

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Considering Cockroaches

I have had the pleasure of raising many different kinds of animals. In my 40 years of pet ownership, I have had rabbits, fish, lizards, dogs, cats, hamsters, and even a pot-bellied pig. As a longtime pet owner, I therefore must take issue with your recent article, "Dogs Make the Best Pets" (6/15/11). There is no doubt that dogs are playful, loyal, and smart. Dogs have been an extremely popular choice for pet owners for decades. But your article completely ignored the many benefits of a slightly less popular pet: cockroaches.



If dogs are such great pets, then why do dog owners have so few of them? How many dogs does the typical dog owner have? One? Two? Three? I have over four hundred cockroaches. This number is, of course, an estimate. I cannot really be certain exactly how many of those little beauties currently live under my roof. They are a little shy and like to hide when I turn the lights on, so it can be difficult to keep an exact count. But my point remains the same: if dogs really were the "best pets," as your article claims, people would have more of them.

Furthermore, while I understand all of your points about the benefits of dog ownership, your article does not address two very important negative factors: the expense and the labor. First, the expense: purebred dogs can cost thousands of dollars. Even if you adopt a dog from a shelter, you still have to pay some fees. Moreover, once you get the dog home, you have to pay for food, toys, and visits to the veterinarian. Second, the labor: dogs require a lot of work. You have to walk dogs. You have to train dogs not to jump on people. You have to teach dogs not to chew on furniture.

These problems with expense and labor do not apply to cockroaches. First and foremost, cockroaches are 100% free. You do not have to pay a breeder or a shelter to adopt a cockroach—they just walk right into your home! You also do not have to buy any sort of special food for cockroaches. They are happy to eat your crumbs, garbage, or even cardboard boxes. Try feeding a cardboard box to a dog! As far as labor goes, there is no pet easier to take care of than a cockroach. You never need to walk cockroaches, because they prefer to spend all day inside the house. Plus, cockroaches already know not to jump on people. In fact, they are more than happy just to scurry into a dark corner when strangers come into the room and turn on the lights.

I am not saying that dogs are all bad. I understand that different people enjoy different kinds of pets. But your article failed to consider every option for people interested in becoming pet owners. Cockroaches may not be right for everyone, but they are certainly the best pets that I have ever had. I hope that this letter helps other readers realize that they should give these tiny creatures a chance to become their new best friends.

- 1) This passage would most likely be found in
- A. the letters to the editor section of a newspaper
  - B. a brochure at a veterinarian's office about how to choose a pet
  - C. an encyclopedia article about cockroaches
  - D. an exotic pet owner's life story
- 2) In paragraph 1, the author most likely identifies him or herself as a "longtime pet owner" who has had many different types of pets in order to
- A. inform readers about the different kinds of pets available
  - B. make readers curious about the author's background
  - C. convince readers that exotic animals like lizards and pot-bellied pigs are more interesting than dogs and cats
  - D. establish that he or she is an authority on the subject of pets
- 3) The author apparently believes that cockroaches make the best pets. However, in paragraph 1, the author states that "dogs are playful, loyal, and smart" and then admits that "dogs have been an extremely popular choice for pet owners for decades." The author most likely makes these statements in order to
- I. show that he or she has considered other points of view before voicing an opinion
  - II. answer the question of why dog owners have so few dogs each
  - III. show that dogs are ultimately better pets than cockroaches
- A. I only
  - B. I and II only
  - C. II and III only
  - D. I, II, and III
- 4) As used in paragraph 2, which is the best synonym for **estimate**?
- A. exaggeration
  - B. guess
  - C. mistake
  - D. amount

