

I. SAFETY PRACTICES FOR ANIMALS IN THE CLASSROOM*

1. Teachers are responsible for animals in the classroom receiving proper care: e.g. light, climate control, food and sanitary living conditions.
2. Remember to plan for care during weekends and holidays.
3. Cages and other living quarters should be appropriately sized, cleaned daily and secured at the end of the day. Watch for signs of mold in cages or other living quarters; e.g. mold growing of vegetables in meal worm culture.
4. Provide sufficient water sources for all animals.
5. Dispose of animal waste matter appropriately; e.g. wrapped in newspaper, placed in plastic bag and deposited in the trash.
6. Provide proper direction for handling of animals – minimally and gently. Demonstrate appropriate technique.
7. Make sure students wear vinyl or other non-allergenic gloves while handling animals.
8. Always wash hands with soap and water after handling or working with animals.
9. Avoid jerking or quick motion when working with animals.
10. Most animals need an adjustment period for a few days when introducing them into the classroom before allowing students to handle them.
11. Never allow students to tease animals especially while the animals are eating, sleeping, etc.
12. Always purchase or secure healthy animals from reliable sources.
13. Do not allow students to bring wild animals into the classroom. Wild animals, such as turtles, snakes, birds, arachnids (spiders, ticks, mites), and insects, may transmit serious diseases and behave unpredictably.
14. Discourage students from bringing personal pets to school. If pets are allowed into the room, they should be handled only by their owners. Certification by a veterinarian declaring the animal disease-free should be required.
15. Poisonous animals should never be allowed in the classroom. This includes some species of spiders, venomous insects, lizards, and poisonous snakes.
16. Check with the school nurse and parents/guardians for potential student allergies associated with animals. Some students are allergic to animal dander and mold found in

animals' food and bedding. The school nurse should keep an "Epi-pen" handy in case of hyper-allergenic reactions.

17. Remind students not to insert fingers into animal cages. Most animals may protect themselves by biting, scratching, or kicking.
18. Report animal bites and scratches immediately to the school nurse.
19. Never allow dead animals in the room. It could be diseased. You should have a veterinarian evaluate any classroom animal that dies unexpectedly.
20. Animals used in the elementary classroom should most often be invertebrates. Always order live animals from a reputable science supplier.
21. No experimental procedure that causes pain or discomfort should be attempted on mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, or fish. Vertebrate studies should be restricted to observations of normal functions such as growth, feeding, or life cycles.
22. Student-performed dissections are not recommended for most elementary students.
23. Live bacterial and fungal cultures should not be used in the elementary science program.
24. When pond water is brought to class, never use contaminated or polluted sources. Always wash hands with soap and water following the activity.
25. When studying insects, watch for symptoms of allergic reactions, especially if the insects bite or sting (redness, swelling, trouble breathing, etc.). Contact the nurse immediately should symptoms appear.
26. Only use sanitized owl pellets for classroom investigations. Check for student allergies to fur and feathers, since these are common contents of owl pellets.
27. If studying chicken bones, thoroughly remove all traces of meat and soak the bones in a mild bleach solution for at least three days before allowing students to examine them.

* This list includes recommendations of the CSSS about animals in the classroom.

Science & Safety: It's Elementary! Council of State Science Supervisors (CSSS)

Section 7. What precautions should I take when using animals in the classroom?

http://www.csss-science.org/downloads/scisaf_cal.pdf

II. SAFETY PRACTICES FOR OUT-OF-DOORS:

1. Teachers should always visit out-of-doors areas to review potential safety hazards prior to

students carrying out activities.

2. Keep clear of out-of-doors areas when may have been treated with pesticides, fungicides and other hazardous chemicals.
3. When working out-of-doors, students should use appropriate personal protective equipment or PPE including safety glasses or safety goggles (when working with hazardous chemical), gloves, close toed shoes, hat, long sleeve shirt and pants, sunglasses and sun screen protection. When working near deep water, use life preservers or other floatation devices.
4. Caution students relative to poisonous plants (ivy, sumac, etc.), insects (bees, wasps, ticks, mosquitoes, etc) and hazardous debris (broken glass, other sharps, etc.).
5. Caution students about trip/fall hazards like rocks, string/rope, etc. when walking out-of-doors.
6. Teachers need to inform parents in writing of on-site field trips relative to potential hazards and safety precautions being taken.
7. Teachers need to check with school nurse relative to student medical issues; e.g., allergies, asthma, etc. Be prepared for medical emergencies.
8. Teachers need to have a form of communications available such as a cell phone or two-way radio in case of emergencies.
9. Wash hands with soap and water after doing activities dealing with hazardous chemicals, soil, biologicals (insects, leaves, etc.) or other materials.
10. Be certain to contact be main office prior to bringing classes out of the building for science activities.
11. Wash hands with soap and water after returning to the classroom from out-of-doors activities.