

## Module 2

# How are guide dogs trained?



## Lesson plan

### UK Curriculum links

English, PSHE, Personal development and wellbeing

### Aim:

To explain the stages in the life of a guide dog in training.

### Objectives:

To recap on what is known about the role of the guide dog and understand the rigorous training involved.

### Learning Outcomes:

Most children will be able to describe some stages of a guide dog's training. Others will be able to develop a guide showing all the stages in the development. Some will create their own blog highlighting specific experiences, thoughts and feelings.

### Teacher/ Leader Notes:

There are various videos available on our You Tube Channel Guide Dogs UK "The Life of Guide Dogs" video is used in this lesson plan, it is available via a link on the learning page.

### Resources:

You will need access to the internet for the You Tube Video

Resource sheet and cut-out statements - The stages of training a guide dog

Resource sheet – Application to become a guide dog

A copy of Our (guide dog) Breeds

### Key Vocabulary:

Puppy walker, training, qualities, volunteer

### Further Learning:

Make Sense our STEM pack gives young people an insight into the senses of people and dogs. It has lesson plans on sight loss awareness and sensory play activities, available as a download from [www.guidedogs.org.uk/learning](http://www.guidedogs.org.uk/learning)

## Introduction

Explain that a guide dog needs to have very special training to do his/her job to the high standards required. It starts when they are very young. Show the video "The Life of Guide Dogs"

**There are plenty of opportunities to pause here, the video has been broken down into 5 parts, you can use the prompt questions to promote discussion at the end of each section.**

## The life of guide dogs

<https://youtu.be/AHXMePThvgw>

- How does Retinitis pigmentosa affect sight? NB A couple of kitchen roll inners glued together can give the group a basic example of tunnel vision.
- How do guide dogs help their owners?

## Guide dog puppies

- What happened when the puppies were six to eight weeks old?
- What is the volunteer who looks after the pup known as?
- What sort of things are the puppies introduced to? Why are these important?

## Guide dogs in training

- What colour harness do the dogs wear at the Guide Dog Training School?
- What do the dogs do when they reach an obstacle?
- How are the dogs rewarded when they get things right?

## Matching the dog with their owner

- What forms of transport does Chad need to be able to go on?
- Where does Chad take Dave to every day?
- How long did Chad and Dave train together for?

## When a guide dog retires - optional

- What did Quince do before he retired?
- Why did Quince retire?

## Class Activity

### The Stages of Training A Guide Dog

Use the pre-cut-out activity cards (from the resource sheet) and mix them up, ask eight children to come forward to read aloud a card each. Encourage the group of eight to put themselves in order of a guide dog's timeline from birth to becoming a guide dog, with help from the whole group/ class.

As you go through each card there are additional questions and answers in the teacher/ leader version to ask the whole group/ class.

[www.guidedogs.org.uk](http://www.guidedogs.org.uk)

## Activity Idea 1

### What is a volunteer?

**The puppy walkers are volunteers. Ask children to work in groups. What do they think being a volunteer means; write a definition in their own words.**

Can they think about times they have volunteered to do something either at home or at school and make a list? Can they describe the feelings that are attached to volunteering? Make a list. Share definitions and discuss feelings together.

## Activity Idea 2

### Guide dog's training process

**Children prepare a guide using numbered bullet points and headers to show the progress of a guide dog's training process.**

They could develop this as a concertina style book. Encourage them to refer back to the video and class activity for support.

## Activity Idea 3

### Application to become a guide dog

**Ask children to imagine that The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association are looking for a puppy to train as a guide dog, encourage them to think back to the video and class activity for the qualities needed for a guide dog.**

Ask children to imagine that they are a puppy and ask them to fill in Resource sheet – application to become a guide dog. This is a simple job application form. They should first of all come up and choose the dog they would like to be (from Our Breeds poster) and write this information along with their name. They should then go on to describe themselves and explain why they should be considered for this important job. They should write about the things they are already good at e.g. listening carefully to commands, being patient, brave etc.

## Plenary

### Training timeline

**Plot a timeline together showing the training process of a guide dog, step by step.**

## Home Activity

### Puppy walker diary

**Ask children to imagine they are one of the puppy walkers and write a diary about a recent experience, they and the guide dog have experienced - this might be a day at the seaside or travelling on a bus or train.**

(Explain that it is always easier and more relevant to write from personal experiences so if they never use public transport they should choose something that they are more familiar with.)