



Fun Reading 🐾 Reading for Life

Dog Team Assessment

Date: _____ Location: _____ Dog's name: _____

Handlers name: _____ Handlers phone no: _____

Dog breed: _____ Dog's age: _____ Male / Female

Dog Assessor name: _____ Dog vest size: _____

Overall outcome – Pass / Fail ☐ **Follow up required** **Dog Assessor Signature:** _____

Overall Comments

Assessment Tasks	Pass	Fail
1. Greeting behaviour and appearance		
2. Dog being handled		
3. Dog walking on a loose lead		
4. Dog walking past toys, ball and food		
5. Stay / Recall		
6. Dog held by another person		
7. Resource guarding		
8. Reading session scenario		
9. Dogs reaction to loud noises		
10. Walking past other dogs		

Overall Assessment Behaviour	A	M	S	N
Did the handler praise and reward their dog appropriately?				
Was the handler in control of their dog during the assessment?				
Was the dog happy, non-fearful and relatively relaxed during the assessment?				
Did the handler use only positive methods of control (e.g. no lead-jerking or harsh voice)?				

A= Always, M= most of the time (more than half of the time), S= some of the time (less than half of the time), N=Never.

For a dog team to pass, ALL ticks must be in A or M.



Dog Team Assessment

Important notes to Assessor:

- Dog and handler are **both** evaluated as a team during the entire assessment event. The assessment may include observed behaviours before the actual assessment such as how the dog interacted with other dogs present or how they behaved when walking to the assessment area.
- The handler is expected to be calmly in charge of their dog.
- Dogs are tested wearing either a flat collar with a 1-2m webbing lead, a Martingale collar, or a well-fitting harness. It is up to the discretion of the assessor if the particular harness is suitable for adequate control of the dog at all times.
- No training collars, halties, muzzles, aversive collars or retractable leads are permitted.
- Handlers are encouraged to talk to their dog throughout the test, reassure their dog and give positive reinforcement when appropriate.
- ABSOLUTELY NO yelling, harsh commands or physical punishment (eg. Lead jerking).
- The Assessor is encouraged to chat to the handler, explaining the purpose of each assessment task and making them feel comfortable. **Reading out the Purpose of each assessment task is strongly encouraged.**
- The handler is a role model to young children. Modelling good dog ownership, positive treatment of their dog and positive human/dog relationships.
- Assessment tasks have been presented in a suggested sequence, however the assessor may choose to assess tasks in a different order.
- Unless each task is easily passed, the assessor should write comments.

Assessing Equipment Required: The assessor will bring

Long lead (3-5m)	Toys and Ball	Cone or marker	Food (either in a container or a bag of dog treats)
Items to make a noise for distractions (whistle, metal tin, clip board, squeaking toy)	Umbrella	Children's picture book	Rug and or chair for handler and dog to sit on.

A dog team may have a follow up assessment before they start volunteering or a school observation by the Assessor once they have started in a school, to ensure that the dog is coping with the noisy, busy environment. This is at the discretion of the Assessor and or Story Dogs Coordinator.

Safety of the child, volunteer and dog are the priority.
If the dog is not happy then the child is not safe.



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1. Greeting behaviour and appearance of dog	Pass	Fail
<p>PURPOSE: The dog must be well groomed and calm when meeting new people and visiting schools.</p> <p>ASSESSOR: Approach and shake hands with handler and introduce yourself.</p> <p>DOG: Must be calm, stay seated or stationary while assessor shakes hands and leaves.</p>		
<p>Comments:</p>		

2. Dog being handled	Pass	Fail
<p>PURPOSE: Although Story Dogs discourages children from patting or handling the dog in ways that may stress the dog, such as hugging, rough pats, patting on head or rough touching of ears or paws, this may still happen. The assessor needs to see that if this does happen the dog will remain relatively calm, not growl or become aggressive and or be fearful.</p> <p>ASSESSOR: Ask the handler to give sit, stand or down cue. Ask the handler "Is there anywhere your dog does not like to be touched or if there is any known ailment that would make your dog not want to be touched in a certain area?" The assessor then handles the dog, avoiding areas identified if applicable.</p> <p>DOG: Must be under control; not become anxious or intolerant and allow gentle patting, hugging and holding. Dog does NOT have to hold the sit or down after initial patting.</p>		
<p>Comments:</p>		

3. Dog walking on a loose lead	Pass	Fail
<p>PURPOSE: A Story Dog is a calm gentle dog that wants to be going to school. A dog walking into a school or public event on a loose lead conveys a sense of calmness, a good relationship between the dog and the handler and the handler being in control.</p> <p>ASSESSOR: Ask handler to walk their dog around the assessment area. If there is a tree, table, or large object in the area you may indicate to the handler to walk their dog around that object and back to where you are standing.</p> <p>DOG: Walks nicely, without pulling.</p>		
<p>Comments:</p>		



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4. Dog walks past toys, ball and food	Pass	Fail
<p>PURPOSE: When working in a school a dog may encounter toys, balls and food. It is important that the dog does not lunge at or pull the handler towards these objects.</p> <p>ASSESSOR: Lay out toys, ball and food on the ground. Objects should be at least 2 meters apart from each other. Ask the handler to walk their dog within one meter of toys, ball and food. The handler should not encourage the dog to show interest in the objects. The handler can use 'leave it' commands and or treats to ensure their dog does not lunge or grab at objects.</p> <p>DOG: Must see the objects and walk calmly past when cued.</p>		
<p>Comments:</p>		

5. Stay / Recall	Pass	Fail
<p>PURPOSE: A Story Dog should respond to cues from the handler and should be under control at all times. Stay and recall are basic skills all Story Dogs should have. Although as a Story Dog your dog will be on lead at all times this assessment task is being carried out on a long lead to simulate what may happen if you let go of the lead. The handler should still be able to maintain control of their dog.</p> <p>ASSESSOR: Clip the long lead onto the dog, continue to hold the long lead and move about 3 metres away from the dog. Depending on the handler, the stay and recall can be carried out with the Assessor holding the long lead or the handler holding the long lead.</p> <p>Stay: Ask the handler to have their dog in a sit, stand or down position. Ask the handler to then give a 'stay' or 'wait' cue or any other cue they may use. The handler walks to approx. 3 meters away, pauses and returns to their dog.</p> <p>Recall: Ask the handler to have their dog in a sit, stand or down position. Ask the handler to then give a 'stay' or 'wait' cue or any other cue they may use. The handler walks to approx. 3 meters away, and gives a recall cue.</p> <p>DOG: To hold the stay. In the recall the dog should go directly back to the handler. If the dog detours or takes its time it is only a fail if the handler could not get the dog back at all.</p>		
<p>Comments:</p>		



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6. Dog held by another person	Pass	Fail
<p>PURPOSE: This shows that the dog can be handled by another person without excessive stress or whining, in case something happens at school and the dog has to be temporarily held by someone else. The assessor will take the dog's lead and passively holds the dog (not giving any commands) while the handler moves approx. 5 meters away (5 big steps) and waits for approx. 10 seconds.</p> <p>ASSESSOR: With the long lead still attached to the collar, ask the handler to have their dog in a sit, stand or down position. Ask the handler to then give a 'stay' or 'wait' cue or any other cue they may use. Ask the handler to move away approx. 5 meters and stay there for approx. 10 sec</p> <p>DOG: Dog to remain calm, not move excessively towards the handler, and not show signs of stress.</p> <p>Comments:</p>		

7. Resource Guarding	Pass	Fail
<p>PURPOSE: Resource guarding is when a dog controls access to food, objects, people and locations that are important to him through defensive body language or overt aggressive display. Guarding resources is usually a manifestation of the dog's deep-rooted insecurity and inability to cope well in a social situation, even with people and other dogs he knows.</p> <p>Story Dogs does not want this type of protective behaviour happening when you and your dog are participating in the program. To determine if your dog has any resource guarding behaviours we will ask you to take a toy from him and the Assessor will walk past him when he is eating.</p> <p>ASSESSOR:</p> <p>Toy: Ask the handler to give the dog a toy. If the dog has the toy in its mouth ask the handler take the toy from the dog. If the dog does not pick up the toy then that is OK and considered a pass. It should be noted in the comments whether or not the dog actually picked up and relinquished the toy, or whether they didn't take the toy at all. The handler is allowed to swap the toy for something else the dog may pick up.</p> <p>Food: Ask the handler to move a step or two away from the dog. Put some dog treats or dry dog food in a small pile on the ground or in a bowl. Ask the handler to allow the dog to eat the food. While the dog is eating the food the Assessor walks past to see if the dog will hard stare, growl or show any signs of resource guarding towards the Assessor.</p> <p>DOG: The dog should give up the toy easily. The dog should not growl, hard stare, lunge, or show other signs of resource guarding.</p> <p>Comments:</p>		



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8. Reading Session Scenario		Pass	Fail
<p>PURPOSE:</p> <p>Much of your time as a Story Dogs volunteer will be spent in the reading session. It is very important that your dog can settle and is happy in this environment. To simulate this part of the program the Assessor will join you and your dog on the reading rug or on chairs next to the rug, with your dog on the rug.</p> <p>The assessor will also leave the reading space and coming in quickly to see if your dog can cope with sudden interruptions.</p> <p>The assessor will then be an exuberant child and do things to your dog that we would not encourage children to do, however these things MAY happen and we need to know that your dog can cope. You would NOT normally let a child do these things to your dog, however as we are trying to see if your dog can cope, just in case, please let the assessor continue. When you are in a reading session at school we would want you to STOP a child treating your dog like this. Of course please stop the assessor if you think the situation is stressing your dog too much.</p> <p>ASSESSOR: There are three things being assessed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can the dog settle for 3 – 5 mins with little to no distractions? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No 2. Can the dog cope with a person coming towards them? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No 3. Can the dog cope with an exuberant child being close to them, flapping about with the book (open/close the book several times, drop the book, show pages to the dog etc), and the exuberant child patting the dog enthusiastically? The assessor should not go over the top in regards to over stressing the dog. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <p>DOG: The dog may reposition itself but the handler must be in control and the dog must not be showing signs of undue stress or anxiousness.</p> <p>Comments: How did the dog respond?</p>			



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9. Dogs reaction to distractions	Pass	Fail
<p>PURPOSE: Schools are noisy unpredictable places where sudden loud noises and distractions happen often. Story Dogs is very mindful of the dog's welfare. As such we endeavor to simulate some sudden noises to gauge how your dog may react. Your dog is allowed to react but then relax and recompose. You can reassure your dog during this part of the assessment.</p> <p>ASSESSOR: Keep the dog team seated in the reading session position and then you and or the Coordinator make some sudden loud noises, dropping of objects, opening an umbrella, blowing a whistle or bouncing a ball nearby. During this assessment task the dog may startle and or acknowledge the noise (the dog may jump and or turn towards the noise), but then should settle again quickly. To enable this to happen noises should be made with a sufficient gap between them. The dog should not panic, try to run away, react by growling or barking and also not be fearful and shaking.</p> <p>DOG: The dog may react to the distractions, but must regain composure quickly.</p>		
<p>Comments:</p>		

10. Walking past other dogs	Pass	Fail
<p>PURPOSE: When volunteering at a school with your dog you may be the only dog at the school. However there may be times when you attend promotional events with Story Dogs or encounter local dogs at your school and at these times our Story Dogs need to be calm, non- reactive and in control around other dogs.</p> <p>ASSESSOR: Set up a central point with a marker of some sort, cone/drink bottle/etc. Ask each handler to walk their dog 2m away from the marker in the opposite direction from each other. Ensure that the two dogs have seen each other.</p> <p>DOGS: Dogs to be calm and not lunging or dragging handler towards other dog. Dogs should show no signs of aggression. Signs of interest towards the other dog are fine as long as the handler can retain control.</p>		
<p>Comments</p>		