Assembled Den Meeting Plan – BEAR (3rd Grade)

This ***Assembled* Den Meeting Plan** combines ideas from Bear Den Meeting Resources found at Scouting.Org or from the requirements themselves, into the parts of a quality Den Meeting, which are **Preparation** (plan + collect materials needed), **Gathering** (something for early arrivals to do), **Opening** (a ceremony to start), then **Activities** (an Activities Intro chat, followed by a series of activities, ideally alternating quiet and energetic fun), **Closing + Recognition** (ceremony), and **After the Meeting** (follow up) …

Bear – 3rd Grade

Critter Care

A "Pet Care" Adventure

ELECTIVE (2 "electives" are needed to earn the Rank of Bear)

Snapshot of Adventure. Many families have a pet dog, cat, horse, bird, fish, hamster, or other animal. Almost one out of three U.S. households have a dog as a pet. One out of four have a cat as pet. Pets are fun, but they are also a big responsibility. Pets need food, water, shelter, and exercise to stay healthy. When you look after a pet, whether it belongs to you or a neighbor, you learn a lot about love, loyalty, and caring. Learning to look after pets — and having fun with them — is what this Adventure is all about.

The QR Code above takes you to scouting.org/cub-scout-adventures/critter-care/

This Den Meeting Plan adapts Activity ideas from that Scouting link with other fun, simple, easy ideas. For more, see the Adventure Resources at the end of this Plan for a list of the suggested Activities at that link.

Requirements from the Bear Handbook

1. **Identify an animal that would be good pet for your family.**
2. **Choose two animals that are allowed as pets in your community. Compare and contrast why these pets may be a good choice for you.**
3. **Based on your choice in requirement 1, investigate how to properly care for your chosen animal.**
4. **Discover three ways a pet can help people.**

Meeting Plan

Does this take one Meeting to complete – or more? It's up to the Parents / Leaders! As written, you can do this in a single session, but Scouts and families might get more of this with a visit to an animal shelter or veterinarian or animal trainer. Or a series of "meet and greet my pet" sessions.

PREPARATION (and materials needed): Read the Critter Care adventure in the Bear Handbook.

- As always, decide whether you like any of the "Activity Card" options for the Requirements or the suggested activities below or some other way to deliver this Adventure.
  - When you decide, check the materials and supplies you need.
- Some big decisions for this will be whether you arrange a visit to an animal facility or allow any "meet and greet my pet" session. If visiting a facility, be sure to let Scouts and families know when and where.
- If you allow any "meet and greet my pet" session, be sure to alert all families, secure extra adult supervision, and communicate any rules, like all pets must be contained or restrained, or "this session is 'dog day' and the next session will be 'caturday' for cats only".

GATHERING: A "gathering" activity is to keep Scouts occupied as the rest of the den arrives. *What you do will depend on your location and leadership resources*.

- Use gathering time to connect with adults and "share the leader load": everyone can help with something! A good approach is for different parents (or teams) to share the "lead" of parts of the Adventure below.

OPENING: (Parent leader: _____) An Opening ceremony says, "we've begun" and helps set the tone.

- Maybe: a simple ceremony you like that includes the Pledge of Allegiance and the Scout Oath and/or Law.

ACTIVITIES (See also other Activities linked at Adventure Resources – use those if you like them):

◆Activity Intro: (Parent leader: _____) As you move into Activities, have some "talk time" where you (1) discuss today's Adventure activities (what you'll do, how you'll do it – share in a way to get the Scouts excited) and (2) let each of the Scouts share "what's new" with them and get to know each other better.

◆Activity 1: Who's a Good Pet? (Requirement 1: *"Identify an animal that would be good pet for your family."*) (Parent leader: _____)

- Have the Scouts describe their pet or the pet they would like to have. Sharing pictures is great.
  - Talk about the pet's needs.
  - How big or small the pet is.
  - What are the pet's dietary needs? (What should it eat?)
  - Does the pet need a small or large yard or some other type of enclosure?
  - Does the pet need a specialty vet?
  - Does the pet need exercise and what kind?





◆Activity 2: Permitted Pets (Requirement 2: *"Choose two animals that are allowed as pets in your community. Compare and contrast why these pets may be a good choice for you."*) (Parent leader: _____)

The plan below adapts the substance of the Requirement but starts with Pets, So Many (but without a worksheet) from the Adventure Resources.

- Have the Scouts describe whether the following types of pets would generally be good pets or not so good:
  - The Activity Card from the Adventure Resources for Pets, So Many lists Dog, Elephant, Snake, Raccoon, Cat, Wolf, Horse, Rabbit, Tiger, Fish.
  - How about Turtle, Frog, Llama, Bat, Coyote, Shark, Lizard, Goat, Rat, Hamster, Monkey, Ferret, Chicken, Duck Duck Goose?
  - The answers may be "could be good – under some circumstances". Let Scouts explain "why".
- The Help Me Choose worksheet identifies these qualities of possible animals or pets to compare and contrast – let Scouts pick two possible pets to compare and contrast on these topics:

  Grooming? – Speed? – Life expectancy? – Hunting ability? – Loneliness? – Space? – Affection? – Protection? – Good with children? – Energy? – Walks? – Physical characteristics? – House training? – Human language?

◆Activity 3: Care for a Pet (Requirement 3: *"Based on your choice in requirement 1, investigate how to properly care for your chosen animal."*) (Parent leader: _____)

The Adventure Resources offer Activity Cards of Pet Responsibilities (Complete Some Worksheets), Shelter Visits (Visit a Shelter!), Trainer Visits (Visit a Trainer!), and Veterinarian Visits (Visit a Vet!). Use what you like – visits are great!!! – or do something else. The plan below adapts the substance of each.

- Have a group discussion about pet responsibilities and care required for family pets or an animal that would make for a good family pet. Or, what do you need to do to take care of a pet?
  - Answers will vary from pet to pet, but might include:
  - Feed the pet, provide water, pick up poop, house train, groom (brush), clean litter box, clean fishbowl, walk the dog, play with the pet, keep the pet safe (indoor pet? fenced yard?), medicines, pet the pet!
- If you do a visit to a shelter, trainer or veterinarian, encourage Scouts to ask questions – like explain the importance of the following:
  - Regular exams // Spay and neuter
  - Preventing parasites // Dental care // Proper restraints
  - Maintain a healthy weight // Get regular vaccinations
  - Provide an enriched environment
  - Why Microchip and tattoo your pet?



◆Activity 4: A Pet Is Helpful (Requirement 4: *"Discover three ways a pet can help people."*) (Parent leader: _____) The plan below adapts the substance of Animal Helpers but without making a PowerPoint.

- Lead a group discussion about the different ways pets can help people like your family. The Mayo Clinic says they:
  - Keep us company, which makes us feel less alone.
  - Make us laugh and smile, which can lift mood and manage stress.
  - Comfort us during hard times.
  - Encourage us to exercise and get outdoors.
  - Give us routine and purpose.
- Things to think about:
  - Physical health benefits
    - Taking your dog for a walk means you are going on a walk too!
    - Scheduling regular veterinarian visits can be a reminder that you need regular health checkups too.
  - Mental health benefits, like decreased stress and anxiety.
- Service Animals are super helpful, including:
- Guide dogs for the vision impaired // Allergy detection dogs
- Autism service dogs // Diabetic alert dogs // Hearing dogs
- K-9 Security dogs // Psychiatric service dogs // Seizure alert dogs





◆Activity 5: [*OPTION*: Fun Game We Like (Parent leader: _____):



If this meeting is too dry or the games in the Activity Cards in Adventure Resources don't resonate with you as something your Scouts will like, you can turn up the "Fun Meter" and play a game or some other Fun Activity you like. Some ideas here. NOTE: the fun game doesn't' need to be connected to today's Adventure topic – it can just be FUN!

CLOSING: A Closing ceremony ends the meeting and highlights the achievements. A Den leader can reflect on the meeting + praise Scouts for specific good actions today. Thank every Parent who helped.

- If you have them, award Loops to all who completed the requirements. Maybe end with a "Living Circle".

AFTER THE MEETING: Clean up as needed. Share refreshments if that's what you like.

Upon completion of this Adventure, your Bears will have earned the Adventure Loop for it. Make sure they are recognized for their completion by presenting the Adventure Loops, to be worn on their belts, as soon as possible according to your pack's tradition. Text or email all Den parents to share these resources for future reference and so parents of Scouts who could not attend may complete this Adventure from home.

ADVENTURE RESOURCES: Den Meeting Resources and "Activity Card" options for this Adventure are found at https://www.scouting.org/cub-scout-adventures/critter-care/. Those resources include the Snapshot of Adventure (included above), a "Safety Moment" of tips and links about doing this safely, and, for each Requirement, one or more "Activity Cards" you can click on for an activity to complete the Requirement.

Those "Activity Card" pages are linked below – along with the "Key" scoring of (a) whether the Activity must be done Outdoors, may be done Indoors, or involves Travel; (b) how much Energy Scouts will generate; (c) How "Supply Intensive"; and (d) Prep Time – those last 3 categories are scored on a 1 to 5 scale, with 5 being "most". Note that while that website page says "Choose one of the following" before the "Activity Cards", what that means is "Choose one of the following – *or do some other activity that will meet the Requirement*", because the Requirements are required, not the Activity Cards. In the Assembled Den Meeting Plan above we have adapted some of what's below or other ways to complete the requirement in easier ways.

1. **Identify an animal that would be good pet for your family.**
   - My Pet (Indoor; **1** of 5 Energy; **1** of 5 Supplies; **1** of 5 Prep Time)
   - Pet Savers (Travel; **3** of 5 Energy; **1** of 5 Supplies; **5** of 5 Prep Time)
   - Pets, So Many (Indoor; **1** of 5 Energy; **2** of 5 Supplies; **2** of 5 Prep Time)
2. **Choose two animals that are allowed as pets in your community. Compare and contrast why these pets may be a good choice for you.**
   - Help Me Choose (Indoor; **2** of 5 Energy; **2** of 5 Supplies; **3** of 5 Prep Time)
   - Poster Pet (Indoor; **2** of 5 Energy; **4** of 5 Supplies; **2** of 5 Prep Time)
   - What Animal (Indoor; **4** of 5 Energy; **2** of 5 Supplies; **2** of 5 Prep Time)
3. **Based on your choice in requirement 1, investigate how to properly care for your chosen animal.**
   - Pet Responsibilities (Indoor; **2** of 5 Energy; **3** of 5 Supplies; **2** of 5 Prep Time)
   - Shelter Visits (Travel; **3** of 5 Energy; **1** of 5 Supplies; **5** of 5 Prep Time)
   - Trainer Visits (Indoor; **3** of 5 Energy; **1** of 5 Supplies; **5** of 5 Prep Time)
   - Veterinarian Visits (Indoor; **3** of 5 Energy; **1** of 5 Supplies; **5** of 5 Prep Time)
4. **Discover three ways a pet can help people.**
   - Animal Helpers (Indoor; **2** of 5 Energy; **4** of 5 Supplies; **2** of 5 Prep Time)
   - Animal Partner (Travel; **3** of 5 Energy; **2** of 5 Supplies; **5** of 5 Prep Time)
   - Service Animals (Indoor; **3** of 5 Energy; **1** of 5 Supplies; **5** of 5 Prep Time)