

# 5 Freedoms

**Grade level:** 4-6<sup>th</sup> grade

**Character Concepts Taught:**  
Responsibility and Empathy

**Common Core Standards Taught:**  
English Language Arts: Reading, Speaking and Listening  
Science: Asking questions, problem solving, life science  
Health Science: Nutrition and wellness

**Objectives:**

1. Students will understand what the 5 Freedoms are and will be able to list them.
2. Students will apply the 5 Freedoms to a pet or a zoo animal

**Materials Needed:**

- Copies of the Five Freedoms poster
- Animal facts sheets
- Poster board (optional)
- Craft supplies (optional)
- Question Sheet

## Lesson Procedure

**Opening:**

Ask students to give you examples of things they need to be happy and healthy (food, water, shelter, love, medical care, exercise, etc.) Write their answers down on a piece of chart paper or on a classroom chalkboard or whiteboard. After students have covered all the basic responses, ask them the following:

- What does a pet need to be happy and healthy? (Circle all the items on the list that they have in common with people.)
- Are pets able to get themselves everything they need to be happy and healthy?
- In what ways do pets need our help?

**Body:**

Explain to students that there are 5 things every animal deserves to be happy and healthy; these 5 things are called the 5 Freedoms.

Go over the 5 Freedoms with students, giving them each a copy of the 5 Freedoms poster:

## **The Five Freedoms**

The 5 freedoms are a set of standards or rules used around the world to help guide the way we care for animals in farms, zoos, and in our homes. They outline what we, as responsible pet owners, must provide. They are not just things we want to do for our animals, but things we must do in order to keep our animals healthy and happy. The Five Freedoms are listed below with modifications for younger students in italics:

**Freedom from hunger and thirst:** by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigor. Every animal must always have access to clean, fresh water. A sufficient amount of food must be provided to keep your pet in good health and at a healthy weight. The CORRECT food for that species must be given.

*Freedom from being hungry and thirsty by giving them food and water.*

**Freedom from discomfort:** by providing an appropriate environment, including shelter and a comfortable resting area. Having an appropriate shelter for your pet is very important. If you are caring for an animal that lives outdoors, the shelter you provide must be weatherproof, free from drafts, wind, rain and excessive heat from the sun. Dogs must be able to stand up and comfortably be able to turn around in their kennel. Small animals must have enough space to play without feeling confined. Make sure your pet has a warm, comfortable place to live.

*Freedom from being uncomfortable by giving them a comfortable place to live.*

**Freedom from pain, injury or disease:** by prevention through rapid diagnosis and treatment. It is very important to know signs of illness in your pet. The number one sign of illness in animals is acting lethargic, tired or sluggish. Another way to help your pet is by keeping their environment clean and free from any hazards that might cause injury. The more time you spend getting to know your pets, the easier it is to determine when they aren't acting quite like themselves.

*Freedom from pain and disease by giving them vet care.*

**Freedom to express normal behavior:** by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind. Knowing what behaviors and instincts that species of animal exhibits is important in order to give the animal a habitat that will allow him to express those natural behaviors.

Knowing your pet's normal behavior comes easily when you give her/him a lot of attention and spend lots of quality time with her/him. Just like people, animals can get bored and lonely. Providing things like a cat tree for your cat to climb or access

to a window to watch the birds would be a great example of this freedom. Toys are also a great way to keep your pet mentally stimulated!

*Freedom to act like they want to by giving them toys to play with.*

**Freedom from fear and distress:** by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering. All animals deserve to be happy, so give them lots of love. Ensuring conditions that avoid unnecessary anxiety and stress will help to provide freedom from mental suffering. Remember, you mean the world to your pets, always strive to make them feel as special as they make you feel!

Activity:

1. Split kids into 5 groups.
2. Assign each group a different freedom and an animal fact sheet.
3. Ask students to come up with ways that a zoo would give an animal their assigned freedom. Give them the question sheet as a guideline.
4. Students can write up a plan, create a story, make a diorama or a drawing.
5. Each group will present its freedom to the rest of the class.
6. Go over the "Why Wild Animals Don't Make Good Pets" flyer. Don't read it out loud, but have a discussion with them as to the content in the flyer