



How do we decide what is true?

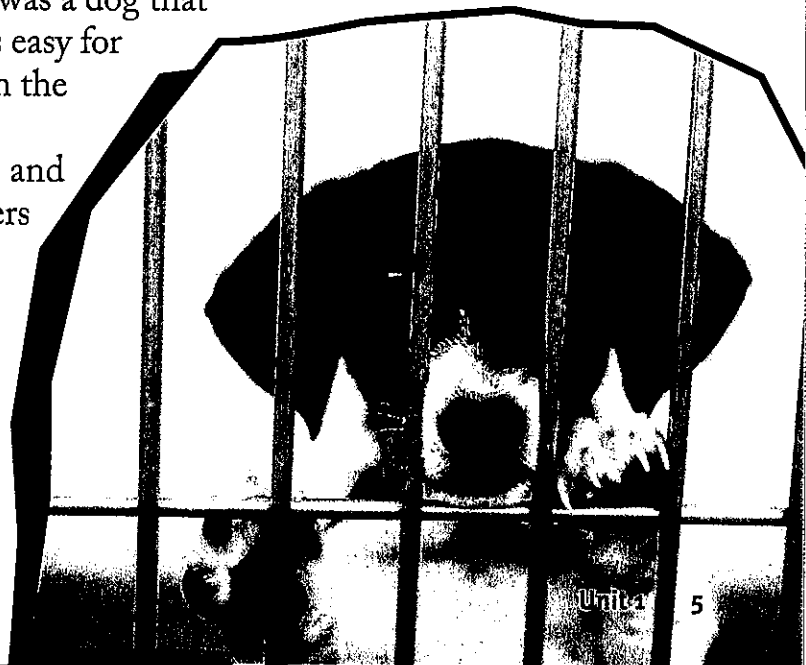
Half of all the animals brought to open-admission animal shelters are put to sleep. No-kill shelters seem like the answer to this sad problem. They may not always be the best choice, though. As you read the article, ask yourself: **Are no-kill animal shelters really more humane than other animal shelters?**

A Place Where Strays Can Stay

Javier skidded to a halt and kicked his skateboard up into his hand. There was just one thing he had wanted for his birthday: a German shepherd dog. Yesterday, Javier went to the local animal shelter, hoping to find one. Instead, he saw a small, brown puppy with big, floppy ears. A woman had found the puppy abandoned by the side of the road. It had been dirty, hungry, and alone. She had brought it to the shelter for care. "Who abandons an innocent puppy?" Javier wondered. This dog was not the German shepherd he had imagined, but it was a dog that needed a home. The **decision** was easy for Javier. He adopted the puppy from the shelter and brought it home.

Between 6 and 8 million dogs and cats are sent to U.S. animal shelters every year. Some of the animals are young and will be adopted at the shelter. Others may spend the rest of their lives there. Animals that are very old or sick are not likely to be adopted. What happens to them?

Animal shelters do their best to find loving homes for animals like this dog.

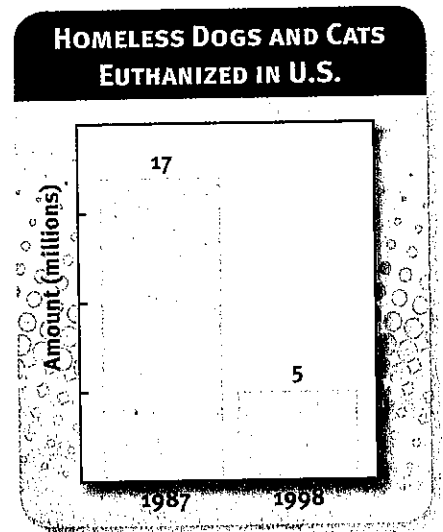


THE FACTS ABOUT SHELTERS There are two kinds of animal shelters where unwanted cats and dogs are sent. One type is the open-admission shelter. Such shelters accept every animal brought to them. No matter how old, sick, or injured an animal is, they will care for it. Open-admission shelters always need more space. They can care for animals for only a set number of days. An animal that has not been adopted once those days have passed is euthanized. *Euthanize* means “to end the life of an individual as gently as possible for reasons of mercy.” Shelters euthanize an animal by injecting it with chemicals that quickly cause its death. The other type of shelter is the limited-admission, or “no-kill,” shelter. Such shelters do not usually euthanize animals. The animals stay at the shelters until they are adopted. However, these shelters can accept only a limited number of animals.

It may seem **unbelievable** that any shelter would kill animals. How can people who take in stray and unwanted animals also kill animals? The situation is not easy. Open-admission shelters work very hard to place animals in new homes. Unfortunately, too few people adopt animals from shelters. Shelters do not have enough room for all the homeless animals in the country.

IN NEED OF A HOME No-kill shelters might seem like the best place for unwanted animals. However, the **fact** is that these shelters face difficult situations, too. Many of these shelters do euthanize some animals. They euthanize animals that are very sick and cannot be cured. They also euthanize animals that pose a risk to people’s safety.

No-kill shelters are usually full. These shelters must turn animals away. Homeless animals can face harsh, slow deaths. They may die of starvation or disease. They may be killed by cars



Information is from American Pet Products Manufacturers Association, 2005–2006 National Pet Owners Survey.

or by other animals. Some people **believe** euthanasia is a more humane way for homeless animals to die. When animals are euthanized, they die with as little pain and distress as possible.

Animals in no-kill shelters may never get adopted. Unadopted animals spend their lives in cages. The Potter League, an open-admission shelter, presents the view that “keeping an animal caged . . . for months or years on end leads to animal suffering.” In some people’s **opinion**, euthanasia is a better option than such a life.

Sometimes, no-kill shelters are in a hurry to make room for more animals. One way they make room is by sending animals to foster homes. Doing this keeps the animals alive, but sometimes the foster homes are not checked out as well as they should be. An animal sent to a foster home may end up being abused or neglected.

It can be difficult to know the best place for unwanted animals. Sift through the facts to form your own opinion. Then **decide**. Which shelters are the best option—open-admission or no-kill?

WRAP IT UP

Find It on the Page

1. Name the two types of animal shelters discussed in the article.
2. What are the main differences between open-admission and limited-admission shelters?
3. Summarize the main problem that all animal shelters face.

Use Clues

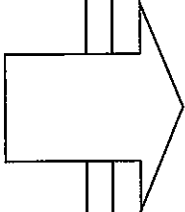
4. What do you think would happen if all shelters adopted a “no-kill” policy?
5. How would you solve the problems that no-kill shelters face?
6. What is your opinion of euthanasia as a solution to animal overpopulation?

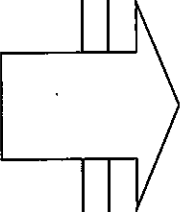
Connect to the Big Question

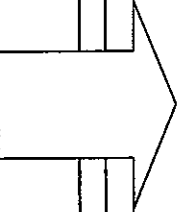
After reading the article, do you think no-kill animal shelters are really more humane than other animal shelters?

Name: _____ Date _____

Details/Similar Words

Details/similar words	
Concept	

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Key point



Reading: Make Predictions**Practice**

When you **make predictions** as you read, you make logical guesses about what will happen next in a story. You can make predictions based on what you have already read. You can also make predictions based on prior knowledge, things you already know.

A Each of these questions is about the passage that follows. Write an answer to the question, or write the letter of the choice that correctly answers the question.

1. Read the title of the passage. What does it lead you to predict about the story?

2. ____ Read the rest of the passage. What might you predict from this passage?
A. Nina will play a joke on Daniela. **B.** Daniela will score the winning goal.

One Very Refreshing Drink

Nina always joked with her teammates. Even though the other girls knew about her pranks, they were always caught off guard. At practice one day, Nina brought a cooler of cold soda; it was hot outside, and she knew everyone would be thirsty. She offered a drink to her teammate Daniela, who was sweaty from running out in the field.

B The passage at the bottom of this page continues the story. Read the passage. Then, write the letter of the choice that best answers each question.

1. ____ Which event might happen next in the story?
A. Justin will open the exploding soda. **B.** Daniela will say the drink is gross.
2. ____ Which prediction for the future is most likely to be true?
A. The team will win their game.
B. Nina will feel sorry for the jokes she is always playing.

Daniela was so thirsty that she decided to trust her teammate. She took the drink. It was cold and refreshing, with no tricks. Then another teammate, Hanna, jogged over. Nina saw her coming and quickly grabbed another soda from her cooler. This time, though, she shook the can fast, up and down, so that the soda would explode, soaking whoever popped the top. Just then Justin, the most popular boy in the school, walked up and asked Nina for a cold drink. Just looking at him made Nina nervous.