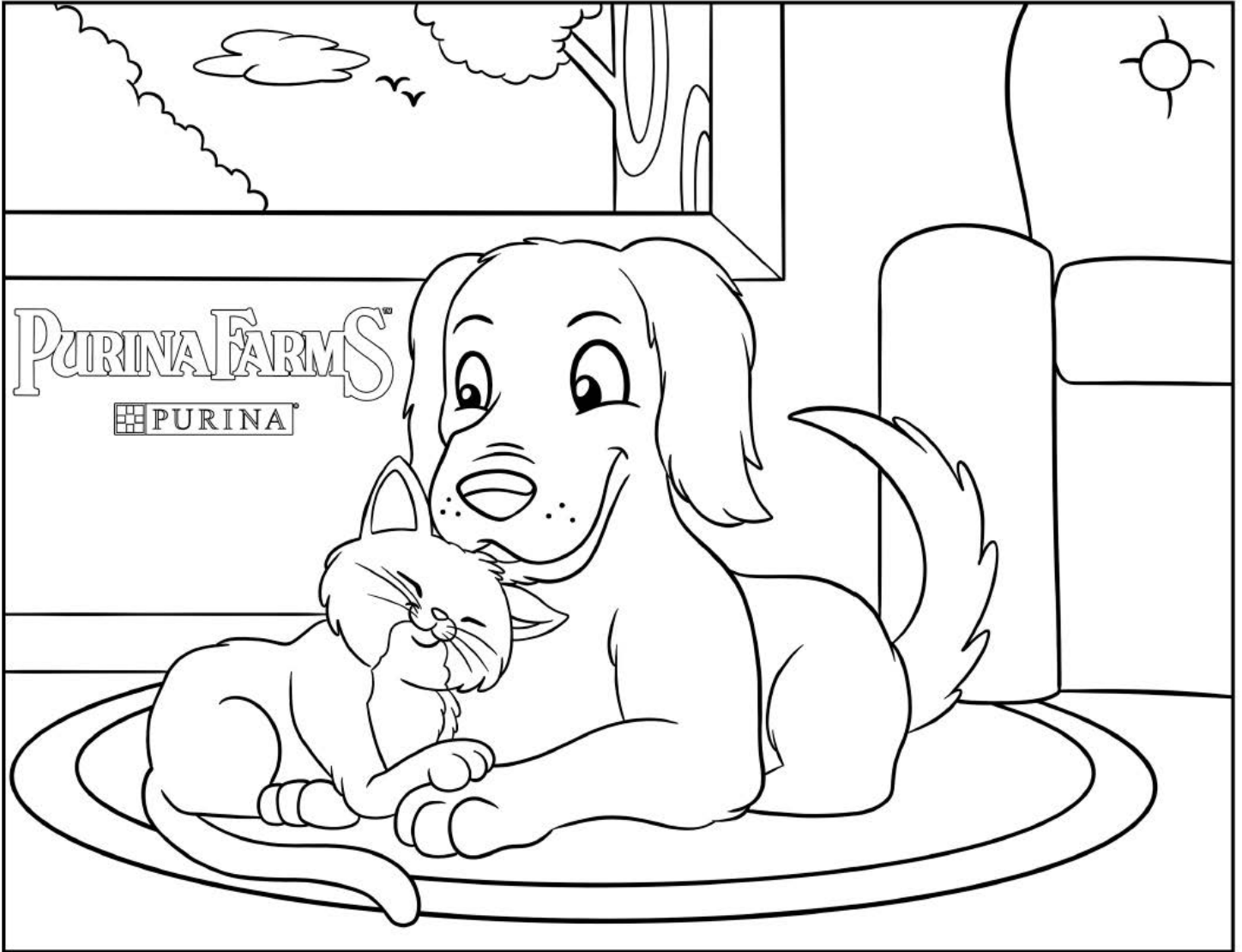


We are going to teach you what each of the letters of BETTER stand for in terms of caring for a pet.

B	<b>Brush</b> (and bathe) Routine grooming keeps your pets' skin and coat healthy and clean. Don't forget to check for lumps and bumps in the process!
E	<b>Exercise</b> Physical interactions strengthen the bond between pets and their owners and promote overall well-being.
T	<b>Train</b> Basic obedience and manners training goes a long way – including sit, stay and come (for dogs).
T	<b>Tags</b> All pets need to have ID tags on their collars and should also be microchipped in case they get lost.
E	<b>Eat</b> (and drink) Complete and balanced nutrition is the foundation of good health.
R	<b>Respect</b> Give affection appropriately when welcomed, but be sure to respect a pet's personal space.

## ACTIVITY

Color the photo of the dog and cat on the next page.

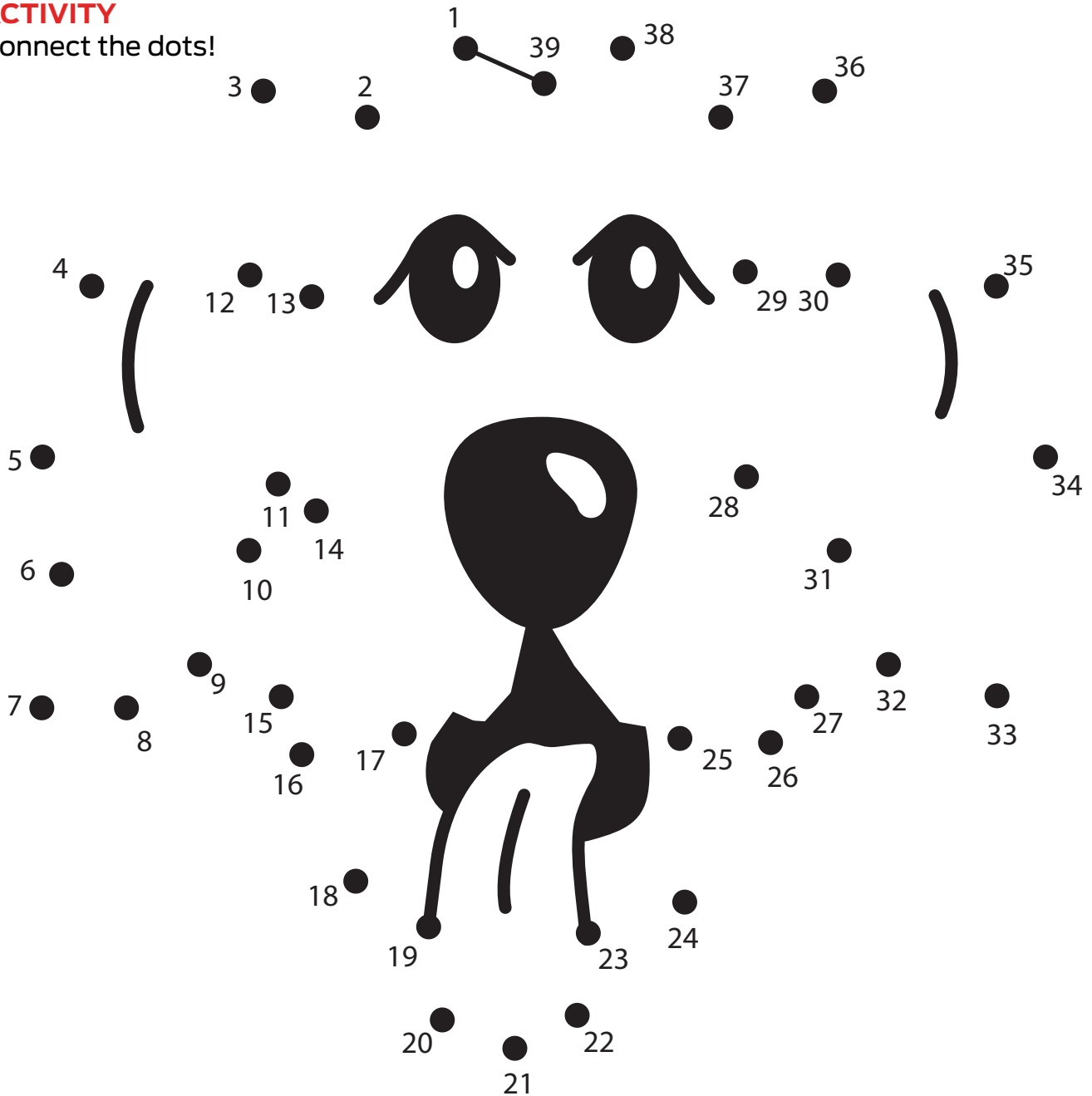


## BRUSH & BATHE

Make sure your pet looks as nice on the outside as it feels on the inside to promote overall wellness. Proper grooming involves gentle brushing very slowly and in line with the hair. As you are petting your dog or cat, look for any bumps or growths and point those out to an adult who can tell your pet's veterinarian. Also, don't forget about regular nail trims.

### ACTIVITY

Connect the dots!



## EXERCISE

Enrichment is a big part of owning a pet. Keep their bodies active and their minds thinking, so they don't pick up bad habits like chewing or scratching on furniture.

Plus, spending time with your pet can help form a strong bond.

- Take daily walks with your dog and play stimulating indoor games with your cats
- Provide ample activities inside the house to keep your pets mentally sharp like "hide and seek"
- Look for a local dog park if your dog is well-mannered and likes to socialize with other dogs

## ACTIVITY

Set up your own obstacle course in your home using household items similar to the equipment used in the canine agility courses below, and time yourself to see how long it takes to complete it. Use items like boxes to create tunnels, step stools for pause tables and cones for weaving.



Open Tunnel



Weave Poles



Pause Table

## TRAIN

Basic obedience and manners training is very important and includes teaching behaviors like sit, stay and come. Pets learn best with positive reinforcement. If they do something good, then you give them a reward. Today the reward is PRAISE and a TREAT. Rewards make them want to do that behavior again. Timing is very important. The minute your pet performs the behavior you requested, then you offer a treat. It's called "MARKING A BEHAVIOR" so they associate the treat with what they just did.

## ACTIVITY

Grab a partner and your favorite people snacks like goldfish crackers or fruit snacks.

- Sit – Start by holding your hand in front of your partner and then slowly lift it up. As the head raises, the bottom goes down. Give a treat once your partner is sitting.
- Down – Start by holding your hand in front of your partner and then slowly move it down to the floor. As their head goes down, so does their body. Give a treat once your partner is lying on the floor.
- Roll Over – Make a circular motion in front of your partner's face encouraging him/her to lean to one side. Give a treat once your partner rolls over.
- Come – Ask your partner to stay. Take 5 steps backwards away from your partner. Bend over and pat your legs asking your partner to come to you. Give a treat once your partner is sitting in front of you.



## TAGS (Identification)

1 in 3 pets will go missing in their lives; do you know the primary reason? Loud noises like fireworks and storms frighten pets, making them want to get as far away as possible. The best way to make sure your lost pet is reunited with you is to provide them with proper identification. Your pets need to have ID tags on their collars in case they get lost (90% of pets wearing visible ID tags will be returned to their owners). They should also be tagged with a microchip (the size of a grain of rice). In dogs and cats, chips are usually inserted below the skin at the back of the neck between the shoulder blades.

## ACTIVITY

Can you spot the microchip in this x-ray of a dog?



## EAT AND DRINK

Health starts with good nutrition and eating the right things. It's important for pets to eat a complete and balanced diet designed specifically to meet their unique nutritional needs. Dogs and cats are not small humans. In some cases, they can eat the same food as us, but in other cases, it can be toxic to them. Also, pets should have access to water at all times unless they are potty-training where it might be necessary to restrict water at certain times.

## ACTIVITY

Decide if the below items are good for pets or bad for pets. Circle the ones you think are good and put an X through the ones that are bad.



## EAT AND DRINK

### ANSWERS

- Chocolate:**  This can upset your dog's tummy and make his heart race
- Apple:**  These are good for you and your dog. Just don't give them the core or seeds.
- Chewing Gum:**  This can cause seizures and liver failure, so it goes in the trash.
- Grapes:**  These can cause kidney failure and make your dog very weak, so they go in the trash.
- Blueberries:**  These are good for you and your dog
- Onions:**  These can cause anemia (an attack on their red blood cells) and upset stomach
- Oranges:**  These are good for you and your dog but they're high in sugar so make sure not to give your dog too many!
- Corn:**  These are good for you and your dog (no cob)
- Eggs:**  These are good (cooked w/out the shell) for you and your dog
- Avocado:**  The seed, husk and leaves can make your dog sick. (Note: The meat of the avocado is not toxic, but should only be fed in small amounts).
- Ice cream:**  This can upset their tummy



## RESPECT

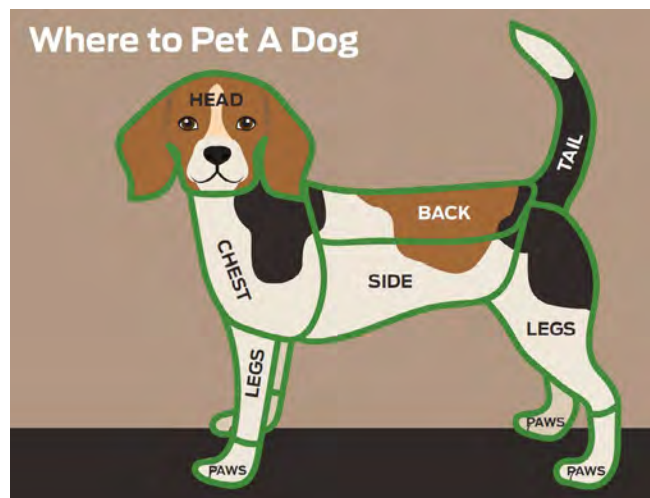
**Respect** a pet's personal space and know how to give them affection appropriately. Follow these steps before interacting with a dog, especially one you are unfamiliar with.

STEP 1 - Pause (or paws as we like to say) to ask the owner if you can pet the dog

STEP 2 - Pat your leg to invite the dog to come to you instead of you going to the dog. This gives them a choice of whether they would like to interact with you.

STEP 3 - Pet under the chin or on the sides.

Color the 3 areas that you should focus on when petting in GREEN.



Answer: Avoid front and back of the dog and focus on the middle - chest, side and back

## ACTIVITY

Watch the [Purina Farms Best Friends Video](#) on YouTube\* then answer these questions:

- 1) What is the first step before petting an unfamiliar dog?
- 2) How many children should pet a dog at one time?
- 3) How should you approach dogs and cats? \_\_\_\_\_ly and \_\_\_\_\_ly.
- 4) Never bother a pet when it is \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.

\*With parent's permission.

## ACTIVITY: Responsible Pet Care Word Search

Draw lines to match the sentence to the answer. Then find the answers in the puzzle below.

1. This activity could involve daily walks with your dog or stimulating indoor games with your cats.
2. This activity involves teaching your dog basic commands like sit, stay, come, lie down.
3. Maintaining this involves teeth brushing, providing chew toys, feeding dry food and/or crunchy treats.
4. Examples of these include appropriate collars, leashes, and toys
5. When you show your pet this, you are snuggling and petting your pet to create a stronger bond.
6. One of the keys to having a healthy pet involves feeding your pet a diet that is complete and balanced and using treats in moderation. What is this called?
7. Taking your pet to the veterinarian on a regular basis and keeping your pet well-groomed promote this.

**WELLNESS**

**NUTRITION**

**SUPPLIES**

**ORAL HEALTH**

**EXERCISE**

**AFFECTION**

**TRAINING**

