

# Should Dogs Work?

Many pet dogs spend their days sleeping around the house. They play catch with their owners. And they have all their meals delivered straight to their bowls. Pet dogs give their owners love and friendship. In return, the dogs live carefree lives.

Some dogs don't have it so easy. They are put to work. The dogs are not paid in cash. They are paid in shelter, food, and love. Those are the same things that many pet dogs get. Service dogs give more than pet dogs give. People depend on them for serious work. There are many kinds of service dogs. Some dogs guide people who are deaf or blind. The dogs act as people's eyes and ears.

Other dogs do police work. There are about 15,000 police dogs in the United States. The dogs search for missing people and hunt down criminals. Many dogs are also used to search for drugs and bombs. Service dogs often work long hours. Meanwhile, pet dogs have the freedom to sleep and play whenever they want to. Is it fair that some dogs should have to work? Read the debate. Then decide.

## Yes! Dogs Should Work

Service dogs are workers and pets. Usually, they get more attention than pets get. Service dogs often work for their owners. So the dogs spend a lot of time with the people who care for them. Service dogs live happy and useful lives.

Service dogs have to work hard. But they enjoy what they do. Their work can be stressful at times. But the owners make sure that the dogs stay happy. To do that, they give the dogs lots of love and praise for their work. This makes the dogs feel good about the work they do. It makes the dogs want to work more.

Police and service work can be dangerous for dogs. But dogs are brave. They are willing to face danger when they work.

Last year, about 350 dogs worked at the World Trade Center site. One rescue worker said, "If these dogs only knew the difference they make.

Certainly, there's nothing that can replace... a dog's nose. And absolutely nothing that can replace a dog's heart."

## **No! Dogs Should Not Work**

Dogs are meant to be pets. They live short lives compared to humans. They should be allowed to enjoy all of their days. Dogs are meant to be companions, not workers. Service dogs are put under too much stress. Their jobs are not fun. Some service dogs are servants. They do things like opening dresser drawers and pulling their owners' wheelchairs.

Guide dogs for people who are blind and other servant dogs are not put in danger. But police dogs are not as lucky. They face life-and-death situations. People can choose to put their lives on the line. Dogs don't have that choice.

Last year, a police dog was shot and killed by police officers. The dog had caught a person the police were chasing. The police officers didn't realize that the dog was on their side. They thought he was vicious. So they killed him. Weeks before the dog was killed, he had acted as a search-and-rescue dog when the World Trade Center was attacked in New York City.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What specific dog task is *not* mentioned in the article?

- A Dogs guide people who are deaf and blind.
- B Dogs do police work.
- C Dogs protect sites like the World Trade Center.
- D Dogs help people who struggle to move their own wheelchairs.

2. The article presents both arguments in favor and against

- A putting dogs to work
- B using animals in the police force
- C allowing pet dogs to sleep and play whenever they want
- D making dogs work long hours

3. Which piece of evidence below strongly supports the argument that dogs should work?

- A Service dogs are put under too much stress.
- B Service dogs have to work hard.
- C Service dogs are workers and pets.
- D Service dogs are given lots of love and praise for their work.

4. Read the following sentences:

"Last year, a police dog was shot and killed by police officers. The dog had caught a person the police were chasing. The police officers didn't realize that the dog was on their side. They thought he was **vicious**. So they killed him."

What word could best replace the word **vicious** in this sentence?

- A violent
- B weak
- C energetic
- D friendly

5. What is this passage mostly about?

- A the different types of work service dogs perform
- B arguments related to putting dogs to work
- C the need for guide dogs and police dogs
- D the use of dogs as pets throughout history

6. How many police dogs are in the United States and what do they do?

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7. Read the sentences:

“People can choose to put their lives on the line. Dogs don't have that choice.”

What does the author suggest in these two sentences?

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8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence.

Some people argue that dogs should only be pets; \_\_\_\_\_, others argue dogs can save lives as service dogs.

- A so
- B therefore
- C specifically
- D on the other hand

9. Read the following sentence.

Owners of service dogs make sure that the dogs stay happy by giving their dogs lots of love and praise for their work.

Answer the following questions based on the information provided in the sentence you just read. One of the questions has already been answered for you.

Who is the main subject of the sentence? owners of service dogs

What do owners of service dogs do? \_\_\_\_\_

How? \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Vocabulary Word:** carefree (*adjective*): untroubled, lacking problems, worries, and responsibilities.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Teacher Guide &amp; Answers

**Passage Reading Level:** Lexile 560

**Featured Text Structure:** Argumentative – the writer presents evidence for both sides of an argument

**Passage Summary:** In “Should Dogs Work?,” the author presents both sides of the argument reflected in the title. Under the heading “Yes!,” the author provides evidence that dogs can make a difference and live happy and useful lives. Under the heading “No!,” the author provides evidence that dogs are put under stress and may lose their lives doing service work.

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6. How many police dogs are in the United States and what do they do?

**Suggested answer:** There are about 15,000 police dogs in the United States. These dogs search for missing people and hunt down criminals. Many police dogs also search for drugs and bombs.

7. Read the sentences:

“People can choose to put their lives on the line. Dogs don't have that choice.”

What does the author suggest in these two sentences?

**Suggested answer:** The author suggests that while human beings can make and voice a conscious choice whether to put their lives in danger, dogs do not have that choice. Dogs do not have that choice because they are unable to make that decision and act upon it, since their actions are commanded by humans.

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What do owners of service dogs do? **make sure that the dogs stay happy**

How? **by giving their dogs lots of love and praise for their work**

10. **Vocabulary Word:** carefree (*adjective*): untroubled, lacking problems, worries, and responsibilities.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: answers may vary.