

NLC Literacy & English Learning at Home

First Level Stage 4

Friendship In Action

Dutiful Dogs

Dogs have lived and worked with people for over 12,000 years. Gradually, as dogs have become domesticated people have trained them to help with different tasks.

Some types of dogs are bred for certain abilities. The patient, friendly Labrador makes a very good "seeing-eye" dog.

Huskies can cope very well in cold weather, and sheepdogs learn very quickly to herd and steer sheep.

The Beagle Brigade

Colvin Brannaka is an expert dog trainer. In just 12 weeks, he can train beagles to inspect baggage for foods that are not allowed to come into a country.

Beagles are ideal for this work because they have an excellent sense of smell and a quiet and friendly nature. They work very well with people and inspect luggage without upsetting the traveller.

The beagles are so well trained they can sniff out the difference between food that is harmful and food that is not. They can sniff out oranges that might carry pests, but ignore orange juice which does not.

The Beagle Training School

In an interview, Colvin Brannaka explained how he trains his beagles and the "detective teams" who handle them.

At what age are the puppies ready to start training?

I begin to train the puppies when they are 49 days old. At this age they are ready to cope with learning.

Are all beagle puppies suitable for training?

No. Only about 40% have the right qualities to learn really fast. I choose the right qualities to learn really fast. I choose the right puppies by watching how they behave in a variety of new situations.

How do you manage to train them in just 12 weeks?

By choosing the right learning activities, at the right learning pace, with the right rewards. The beagles learn to sniff out one food at a time so they don't get the 20 food scents mixed up.

Is it difficult to choose the right people to train as dog handlers?

- Yes. The beagles and their handlers will have to work together for 6 years so I choose people who will be enthusiastic about doing this work for that length of time

Read, Think and Talk

1. Carefully **read** over the passage. Discuss the sentences and phrases that
 - Tell the reader how dogs can help us.

Talk for 1 or 2 minutes to someone on how dogs can help us.

Discuss what was good about your talk and how it could be improved.

2. **Find** the following words in the text and read the sentences surrounding them

- **gradually**
- **luggage**
- **pace**

Talk about other words which have the same meaning and **note** down your suggestions.

Look for other words in your thesaurus which mean the same and note down some of these.

Think, Talk and Write

3. **Read** the text extract again from the beginning and discuss the author's style i.e. the choice of language, content, sentence structure and tone used to tell the story.

Talk to someone about your ideas for the next part of the story.

Write what you think could be the next part (not more than a few paragraphs).

Read, Check, Edit and Correct

4. **Read** the passage below with someone. Copy the passage and with a **red** pen/pencil, correct any mistakes you see. When you are finished, check the answer sheet.

for people in weelchairs horse-riding can be a very satisfying eperience organizations such as riding for the disabled asociation (rda) have voluntears who share their time and equestrian knowledge with people who have disabilities

Find

- 8 capital letter
- 2 full stops
- 2 commas
- 6 spelling mistakes