

Emily Smith  
St. Alban's Episcopal  
6<sup>th</sup> Grade, 1<sup>st</sup> Place

Many different animals benefit humans in our daily lives. We all know that animals provide us with meat and milk for food, and give us wool and leather for clothing and other products we use. They also contribute to medical research which saves lives every day.

There are also animals who learn to do jobs just like humans do. Working animals around the world such as horses, mules, and camels provide transportation. Dogs help the police and the military find illegal drugs and bombs, and are also trained to rescue lost people. On farms and ranches, dog herd sheep and cows. Cowboys also help herd by riding horses. Dogs and birds such as falcons are used in hunting. Guard dogs help to protect people and their homes. There are even pigs trained to use their sense of smell to find truffles, an expensive cooking ingredient, under the ground in France!

Assistance and guide animals help disabled people with their daily lives. The most well-known are seeing-eye dogs who guide people who cannot see well. Animals can also help those who cannot hear know when the phone or doorbell rings. Even monkeys can assist people who cannot walk, lift, or reach by performing tasks for them. These animals help many disabled people live more independently.

There are also therapy animals such as dogs, cats, and horses, who help people in nursing homes, hospitals, schools. Animals can reduce stress and improve your health. There are even dogs trained to be good listeners, who help children in school learn to read out loud with confidence. These animals provide companionship and help people to interact with each other.

Many of us enjoy living with pet animals. Pets of all kinds love their owners and give them someone to love in return. Pets can be special friends to lonely people, and can cheer us up when we feel sad. A simple thing like taking a dog for a walk can help people exercise and meet other people. My own cat helps me by keeping me company. I pet and play with him every day. If I could have any pet I wanted, I would want a baby monkey, because I think they are so cute.

When we think about all the ways animals benefit us, we should know that all animals deserve our respect and care. As you can see, animals help us and change our lives every single day. Animals help us to be better people!