

Working dogs

Watch the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6i9X3Fnsymo>

We know them as man's best friend, and while dogs have **endeared** themselves to **humankind**, they are not only great **companions** but hard workers. For thousands of years dogs have been part of the human **experience**; they have **adapted** and been **bred** to assist us in everyday life. They play **diverse** roles as **livestock** herders, **rescuers**, sled pullers, and even work to brighten the lives of the **elderly** and **disabled**.

Early on in our relationship, dogs found a **role** within **society**. Their **exceptional** abilities to see and run, and their **protective** nature made them perfect for herding **livestock**; fending off **predators** while keeping the herd moving.

Even in the modern age dogs are used in farm work, in places like the **rugged** mountains of New Zealand. On an open range like this, a handful of dogs can handle thousands of sheep. They work **tirelessly**, and cover up to fifty miles a day **routinely**, but working the farm isn't the only way they help their human masters in the frozen lands of the north; **indigenous** people relied on dogs as a **vital** means of transportation. The thick fur and strong **stamina** of dogs like the Siberian Husky made them well **adapted** to **hauling** food and supplies to **villages** in the cold weather.

During the gold rush of the late 19th century, they were **routinely** used to **haul freight**. Years later, sled dogs carried **explorers** Admiral Robert Peary and Roald Amundsen to find the north and south poles. These dogs still **ply** the snows of the extreme north. Their **endurance** is put to the test in competitions like the dog sled race. Dogs often **contribute** to our lives by working alongside us, but they also save lives when sudden **disasters** -like an **avalanche** or **earthquake**- happen. **Rescue** dogs can find people under near-impossible conditions.

Some qualities of rescue dogs do come naturally; their sense of smell is far **superior** to humans. But rescue dogs must still work hard with their trainers to **hone** their skills, and for the dog, it's a game. They learn to sniff out people for the **reward** of food and toys; in real situations, it's the dog who communicates to the trainer where people may be **trapped**, and who **command** signal authorities. But dogs don't necessarily have to be the strong and sturdy types to be workers. When it comes to helping special needs people with pet **therapy**, the main qualification is unconditional love. These special dogs spend their days visiting people who could use some **attention**. For them, spending time with these **critters** has led to improved communication, better attention with tasks, and what can often be a much-needed lifting-of-spirits.

For all their help dogs remain some of our closest **companions**.

Vocabulary list:

endear - *verb* make attractive or lovable

humankind - *noun* all of the living human inhabitants of the earth

companion - *noun* one paid to accompany or assist or live with another; a person who is frequently in the company of another; a traveler who accompanies you; *verb* be a companion to somebody

experience - *noun* the accumulation of knowledge or skill that results from direct participation in events or activities; the content of direct observation or participation in an event; an event as apprehended; *verb* go through (mental or physical states or experiences); go or live through; undergo; have firsthand knowledge of states, situations, emotions, or sensations; undergo an emotional sensation

adapt - *verb* make fit for, or change to suit a new purpose; adapt or conform oneself to new or different conditions

breed - *noun* a lineage or race of people; a special variety of domesticated animals within

a species; a special lineage; half-caste offspring of parents of different races (especially of white and American Indian parents); *verb* have young (animals); cause to procreate (animals); copulate with a female, used especially of horses; call forth

livestock - *noun* not used technically; any animals kept for use or profit

diverse - *adj.* distinctly dissimilar or unlike; many and different

rescue - *noun* recovery or preservation from loss or danger; *verb* take forcibly from legal custody; free from harm or evil

elderly - *adj.* advanced in years; ('aged' is pronounced as two syllables); *noun* people who are old collectively

disabled - *adj.* markedly unable to function as a consequence of injury or illness; so badly injured as to be excused from continuing; *noun* people collectively who are crippled or otherwise physically handicapped

role - *noun* normal or customary activity of a person in a particular social setting; the actions and activities assigned to or required or expected of a person or group; what something is used for; an actor's portrayal of someone in a play

society - *noun* an extended social group having a distinctive cultural and economic organization; the fashionable elite; a formal association of people with similar interests; the state of being with someone

exceptional - *adj.* deviating widely from a norm of physical or mental ability; used especially of children below normal in intelligence; surpassing what is common or usual or expected; far beyond what is usual in magnitude or degree

protective - *adj.* (usually followed by 'of') solicitously caring or mindful; intended or adapted to afford protection of some kind; showing a care

livestock - *noun* not used technically; any animals kept for use or profit

predator - *noun* any animal that lives by preying on other animals; someone who attacks in search of booty

rugged - *adj.* sturdy and strong in constitution or construction; enduring; very difficult; severely testing stamina or resolution; rocky and steep; topographically very uneven

tireless - *adj.* characterized by hard work and perseverance; showing sustained enthusiastic action with unflagging vitality

routine - *adj.* occurring at fixed times or predictable intervals; found in the ordinary course of events; *noun* an unvarying or habitual method or procedure; a set sequence of steps, part of larger computer program; a short theatrical performance that is part of a longer program

indigenous - *adj.* originating where it is found

vital - *adj.* manifesting or characteristic of life; performing an essential function in the living body; full of spirit; urgently needed; absolutely necessary

stamina - *noun* enduring strength and energy

haul - *noun* the act of drawing or hauling something; the quantity that was caught; *verb* transport in a vehicle; draw slowly or heavily

village - *noun* a community of people smaller than a town; a settlement smaller than a town; a mainly residential district of Manhattan; 'the Village' became a home for many writers and artists in the 20th century

freight - *noun* transporting goods commercially at rates cheaper than express rates; the charge for transporting something by common carrier; goods carried by a large vehicle; *verb* load with goods for transportation; transport commercially as cargo

explore - *verb* examine (organs) for diagnostic purposes; examine minutely; travel to or penetrate into; inquire into

ply - *noun* (usually in combinations) one of several layers of cloth or paper or wood as in plywood; one of the strands twisted together to make yarn or rope or thread; often used in combination; *verb* use diligently; wield vigorously; join together as by twisting, weaving, or molding; travel a route regularly; apply oneself diligently; provide what is desired or needed, especially support, food or sustenance

endurance - *noun* the power to withstand hardship or stress; a state of surviving; remaining alive

contribute - *verb* contribute to some cause; be conducive to; provide; bestow a quality on

disaster - *noun* an act that has disastrous consequences; an event resulting in great loss and misfortune; a state of extreme (usually irremediable) ruin and misfortune

avalanche - *noun* a sudden appearance of an overwhelming number of things; a slide of large masses of snow and ice and mud down a mountain; *verb* gather into a huge mass and roll down a mountain, of snow

earthquake - *noun* shaking and vibration at the surface of the earth resulting from underground movement along a fault plane or from volcanic activity; a disturbance that is extremely disruptive

superior - *adj.* (often followed by 'to') above being affected or influenced by; (sometimes followed by 'to') not subject to or influenced by; of or characteristic of high rank or importance; of high or superior quality or performance; having an orbit farther from the sun than the Earth's orbit; having a higher rank; written or printed above and to one side of another character; *noun* a town in northwest Wisconsin on Lake Superior across from Duluth; the head of a religious community; one of greater rank or station or quality; a character or symbol set or printed or written above and immediately to one side of another character; the largest freshwater lake in the world; the deepest of the Great Lakes; a combatant who is able to defeat rivals

hone - *noun* a whetstone made of fine gritstone; used for sharpening razors; *verb* sharpen with a hone; make perfect or complete

reward - *noun* an act performed to strengthen approved behavior; the offer of money for helping to find a criminal or for returning lost property; payment made in return for a service rendered; benefit resulting from some event or action; a recompense for worthy acts or retribution for wrongdoing; *verb* act or give recompense in recognition of someone's behavior or actions; strengthen and support with rewards; bestow honor or rewards upon

trap - *noun* a device in which something (usually an animal) can be caught and penned; a light two-wheeled carriage; a device to hurl clay pigeons into the air for trapshooters; drain consisting of a U-shaped section of drainpipe that holds liquid and so prevents a return flow of sewer gas; informal terms for the mouth; something (often something deceptively attractive) that catches you unawares; the act of concealing yourself and lying in wait to attack by surprise; a hazard on a golf course; *verb* to hold fast or prevent from moving; catch in or as if in a trap; hold or catch as if in a trap; place in a confining or embarrassing position

command - *noun* availability for use; the power or authority to command; great skillfulness and knowledge of some subject or activity; an authoritative direction or instruction to do something; a military unit or region under the control of a single officer; a position of highest authority; (computer science) a line of code written as part of a computer program; *verb* make someone do something; be in command of; demand as one's due; exercise authoritative control or power over; look down on

therapy - *noun* (medicine) the act of caring for someone (as by medication or remedial training etc.)

attention - *noun* a courteous act indicating affection; a motionless erect stance with arms at the sides and feet together; assumed by military personnel during drill or review; the faculty or power of mental concentration; the process whereby a person concentrates on some features of the environment to the (relative) exclusion of others; a general interest that leads people to want to know more; the work of providing treatment for or attending to someone or something

critter - *noun* a regional term for creature (especially domestic animals)

companion - *noun* one paid to accompany or assist or live with another; a person who is frequently in the company of another; a traveler who accompanies you; *verb* be a companion to somebody