

POCKET PETS REPORT FORM

NAME _____
CLUB _____
BIRTHDATE _____
YEARS IN PROJECT _____
YEARS IN 4-H _____



INTRODUCTION TO POCKET PETS
(Lesson 1)

- I. List six responsibilities of a good pet owner:
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
 - 6.
- II. Can you think of ways in which these pets appear similar to each other? Different from each other?
- III. All of these pets are mammals. What is a mammal? What group of mammals do all of these pets belong to? List some characteristics of this group.
- IV. There are many rewards to owning a pocket pet. How do you think you would benefit by raising one?

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POCKET PETS
LESSON 11: MICE AND RATS



PET RATS ARE CLEAN AND TAME

1. Things you should know about your mouse or rat cage:
 - A. Why shouldn't a mouse or rat cage be made of wood?
 - B. What can be used to deodorize a mouse or rat cage?
 - C. Should newspaper be used as bedding in the cage? Why?
 - D. How often should your mouse or rat cage be cleaned?
 - E. Give examples of things that can be used for nest boxes in the cage.
 - F. What type of bedding can be used in the cage?

II. Feeding your mice and rats:

- A. What foods do mice and rats like to eat?
- B. How will you give your pets water?
- C. What should you give your pets to keep their teeth in good condition?

III. List three things to do to keep your mice and rats clean and healthy:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

IV. Other things to know about mice and rats:

- A. Why don't we like wild mice and rats?
- B. What is one value to man of tame mice and rats?

C. List three good qualities of tame mice and rats:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

D. At what age should you buy a mouse or rat?

E. What is the best way to tame a mouse or rat?

F. How should you pick up and hold your pet?

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LESSON III - GERBILS



THE GERBIL: A HANDFUL OF FUN

- I. Gerbils in general:
 - A. Where do gerbils come from?
 - B. What is different about the sleep of gerbils from other pocket pets?
 - C. How is a gerbil's tail different from other pocket pets?
 - D. How large is an adult gerbil, and how much does he weigh?
- II. Your gerbil's home:
 - A. Describe a cage that your gerbil would like.
 - B. How often must you clean the cage?

- C. How often should you add more litter to the cage (between complete cleanings)?
- D. You should put a piece of burlap sack in your gerbil's cage. What will he use it for?

III. Food for your gerbil:

- A. List five foods that are good for gerbils:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

- B. You should feed gerbils once a day, and should not over feed them. Why not? How much should you feed a gerbil each day?

IV. Things to remember about gerbils:

- A. Gerbils enjoy having their backs and ears gently scratched. Handle them gently and often to make them relaxed friends.
- B. If you keep your gerbil's home clean and dry, the gerbil will clean and groom himself, and will be free from illness.
- C. Put a block of wood in the gerbil's cage for him to chew on.
- D. Keep gerbils from cold temperatures; keep them from direct, hot sunlight, too.
- E. Do not let your gerbils escape or run loose. They can be easily injured or lost, and can be harmful to farmers if they multiply in the wild.

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LESSON IV - GUINEA PIGS



THESE "PIGS" ARE CUTE!

- I. What is a guinea pig?
 - A. Explain where guinea pigs came from and how they got their name.
 - B. What are guinea pigs used for aside from pets?
- II. Feeding a guinea pig:
 - A. The guinea pig is a vegetarian. List five fruits and vegetables that are good for him:
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

B. Remember:

1. Always remove and throw away whatever food the guinea pig leaves over each day. The food might spoil and make him sick.
2. Always have fresh water in a gravity bottle for the guinea pig to drink.
3. Purchase a salt spool in a pet store and keep it in your guinea pig's cage.

III. The guinea pig's cage

A. Describe a cage you might build or purchase for your guinea pig:

B. How much space does a guinea pig need?

C. What should you cover the floor of the cage with?

IV. Keep him healthy!

A. List five ways to make sure your pet stays healthy:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

B. What temperature is best for a guinea pig?

C. What should you do if your guinea pig has lice or fleas?

D. How should you pick up a guinea pig?

V. Remember! Guinea pigs love to be handled. Pet and play with them as much as possible.

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LESSON V: HAMSTERS



THE HAMSTER IS A HOARDER
He fills his cheeks with food, then eats it later!

- I. About hamsters:
 - A. Tell something about the history of hamsters;
 - B. Why must you be careful about letting hamsters escape?
 - C. At what age is it best to buy a hamster?
 - D. Does a hamster enjoy living alone or with others?
- II. Housing for hamsters:
 - A. Describe a good, comfortable cage for a hamster:

B. What temperatures are most comfortable for a hamster?

C. How often should your pet's cage be cleaned?

D. What would be wrong with housing a hamster in an all-wood cage?

III. Food for your hamster:

A. List four foods that are good for hamsters:

1.

2.

3.

4.

B. Do hamsters like vegetables?

C. What fruits should not be given to a hamster?

IV. Handling hamsters:

A. Describe how you would train your hamster:

B. Remember! Always handle hamsters gently. Never tease or frighten them. Handle them frequently, though.

V. A healthy hamster:

A. List four basic steps to keep hamsters healthy:

1.

2.

3.

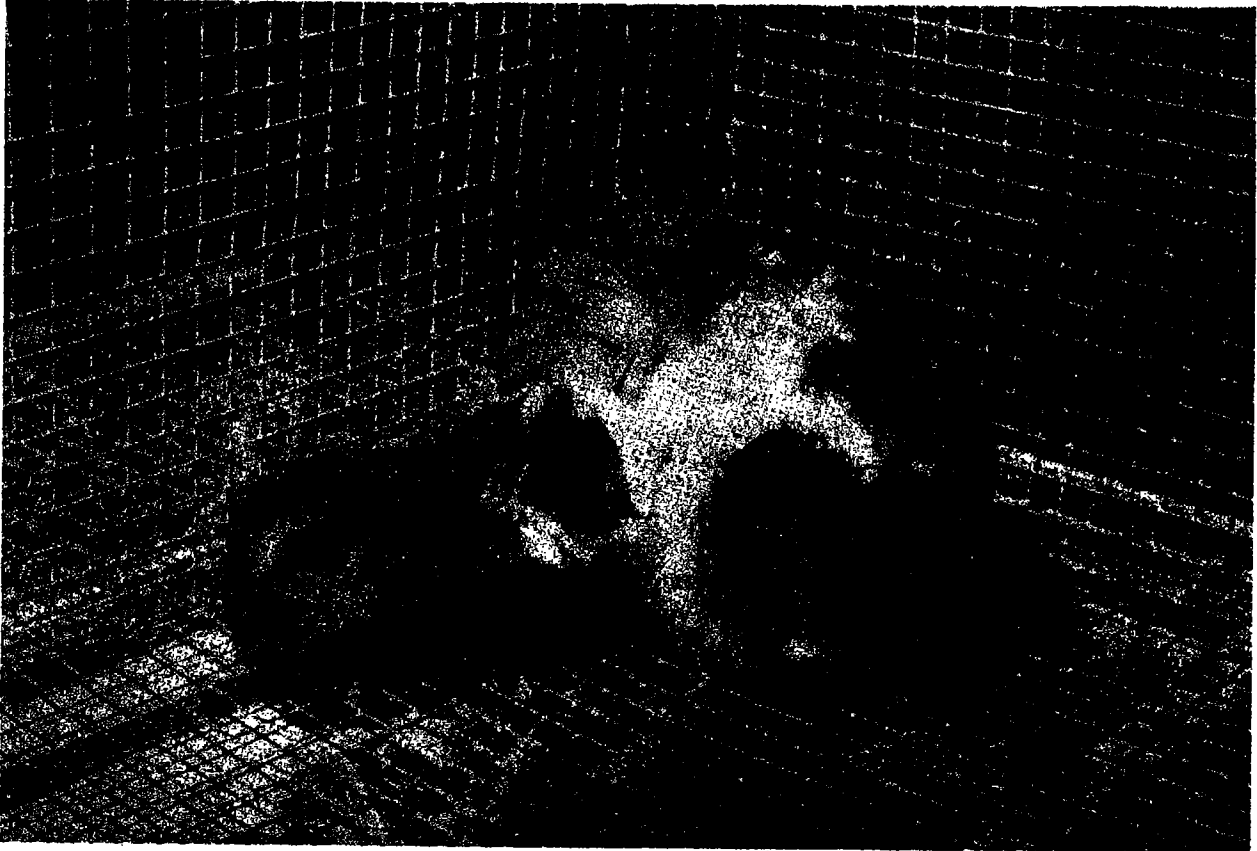
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B. What should you do if your hamster has lice or fleas?

C. What should you do with left-over vegetables in the hamster cage?

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LESSON VI: BREEDING POCKET PETS



POCKET PETS MAKE GOOD MOTHERS

- I. In general:
 - A. Why would you like breeding your pocket pets?
 - B. What would you do with the young pocket pets if you had too many to care for yourself?
 - C. Remember: 1) With all pocket pets, do not let the mother have too many litters a year. It will weaken her and damage her health.
2) Do not touch or disturb baby pocket pets during the first few weeks after birth. It will upset the mother and she may hurt her young.
- II. Breeding mice and rats?
 - A. When the female rat is pregnant, she may be kept in a cage with her mate. Is it advisable to keep her in a cage with another female? Why not?

- B. How many young is the mother rat likely to have?
- C. Will the mother mouse accept other females in her cage?
- D. How would you prepare the mother mouse's cage for her coming family?

E. Remember:

- 1. Give the mother plenty of milk to drink during her pregnancy and in the first few weeks of nursing.
- 2. Be sure to separate the male and female young as they approach maturity. Why?

III. Breeding gerbils

- A. Gerbils have happy families. The male gerbil is monogamous (he wants only one mate). He should stay with the mother during pregnancy and motherhood, since he will help her with the young.
- B. How long is the gestation period for gerbils? How many young is the mother likely to have?

IV. Breeding guinea pigs.

- A. What is the average size of a guinea pig litter?
- B. What should you feed the mother guinea pig during the first ten days after birth?
- C. Remember:
 - 1. Avoid lifting and playing with the mother during the last two weeks of pregnancy. You may injure her.
 - 2. Separate the male and female young before they can breed.

V. Breeding hamsters

- A. Describe the procedure for mating hamsters:
- B. What should you give the female for nesting material
- C. At what age can the young be weaned?
- D. Remember:
 - Supplement the mother's diet with bread and milk after the birth of her young.

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