

# General Knowledge

People who have developmental disabilities should not only be present in their communities... They should participate..

The purpose of General Knowledge Class is to broaden the student's frame of reference so that he/she may become more conversant within society.

If anybody anywhere should bring up a subject that was covered in class, the student automatically stands a better chance of being "in the loop".

The premise behind conducting a General Knowledge Class is simple:

**Assuming that you have a working knowledge of a given subject, you are merely asked to relay this knowledge to the students... Tell them about it!**

Our list of Knowledge Classes is too long to print. (Just see the Encyclopedia.) Here are just a few examples:

## Knowledge

### Thomas Edison

- Thomas Edison was born in 1847 and died in 1922. How many years did he live?
- Thomas Edison was born in Ohio. He grew up in Michigan. He moved to New Jersey. Do you know where these states are? Look at the map.
- His middle name was Alva. That's an odd middle name. What's your middle name?
- He was a great inventor. What's an invention?
- During his career, Thomas Edison patented over 1000 inventions. They include: the electric light, the phonograph, the movie camera. Talk about each of these inventions. What are their functions and use? How do they relate to your daily life? What other inventions and changes in our lifestyles did they lead to?
- Name and discuss more of Thomas Edison's inventions (e.g. the battery).
- Name other inventions that are now taken for granted as part of our lives.
- Do you have any ideas for inventions... something that presently does not exist that people could really use if it did exist? (If the group suggests an idea, discuss how you would go about creating it so it would work.)

- **HOMEWORK:** When you go home, ask people (parent, residential staff, etc.) what they know about Thomas Edison and inventions. If you learn anything new or related, bring it in to share with the group. If you find any pictures related to Thomas Edison, bring them in. If you happen to invent something, bring that in.

## **Knowledge**

### **Dogs**

We do not have to define “dog”! We have all known (and probably loved) dogs in our past.

Reminisce for a bit about dogs people in the group have known (or know)... their names, their habits, what they looked like, stories, etc.

Let’s just focus upon facts about dogs...

### **Kinds of Dogs**

How many breeds of dogs are there? (over 300) How many can you name? What are some of them? What do they look like? Anybody want to do some drawing? Name some large dogs, small dogs, fast dogs, etc.

### **Jobs for Dogs**

List and describe: Guide Dogs, Sled Dogs, Herd Dogs, Circus Dogs, Fire Station Dogs, Watch Dogs, Racing Dogs, Bloodhounds, Hunting Dogs, First Aid Dogs, Movie Dogs, Others?

### **Famous Dogs**

Identify both real and cartoon dogs: Lassie, Rin-Tin-Tin, Asta, Checkers (Nixon’s dog), Scooby Doo, Huckleberry Hound, Pluto, Goofy(?), Astro, Snoopy, etc. Also: “Lady and the Tramp”, “Call of the Wild”, “101 Dalmations”, etc.

### **Good Qualities of Dogs**

Friendly, loyal, loving & lovable, cute, nice to pet, playful, sometimes useful, sometimes heroic, can do tricks, good learners, expressive, caring, family oriented, character building... add to the list.

### **Problems with Dogs**

Fleas, shed hair, chew on things, dig up things, hyper, might bite, require training, grooming, maintenance, expensive to care for, bark at night, whine, might run away, chase cats, chickens, cars etc., drink from toilet, bad breath, will certainly die...Add to list.

### **Dogs Like**

PEOPLE, attention, playing, chasing, fetching, being petted, meat, other dogs, some cats, smelling, licking, trees & fire hydrants, territory, toys, the ocean, balls & Frisbees, reproducing, swimming, showing off, "good vibes" ... Add to list.

### **Dogs Don't Like**

Fleas, ticks, going to the vet, being cooped up, some cats, certain people, intruders, neglect, reprimands, negativity, baths, threats to friends or family, being hungry, etc.

### **Look up & Discuss these Words**

- Canine
- Kennel
- Instinct
- Devotion
- Rabid
- Mange
- Dingo (Can you use this word in a sentence?)
- Veterinarian
- Mutt, Mongrel

### **Questions**

- What is DOG spelled backward?
- Are dogs happy or alarmed when they hear sirens?
- Why can dogs hear what we can't?
- What are they saying when they bark?
- Is Goofy a dog or what?
- Why do dogs "go to the bathroom" outside and we go inside?

- What are some common and creative dog names?
- Think of more questions?

### **Closing Group Activity**

Let's do some group barking and howling and make this place sound like a kennel!

Go home and research dogs on the internet.

Next time how about Cats?

### **Knowledge**

#### **Cities**

A city is a center of population, commerce, and culture; a town of significant size and importance.

#### **Exercises:**

- Solicit input to describe characteristics typically associated with cities (e.g. traffic, smog, fancy restaurants, tall buildings, etc. ... and to contrast city characteristics from country characteristics (barns, farm animals, peace & quiet, etc)
- List cities that we know or have heard of (New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, etc.) Find each that you listed on a map or globe. Discuss the concepts of East, West, North, South... States, Countries, etc. Name some foreign cities (Moscow, Paris, London, Berlin, etc.)
- Choose 1 city. Brainstorm and discuss as a group that city's distinguishing characteristics and qualities (i.e. climate, landmarks, symbols, sport teams, reputation, music, food, celebrities, history, etc.) Make an art project out of this if you want (drawing, collage, model, etc.)
- Do the same for other cities if time allows or in different sessions.
- Ask for personal experiences that people may want to share in regard to a city or cities (e.g if someone has been to Anchorage or use to live in Detroit, etc.)

- Discuss cities of the past in contrast with cities of the future... technological advances that have or will make a difference.
- As a group, get creative and design your own fictional city. Name it. What celebrity might you make mayor? Describe all of the other attributes listed above... (symbols, landmarks, sport teams, climate, history, industry, geographical location, etc.) This too can become an art project.
- Do the same for States, Countries, Continents, etc. in different sessions.

## Knowledge

### Holidays

What is a Holiday?

What are the Holidays? (List on Board)

When is each one?

What does each mean?

How are each celebrated?

What did YOU do for each one?

What's good about each Holiday? (Your opinion)

What's not good about certain Holidays? (Your opinion)

What are

- Symbols
- Customs
- Foods
- Songs (sing some)
- Preparations
- Etc. For each Holiday?

Using a calendar or a personal appointment book, find and highlight each Holiday of the year.

Focus on the coming one... and discuss a plan.