Level: B1 Intermedio

Skill: Reading

# Pets



We love our pets. Some people say they are our best friends. But what do we really know about them? And do they love us back? Here, we look at the relationship between pets and their owners.

What do pets think of us?
Scientists at Emory University in Atlanta, USA, have been studying dogs' brains. They discovered that dogs can feel emotions like jealousy. When a dog's owner is playing with another dog, the first dog becomes unhappy. The scientists also found that dogs love their owners more than anything else. In fact, they love their owners more than food! This is because dogs see their owners as family members. But it's not just dogs that love their owners. A study from 2015 showed that cats love their owners too. Researchers at Oregon State University in the US tested cats to see if they preferred human interaction or food. The cats chose human interaction. However, cats don't need their owners for food - they're very good hunters!

Can we understand what our pets want?
Some people believe that they can understand their pets. They say things like 'My dog wants to go out' or 'My cat wants to play'. But can they really understand their pets? Scientists at the University of Lincoln in the UK studied how well people understood their dogs. They asked dog owners to watch videos of other dogs and say what they wanted. The results showed that the owners could understand their dogs quite well. They were better at understanding their own dogs than they were at understanding other dogs.

But what about cats?
Can we understand what they want? In 2009, researchers at the University of Sussex in the UK studied how well people understood their cats. They asked cat owners to guess what their cats wanted in different situations. The results showed that the owners didn't understand their cats very well. They were no better at guessing what their cats wanted than people who didn't have cats.

Do pets help us?
Many people say that their pets help them. Some people even believe that their pets can make them better. In a study from 2015, researchers at the University of Western Australia looked at how pets affected people's health. They found that people with pets went to the doctor less often than people without pets. The researchers think this is because pets reduce stress. Other studies have shown that pets can also help people with depression and anxiety.

So, do our pets love us?
Yes, they do. Our pets are very important to us. They're part of our family. And we're part of theirs too.

**Answer the questions with your own ideas.**

**What did scientists at Emory University discover about dogs' emotions?**

**Why do dogs love their owners more than anything else?**

**What is the author's overall message about the relationship between pets and their owners?**

LIVEWORKSHEETS