

All About Animals!

What is iQ: smartparent?

iQ: smartparent is an Emmy-winning multimedia television and web series designed for parents that will empower them with new knowledge, tools, and abilities to successfully guide their children through the changing landscape of digital media and technology. It's a growing community of caregivers, national experts, educators, and parent bloggers who want to understand the opportunities and challenges of media as it relates to the development of their children. *iQ: smartparent* was created by WQED Multimedia in 2012.

About this Episode

This episode of iQsmartparent lands at the unique intersection of animal appreciation, digital media, and education! Meet some furry friends who are part of the Reading With Rover program, an evidence-based literacy program that uses dogs to inspire kids, including those with learning disabilities, to practice reading skills. The segment also includes instructions for how families can create a similar reading program at home with their own pets. This episode also includes feathered friends from the National Aviary, which sponsors a Maker challenge to promote STEAM as local designers create items inspired by birds. Finally, learn how pets (both real ones and virtual ones) can be used to help children build responsibility skills.

Discussion Questions

1. How do the arts influence STEAM? How does it influence conservation efforts like the ones at the National Aviary?
2. How do you think a virtual pet can help build responsibility in children?
3. Is there a program near you that does a reading program with animals? Try checking with your local animal shelter.
4. If you don't have a pet at home to read to, what are some alternatives you can think of? Can you ask a neighbor or a friend?
5. What are the benefits for children reading to animals?
6. What are some important animal education lessons your child can learn from interacting with animals through reading to them and about them?

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About the Guests

Gideon and his mother Rachel from I've Pet That Dog

Gideon loves dogs and loves petting them. He wanted to see how many different dogs he could meet and pet, so he decided take pictures and post them on a website. Since he started his website in September of 2016, he has pet over 300 dogs! He documents every dog he pets and posts about them on his Twitter account, [I've Pet That Dog](#). He records each dog's name, age, background, and personality traits. His favorite dogs are Chihuahuas and he says that he's even in a Chihuahua fan club. www.ivepetthatdog.com/

Follow Gideon on social media!

- <https://twitter.com/ivepetthatdog?lang=en>
- www.facebook.com/IvePetThatDog/
- www.instagram.com/ivepetthatdog/?hl=en



Cathy Schlott is the National Aviary's Curator of Behavioral Management and Education. She manages an expert staff of educators and animal trainers, as well as 80 birds and mammals who serve as ambassadors for their wild counterparts. She is a licensed falconer in the state of Pennsylvania, and has more than fifteen years of professional animal training experience, including past work in wildlife rehabilitation. Cathy shares her passion for birds and conservation through her work as an educator at the National Aviary. When training birds at the National Aviary and beyond, Cathy focuses on behaviors that birds would naturally perform in the wild, showcasing their abilities and educating people through engaging

presentations locally and nationally. Schlott produces the National Aviary's interactive live bird demonstrations where, using a combination of video, music, narration, and animals, guests are transported around the world learning about and experiencing some of the magnificent animals that call our planet home. Schlott has also trained animals to perform on the national stage, including shows like The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon, the Today show and Good Morning America. Schlott continues to share her diverse experiences with the global animal care community and has served as President for the Animal Behavior Management Alliance (ABMA), Vice President for the local chapter of the American Association of Zoo Keepers (AAZK) and is a professional member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). She has presented award-winning papers globally, sharing her training expertise with animal professionals around the world.



Patricia O'Neill is the National Aviary's Director of Education and Visitor Engagement. With more than 22 years in the environmental education field, O'Neill has extensive experience in environmental education program development, facilitation, and project management. She began her career as a Master Teacher onboard Pittsburgh Voyager (AKA Riverquest), becoming the organization's first education specialist. When the opportunity to facilitate land-based programming arose, O'Neill moved from the rivers to Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania (ASWP), spending 12 years at Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve developing and honing skills in field-based environmental education, management and leadership. O'Neill was a member of the Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Educators (PAEE) Board of Directors, co-chairing their 2008 state conference, and was active in the Western Pennsylvania Nature Center Roundtable (WPNCR), assisting with leadership and coordination duties. These past experiences serve her well in her leadership role at the National Aviary. Her department's charge is to educate others about birds, their habitats, environmental pressures, and the role humans play in conservation. Interpretation and guest engagement have become top priorities, and, along with a talented team of interpretive educators, O'Neill influences and supports creative guest experiences with the National Aviary's living collection and exhibitions. O'Neill holds a Bachelor's degree in biology from Allegheny College and a Master's degree in environmental science and management from Duquesne University. She lives in Penn Hills with her husband and two cats.



Mallory Sickle is the Assistant Director of Lifelong Learning at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History. She has been working with animals in professional settings for over 15 years. Her background consists of zoos, conservation centers, and museums. She is also an adjunct professor at West Liberty University teaching Zoo Education. She loves spending time with friends and family, enjoying the outdoors and travel



Lindsay Wright-Durko (artist) has been cultivating a keen observational eye since she was young. She has always loved exploring nature and putting what she saw on paper. This desire for drawing realistically with scientific themes developed through schooling as Lindsay earned her degree in Studio Arts with a minor in Biology at the University of Pittsburgh. Lindsay was a work-study student in the Education Department of the Carnegie Museum of Natural History throughout her years at Pitt. This opened her up to many opportunities including working with paleontologist Dr. Matthew Lamanna to reconstruct the skeleton of a new species of Titanosaur, a long-necked dinosaur. Typically working with color pencil to bring out the bright colors and detail of nature, Lindsay uses knowledge acquired through taking classes in animal physiology, vertebrate morphology and dinosaur evolution to draw accurate illustrations. Lindsay is certified in Science Illustration from California State University, Monterey Bay and completed an internship in Art Direction with Zoobooks, Kid's Magazine. Currently living in Pittsburgh, Lindsay shares her artwork with the community through fairs and festivals, and works as a freelance science illustrator for such clients as the Smithsonian Science Education Center.

Check out Lindsay's work at lindscience.com/



Photo By Jessica Bittel

Jason Bittel has been contributing to National Geographic News since 2014. He loves finding stories about unusual animals, and has covered everything from purple pig-nosed frogs and polar bear baculums to squirrels that make mushroom jerky and eyeball-eating kelp gulls. Bittel's stories have appeared in the Washington Post, Smithsonian Magazine, New Scientist Magazine, onEarth Magazine, and Slate Magazine. He has eaten termite soldiers in South Africa, fished for piranha in the Peruvian Amazon, and once spent a season trapping wild boar for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. He was the recipient of a National Geographic Society Young Explorer Grant in 2009. Bittel holds an undergraduate degree in environmental writing from Allegheny College and a master of fine arts from the University of Pittsburgh.

Check out Jason's work at: www.bittelmethis.com/
www.nationalgeographic.com/contributors/b/jason-bittel/

Online Resources

The National Aviary www.aviary.org/
www.aviary.org/maker-challenge
www.aviary.org/artshow

Carnegie Museum of Natural History <https://carnegiemnh.org/>

- Live Animal Collection
<https://carnegiemuseums.org/carnegie-magazine/fall-2017/animal-attraction/>
- Resources for Teachers <https://carnegiemnh.org/educator/educators/>
- Resources for Homeschool Classes
<https://carnegiemnh.org/educator/homeschool-classes/>

Explore – A multimedia organization and online portal documenting a wide range of topics, and offering a broad selection of live cams of animals in their natural environments, care facilities, and sanctuaries. www.Explore.org

Diversity in America's Great Outdoors – Changing the Face of American Birding
www.fws.gov/midwest/news/585.html

STEM Majors for Students Who Want to Work With Animals
www.teenlife.com/blogs/stem-majors-work-animals

5 Ways Animals Can teach Kids Kindness
www.nationalgeographic.com/family/5-ways-kids-learn-kindness-from-animals/

Caring For Pets Teaches Children Responsibility
www.petassure.com/new-newsletters/caring-for-pets-teaches-children-responsibility/

Four Ways Animals Improve Children's Development
<https://practicaloutcomes.edu.au/2017/12/06/four-ways-animals-improve-childrens-development/>

Why Are Virtual Pet Games Good For Your Kid?
<https://peaksel.com/blog/virtual-pet-games-good-kid/>

How Animals Improve Child Development
<http://info.thinkfun.com/stem-education/how-animals-improve-child-development>

Pets Help Make Children Better Readers, Better People
www.petmd.com/blogs/thedailyvet/ken-tudor/2015/september/pets-help-make-children-better-readers-better-people-3322

Pets can help their humans create friendships, find social support
www.health.harvard.edu/blog/pets-can-help-their-humans-create-friendships-find-social-support-201505067981

10 Things to Consider Before Bringing a New Pet Home

www.petassure.com/new-newsletters/caring-for-pets-teaches-children-responsibility/

Animals Help Children Overcome Challenges

<https://childmind.org/article/animals-help-children-overcome-challenges/>

Classroom Pets – Teaching Children About Responsibility

www.petassure.com/new-newsletters/caring-for-pets-teaches-children-responsibility/

Best Pet Apps for Kids

www.commonsemmedia.org/lists/best-pet-apps-for-kids

PBS Learning Media: Animals Collection

pbslearningmedia.org/collection/inheritance-and-traits-of-animals/#.Wz4rm9VKi70

PBS Learning Media: Nature Collection

pbslearningmedia.org/collection/nature-pbs-custom/#.Wz4roNVKi70

PBS Learning Media: Wild Kratts Collection

pbslearningmedia.org/collection/wild-kratts/#.Wz4rqdVKi70

Lesson Plans for Teachers

www.humanesociety.org/parents_educators/lesson_plans_for_teachers.html

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