

# American Humane Association

The nation's voice for the protection of children & animals



## “Tag, You’re Home!” Lesson Plan

**Grades:** K - 2

**Ages:** 5 - 7

**Time:** 30 - 40 minutes

### Character Pillars:

*Respect*

*Responsibility*

*Kindness*

*Citizenship*

### Standards:

Standard	Area	Performance Description
English/Language Arts	Speaking, Listening, Viewing	E3a
English/Language Arts	Speaking, Listening, Viewing	E3b

**Rationale:** Every year, countless pets get lost, and sadly, few ever find their way back home. Dogs not wearing identification (ID) tags are most at risk. By creating an awareness of various issues surrounding pet identification and practicing some simple steps to create ID tags, students can become more empowered to keep their own dogs — or a dog they know — safer. This lesson is a concrete method of experiencing the character pillars of responsibility, citizenship, kindness and respect, as well as a chance for students to acquire the knowledge necessary to become responsible adult pet owners.

## Behavioral Objectives:

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### Students will:

- Identify various reasons that a dog can become lost.
- Identify reasons why pet identification (tags, microchips) is important.
- Practice making quality ID tags with pertinent information for a pet.
- Engage in behaviors that exemplify the character pillars of respect, responsibility, kindness and citizenship.

## Materials:

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- Chalkboard, dry erase board or flip chart and markers
- "Tag, You're Home" worksheet
- Stuffed animal (preferably a dog)
- Books on a relevant topic (or story invented by the teacher if books are not available)
- Recommended books:
  - *Ribsy* by Beverly Cleary. New York: Harper Trophy, 2001, c 1964. (This is a chapter book. Ribsy gets lost and has many adventures finding his way home.)
  - *Lost and Found* by Adrienne Mason. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2008. (Short story. Two friends must find a lost dog.)
- Optional: construction paper, scissors, markers

## Set:

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- Students will listen to a story about a lost dog and develop empathy about what it may feel like to be lost.
- Students will learn about and practice making quality ID tags.

## Procedure:

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### Reading

- Read aloud (or make up) a short story or portion of a chapter book about a lost dog.
- Make it clear that if students see a lost dog, they should call an adult who can then call an animal control officer.
- Kids should never try to look for an ID tag on a dog themselves. Why? It may not be safe to approach a lost, frightened dog. And doing so may scare the dog more, causing it to run away and stay lost or possibly get hurt.



## Discussion

- Begin a discussion about what it could be like to be a lost dog:
  - Where would he/she go?
  - What would he/she eat?
  - Where would he/she sleep?
  - How would he/she feel?
- After a few students respond, guide the discussion to how students might feel if they were lost:
  - Do you think a dog would feel the same as you would if you were lost?
- Direct the discussion to some things that can be done so dogs don't get lost, or if they do, so they can get back home:
  - Encourage students to discuss the answers.
  - If/when a student mentions ID tags or microchips, acknowledge that and bring the discussion back to it when you are ready to move forward.
- Direct the discussion to ID tags.
- What is an ID tag? (Some students may have participated in an ID program in their community.)
- What is a microchip? (Explain how microchips work. A good resource for information on microchipping pets is <http://public.homeagain.com/>.)
- Why are ID tags important?
- How do they work?
- What is an animal control officer?
  - What information can an animal control officer get from the ID tag?
  - How does an animal control officer use that information?
- It is important that students understand that an ID tag can be a pet's ticket home.

## Activity

- Introduce the stuffed animal, whose name is Denver.
- Tell the students that they will be creating ID tags.
  - Students can either make a tag for their own pet, for another pet they love or for Denver, the stuffed animal.



- Ask the students what kind of information they think would be needed to make a good ID tag, and record responses on the board or flip chart. Correct responses are:
  - Pet Name
  - Address
  - Phone Number
- Distribute the "Tag, You're Home" worksheet.
- Instruct students to fill out the worksheet.
- Optional: Ask students to make an ID tag out of colored construction paper and decorate it.

\* Teacher Note: You may want to consider confidentiality issues and have your students use a fictitious name/address/phone number (or that of the school) to protect the child's personal information.

### **Closure:**

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- Encourage students to share or display their finished ID tags.
- Ask: "What would happen if Denver (the stuffed dog) or your dog was wearing this collar and got lost?"
- Remember, an ID tag can be your pet's ticket home.

### **Assessment:**

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- Completion of activity and participation in the discussion.

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# Tag, You're Home!

Color the picture and fill in the ID tag for Denver or your own pet.

