Topic: Animals

Let's get started . . What animals did you like when you were a child? Did you hear stories, read books or take care of the animals? Did you have a pet? Give examples.

Story: Bear is a dog, a black Labrador, who loved his owner until the end. His owner, Ken, worked at the King County Sheriff's department but then became homeless and lived in his car. Ken and Bear spent their days at Manor Park in Seattle. Neighbors came to the park with their dogs and made friends with Ken and Bear, and with each other. When Ken became too sick to take care of Bear, a neighbor took Bear into her home.

Bear did not explore his new home, although he accepted his new family. He just stood by the front door and waited for Ken to come and visit each day, and go to the park. When Ken went in the hospital and finally died, Bear continued to wait for him and look for him.

In pairs for 10 minutes, ask and answer this question:

Do people like pets in your native country? If so, what kinds of pets are popular? Why are they popular? Do you own a pet now? What kind?

Share your partner's answers with the group.

Interview 3 people about animals.   Write down their names and their answers.   If they say, "yes," ask "Why?" If they say "no," ask "Why not?"

What is your name?	Do you like animals in your house?	Do you like animals on a farm?	Do you like animals in nature?	Do you like animals as symbols?

Black Labrador photo by Gopal Aggarwal, link http://gopal1035.blogspot.com

Discussion Questions – talk in pairs or small groups:

Do you have a pet now? What kind of pet? Who takes care of your pet? What do you like to do with your pet?

Some East Asian and Turkic countries have a calendar with a 12-year cycle. Each year is represented by an animal. Each animal has different traits. Does your native country have this tradition? Explain.

In your native country, can you see wild animals? Are there zoos? Do you like to go to the zoo? Have you visited a zoo in Seattle? What did you like best?

Do you eat meat? Why or why not? In your native culture, are humans more valuable than animals, less valuable or the same?
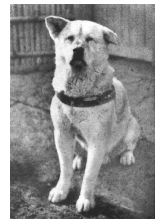
Do you describe people in your native language by comparing them to an animal, such as "strong as a lion," "works like a dog," or "sings like a bird"? Give examples.

What do you think is the most dangerous animal? What do you think is the most beautiful animal?

What animals are important to your native country's economy? What animals are important to your native country's history?

A dog named Hachiko was born in Akita, Japan.   Hachiko's owner was a university professor who worked near Shibuya station in Tokyo. For ten years after the professor passed away, Hachiko continued to go to the station every day, to wait for his owner. Hachiko is a symbol of loyalty in Japan. What animals are symbols of good character for you?

New vocabulary: animals, pet, Labrador, owner, sheriff, explore, accepted, continued, symbol, wild, zoo, human, valuable, pass away, loyalty

Keep talking about it this week: Ask someone to tell you about animals they like. Write down their response and be ready to share with the group at the next Talk Time.

More about Bear at:
http://community.seattletimes.nwsource.com/archive/?date=20040807&slug=magnolia07m

More about Hachiko at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hachik%C5%8D