

Muse®

A Little Help

Sharing is an essential component of social living in many species. Scientists have discovered that many individuals will act to benefit another member of their species despite the risk it may pose to themselves. This issue of MUSE explores the personality characteristics and natural instincts that make a person or animal go out of its way to help others.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

What factors contribute to prosocial behaviors?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn how Sam Oliner's childhood influenced his decision to become a social scientist.
- Students will learn how chimpanzees show prosocial behaviors.
- Students will learn the different ways dogs can help as therapy dogs.
- Students will compare and contrast social behaviors.
- Students will identify patterns.
- Students will collect evidence to support a claim.
- Students will construct explanations.
- Students will create and conduct an interview.
- Students will use a mathematical process to determine percentages.
- Students will participate in a philanthropic activity.
- Students will record information from different sources.



In addition to supplemental materials focused on core STEM skills, this flexible teaching tool offers vocabulary-building activities, questions for discussion, and cross-curricular activities.

SELECTIONS

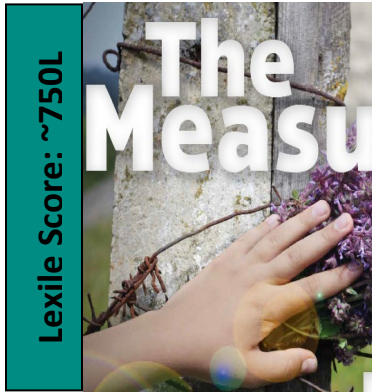
- **The Measure of a Hero**
Expository Nonfiction, ~750L
- **Lending a Hairy Hand**
Expository Nonfiction, ~950L
- **A Perfect Match**
Expository Nonfiction, ~750L

Muse® Teacher Guide: May/June 2024

The Measure of a Hero

pp. 10–15, Expository Nonfiction

Use this article about what makes people altruistic to teach how social scientists look for patterns in data.



RESOURCES

Compare and Contrast:
Creating Kindness

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn how Sam Oliner’s childhood influenced his decision to become a social scientist.
- Students will compare and contrast social behaviors.
- Students will identify patterns.
- Students will create and conduct an interview.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **barbarism** (p. 13) cruel and violent behavior
- **statistical evidence** (p. 13) patterns in collected data used to explain results in a study
- **methodology** (p. 14) a procedure or set of procedures

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What factors contribute to prosocial behaviors?

Ask students to think of a situation when someone asked them for help. How did they feel? Did they want to do it? Did they help or refuse to help? Explain that people react differently depending on personal risk and desire to help others. Introduce the article, “The Measure of a Hero,” and tell students that in this article a social scientist has personal reasons to study why some people go to great lengths and personal risk to help others.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Post and discuss the three vocabulary words and definitions. Have students Think-Pair-Share with a partner. Give them the following directives, one at a time:

- Discuss acts of social **barbarism** throughout history.
- Why is **statistical evidence** gathered in sports?
- Why is it important to follow a **methodology** in math and science?

READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the article and then lead a class discussion based on the following prompts:

1. How did Sam survive the wrath of the Nazi forces?
2. What question drove Sam to devote his life’s work to social science?
3. Describe how the work of social scientists differs from that of traditional laboratory scientists.
4. What subject does Sam Oliner think needs to be added to school curricula? Do you think this is a good idea?

SKILL FOCUS: Identify Patterns

INSTRUCT: Students will compare and contrast the early experiences of rescuers, in-betweeners, and bystanders. Discuss the elements on the graphic organizer, *Creating Kindness*. Instruct pairs of students to revisit the text and to underline information that will be helpful for completing the worksheet. Have partners record the data on the chart, but instruct them to complete the THINK TANK assignment independently.

ASSESS: Meet with small groups and have students discuss the patterns they identified within the data and how it can predict future behaviors.

EXTEND

Language Arts: Explain that one way to gain data in social sciences is to interview people. Have the class brainstorm a list of social topics, then choose one for this activity. Inform the class that an interview should include: **1. Introduction** **2. Brief Conversation (unstructured)** **3. Question & Answer (structured)** **4. Data Interpretation** **5. Conclusion.** Groups of students will create questions to be condensed into one page of questions that the students will use to interview another class. Remind students that large sets of data provide the most accurate results.

Creating Kindness

Compare and Contrast Use information from the article to compare and contrast early experiences of rescuers, in-betweeners, and bystanders in regards to their parents’ behaviors. Complete the THINK TANK activity independently.

Characteristics	Rescuers	In-betweeners	Bystanders
Relationship to Parents			
Parents’ Altruistic Tendencies			
Parents’ Tolerance Level			
Parents’ Discipline Strategies			

THINK TANK: Make some notes using the information on the chart to **identify patterns** and predict behaviors. Discuss in a small group with your teacher.

Lending a Hairy Hand

pp. 20–23, Expository Nonfiction

Learn how scientists study chimpanzees to find out more about characteristics of generosity and how scientists use evidence to support their claims.



ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What factors contribute to prosocial behaviors?

Activate prior knowledge by asking students what motivates them to help another person. Then, present the title of the article, “Lending a Hairy Hand,” and ask students if they think a chimpanzee would share with another chimpanzee. What if the chimp wouldn’t get as much food for himself, would he still share? Explain that the studies reviewed in this article look at the prosocial behaviors of chimps in both laboratory and natural settings.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and ask students to share how these words might relate to the topic of social behaviors. Next, have students locate the words on page 22 of the article and infer their meanings using context clues. Answer questions and clarify any misunderstandings about the definitions. Challenge students to create their own sentences using each word.

RESOURCES

Collecting Evidence: A Helping Hand

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn how chimpanzees show generosity.
- Students will collect evidence to support a claim.
- Students will use a mathematical process to determine percentages.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **prosocial** (p. 22) behavior that is positive, helpful, and intended to promote social acceptance and friendship
- **oxytocin** (p. 22) a powerful hormone that regulates social interaction
- **hormone** (p. 22) a regulatory substance produced in an organism and transported in tissue fluids such as blood or sap to stimulate specific cells or tissues into action

READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the article and then lead a class discussion based on the following prompts:

1. Explain how helping can be nice—but also sometimes selfish.
2. How do chimpanzees demonstrate kindness?
3. Why might chimps choose to be generous rather than selfish?
4. How did Tai’s behavior influence Kofi’s actions?
5. Why do male chimps patrol their territory?

SKILL FOCUS: Collect Evidence

INSTRUCT: This article presents the reader with information about chimpanzees’ ability to demonstrate prosocial behaviors. Present the graphic organizer, *A Helping Hand*, and tell students that they will be reviewing the article and highlighting sentences that provide evidence to support each of the claims stated. Remind students to cite information and details using page numbers.

ASSESS: Have students peer-review their work by sharing completed worksheets with another student. Circulate and guide as they discuss.

EXTEND

Mathematics On page 22 the article concludes that food was shared with Tai during the research trials **40 percent** of the time. Post this information on the board, and then have students use a mathematical process to determine the answers to the following questions:

- a) *In how many trials was food shared during 80 trials? (Answer: 32)*
- b) *In how many trials was food shared during 160 trials? (Answer: 64)*
- c) *In how many trials was food shared during 250 trials? (Answer: 100)*

A Helping Hand

Collecting Evidence Gather evidence from the text to support each claim. Include details and cite your findings by using page numbers.

Claim: Chimpanzees demonstrate generous behaviors even if they do not receive immediate rewards.

Supporting evidence (p. _____)

Claim: Like humans, chimpanzees will sometimes give up food for other chimpanzees.

Supporting evidence (p. _____)

Claim: Chimpanzees make complex decisions when it comes to cooperating.

Supporting evidence (p. _____)

Muse® Teacher Guide: May/June 2024

A Perfect Match

pp. 40–45, Expository Nonfiction

Use this article about therapy dogs to construct explanations with evidence about how to find the right therapy job for a dog.



RESOURCES

Construct Explanations:
Making Matches

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn the different ways dogs can help as therapy dogs.
- Students will construct explanations.
- Students will participate in a philanthropic activity.
- Students will record information from different sources.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **therapy** (p. 40) treatment intended to relieve or heal
- **socialized** (p. 42) behaving in a way that is acceptable to society
- **rehabilitation** (p. 44) the action of restoring someone to health or normal life through training and therapy

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What factors contribute to prosocial behaviors?

Distribute the article and have students preview the photos and predict the topic of study. Invite students to share any experiences they have had with therapy dogs. Have students make a list of characteristics that a dog should have in order to be helpful to people that need assistance.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Discuss the key vocabulary words and definitions with your students. To reinforce the introductory activity (photos + key words), ask them to identify what these words have in common. (helping) Ask students to review the definitions and discuss with a partner how each word relates to the topic of training dogs to help people. Instruct students to circle other helping-related words in the reading.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the article and then answer each question in a full sentence using details from the text. Discuss responses.

1. What special skills does Hathaway have to share?
2. Why is socialization an important part of therapy dog training?
3. Why did it take many tries to find Hathaway the perfect job?
4. How did Hathaway show she liked being a rehabilitation therapy dog?
5. List three other jobs available for trained assistance dogs.

SKILL FOCUS: Constructing Explanations

INSTRUCT: Discuss with students how it was determined that Hathaway is best suited to provide animal-assisted therapy. Students will construct explanations that demonstrate their understanding of how different information is used to find the perfect job for trained and willing dogs. Students will also identify how these dogs can be beneficial to those in need of assistance. Distribute the *Making Matches* graphic organizer and have students complete the worksheet independently.

ASSESS: Collect the worksheets to assess individual understanding of the topic.

EXTEND

Philanthropy: Have students search the internet for local pet shelters and animal organizations that are in need of donations. Students will contact the facilities and request their “wish list.” Students will work together to organize a fundraiser for donations. Have the class brainstorm a list of ideas. (Ex: bake sale, car wash, donation bins, raffles, events, etc.) Review the following steps for successful fundraising:

1. Plan it. Choose team leaders and assign roles.
2. Schedule it. Will it last a day, a week, a month?
3. Set a goal. Aim high!
4. Promote it. This means posters, announcements, fliers, etc.
5. Collect it. Organize bins and pickups.
6. Donate it. Coordinate with chosen organization for delivery of donated item/money.

Making Matches

Construct Explanations Explain how assistance dogs can be beneficial to people facing the challenges below. Then, use your own thinking and information from the article to explain the characteristics of the dog that would be best suited for each job.

Physical Challenges:



Emotional Challenges:



Struggling Readers: