IN THIS CHAPTER HAVE BEEN MENTIONED IN OTHER CHAPTERS. SO FOCUS ON DEFINITE CLUES PER HEALTH PROBLEM RATHER THAN MANY THAT COULD BE SYMPTOMS OF MORE THAN ONE PROBLEM.

---

- 6) Name symptoms of skin problems in dogs. Lumps, bumps and swellings (See also Chapter 7: Questions #3, 10-11)
- 7) Name symptoms of Respiratory problems. Any breathing difficulty, coughing, sneezing. Abnormal chest sounds like gasping or wheezing or rattling breath; voice change.
- 8) Name symptoms of problems in the head area of the dog.
- \* Eye symptoms not previously mentioned: fluttering irises, cloudy pupil, sensitivity to light (squinting), loss of vision.
  - \* Ear symptoms not already mentions: tilting the head, head shaking, hearing loss, loss of balance.
  - \* Nose symptoms—already mentioned.
  - \* Mouth and throat symptoms not mentioned include excessive drooling; swollen lips, mouth, tongue or throat; bad breath, growths, bleeding, difficulty swallowing, gagging.
- 9) Name musculo-skeletal problems. Limping, weakness, pain, stiffness, abnormal walking or running, joint swelling.
- 10) Name symptoms of heart problems. Coughing or shortness of breath, lethargy and weakness, fainting, weight loss, poor growth in young dogs, bluish/pale gums, swollen legs or abdomen, irregular or rapid heartbeat, vibrations over the area of the heart.
- 11) Name symptoms of gastrointestinal problems in dogs. Vomiting, diarrhea, blood or mucus in the stools, constipation, straining, swollen abdomen, excessive gas, unusual drooling, bad coat, jaundice (yellowing of skin and whites of eyes), white, black or tar-like stools.

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 8 continued

- 12) Name symptoms of nervous system problems.  
Seizures, sudden strange actions, sudden changes in personality, lack of coordination, falling, weakness, dragging back legs, paralysis.
- 13) Name some symptoms of urinary tract problems.  
Excessive drinking of water and urination. Straining to urinate, pus or blood in the urine, hunching-up (in pain), weight or appetite loss.
- 14) What can a child do to be prepared for emergencies and First Aid treatment of a dog?  
Dogs in pain will bite. Be very cautious about trying to help an injured dog. Alert your parent that something is wrong. Your parent may need to muzzle the dog. If you don't have a dog muzzle, then use rope or use a piece of panty hose. Wrap a 2-foot piece around the muzzle and knot it under the chin. Then tie the ends behind the head. Call or take the dog to the veterinarian.
- 15) What is a safe way to transport an injured or unconscious dog?  
On a piece of plywood so that you don't do more damage to the dog.
- 16) How do you give artificial respiration  
If the dog stops breathing, you should hold his mouth closed. Then cup your hand around his nose so that when you exhale into his nose, most of the air does not escape. Exhale gently into his nose. Don't blow hard or you will burst his lungs. Repeat every 5-6 seconds until the vet arrives.
- 17) How does one keep a dog's heart beating?  
Lay the dog on its side. Place your hands over the area of the heart and press firmly about 70 times a minute. Don't press too hard or you will break the ribs and puncture a lung. In small dogs, place a hand on each side of the chest and gently press your hands together.
- 18) How can you stop external bleeding in a dog?  
Apply gentle pressure with a cloth, bandage, or whatever is close by.—even your own hand. When the bleeding stops, consider cleaning the wound if a vet is not available. Antibiotics are useful to ward off infection.
- 19) How can you treat internal bleeding in a dog?  
To recognize that a dog IS bleeding internally is the first step. His abdomen will swell or be painful. His gums will be pale, whitish -not

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 8 continued

19) continued

healthy pink. If he vomits blood or there is blood in the urine, stools, saliva, or nose discharge, the dog is bleeding internally. If you do not get the dog to a veterinarian, it will die.

20) What can you do if your dog goes into shock?

Most dogs that die after being struck by a car, die of shock and not the actual injury. The signs are depression, rapid and weak heartbeat, dilated pupils, lowered body temperature, and muscle weakness. Untreated shock can quickly lead to unconsciousness and death. Cover the dog and keep it warm. Stop whatever bleeding is going on. Take the dog to the vet immediately.

21) How should handle a dog with a fractured bone?

Very carefully! The dog is in extreme pain and will bite unless muzzled. A board is a good to transport the dog, especially if the ribs are broken. You must not puncture the lungs! Lay the dog someplace flat in your car and drive to the vet's immediately. To leave a broken bone to heal itself will usually result in a crippled dog that suffers most of its life.

22) Name some common emergencies in dog health.

Heatstroke, vomiting or diarrhea from upset stomach, injury from dogfights, seizures, poisoning.

23) What can you do if your dog has eaten or drunk something poisonous?

Time is critical; get the dog to the vet immediately! Bring the label or can of the poison, if possible.

24) Name items in your garage that are poisonous to a dog.

Insecticides and parasite medications, rat poisons and slug bait; acids, alkalis and petroleum products; antifreeze that leaks out of parked cars; paint, tar and grease that gets on the animals skin; burns.

25) Name household items that are poisonous to dogs.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol, Daytril, etc.), bleach, boric acid, cleaning fluid, deodorants, deodorizers, detergents, disinfectants, drain cleaner, furniture polish, gasoline, hair coloring, weed killer, kerosene, matches, mothballs, nail polish and remover,

## 4-H SKILLATHON STUDY GUIDE

### CHAPTER 8 continued

25) continued

prescription medicine, rubbing alcohol, shoe polish, sleeping pills, turpentine, windshield-wiper fluid and some household plants.

26) What should you have in a dog's First Aid Kit?

Tweezers, scissors, nail clippers, soft tape or rope for a muzzle, bandage, adhesive tape, Gauze pads, antiseptic, cotton balls, antacid, flea spray, dog shampoo, pediatric electrolytic solution, meat tenderizer for insect & jellyfish stings), antihistamine tablets, hydrogen peroxide, charcoal tablets, small jar with lid for urine or stool sample, ear drops and eye drops, medication prescribed by the vet.

---

CHAPTER 9 is about training your dog. You should review *The Complete Dog Book for Kids* and your 4-H club's dog training material.

---

**IMPORTANT: STUDY and LEARN THE DEFINITIONS IN THE BACK OF THE BOOK. Knowing them is more important than memorizing them. You should be able to tell other people what each word means. Look at yourself in the mirror and tell yourself what each word means.**

NOTE: THE STATE 4-H DOG SHOW IS, BY TRADITION, THE FIRST SATURDAY IN DECEMBER.