

**Back to Catalog      Directions: Read the selection and answer the questions.**

### **The "PetsPal" Project**

by Cyndy Hall

When she was ten, Lindsey Walker found her purpose in a letter addressed to "Occupant."

"My mom and I were sorting mail," Lindsey remembers. "I don't know why I opened that one envelope, but I did."

Inside the envelope was a photo of a starving puppy cringing against a wall of a wire kennel. "You could see every bone in his body," Lindsey says. "I knew I had to do something."

#### **Taking Action**

Lindsey investigated volunteer opportunities at area animal shelters. "They'd look at me and say, 'Oh, sure, what's this kid really going to do?'" she recalls. "Nobody took me seriously."

So Lindsey wrote her local newspaper proposing an "Adopt a Pet" column. A different homeless animal would be featured in every issue, along with the address and hours of the animal shelter that was offering that pet for adoption.

To her surprise, the newspaper editor called Lindsey a few days later to ask if she'd be interested in submitting a sample column herself. "He wanted the first one finished the next afternoon," Lindsey remembers. "I think it really surprised him when I walked in with a finished column and pictures."

#### **The Next Step**

The column was a start, but Lindsey knew there was more to do. "There were so many animals needing homes. I had to find a better way."

Lindsey found her "better way" four months later via the Internet. A family friend helped her set up a Web site featuring pictures and brief descriptions of homeless animals from area shelters.



**Lindsey and one of her rescued puppies**

"PetsPal" was launched in July of 2005. Since then, twenty-one different municipal, private, and humane-society shelters have signed up for Lindsey's free service. Almost three hundred cats, dogs, rabbits, and birds featured on PetsPal site have been adopted into new homes.

A two-year-old female black Lab mix named Casey was one of Lindsey's first "pals." Casey was a playful, exuberant dog who loved everyone in spite of the abuse she'd suffered at the hands of her first owners. Lindsey featured Casey in her column and on the PetsPal site several times with no luck. Finally Sue Hervieux, one of Lindsey's teachers, took Casey home for a trial weekend. It was a perfect match. Casey and Sue now spend weekends working at a group home for disabled adults. "Casey's been adopted by the whole place," Lindsey reports.

### **Actions Rewarded**

One of Lindsey's many honors was being named the American Humane Association's 1999 "Be Kind to Animals Kid." But Animal Control Officer Donna Philbrick doesn't believe the awards mean as much to Lindsey as the adoption of one more homeless pet. "She's a nonstop miracle worker," says Philbrick. "That young lady has done more for animals than most people accomplish in their whole lives."

Lindsey plans to attend veterinary school and open her own clinic, with a large section for homeless pets. Lindsey Walker started with a dream. "No matter what anyone says, if you believe in your dreams you can do it," she says. "Your age might make it harder, but you have to keep on trying. It will happen if you believe."

1. Who would find the information in the selection most useful?
  - A. Someone who receives a new pet
  - B. Someone who plans to open an animal clinic
  - C. Someone who wants to help homeless animals
  
2. Which idea is included in the section under the heading The Next Step?
  - A. Lindsey received many awards.
  - B. Lindsey set up her own Web site.
  - C. Lindsey wrote to her local newspaper.
  
3. Which sentence explains why Lindsey will most likely accomplish her goal to open her own animal clinic?
  - A. Lindsey believes she can achieve her dreams.
  - B. Lindsey started her own Web site for homeless animals.
  - C. Lindsey wrote a newspaper article about animals up for adoption.

4. What is the meaning of the word *launched* in paragraph 8?

- A. Started
- B. Finished
- C. Improved

Respond to the short answer questions (a and b below) and use the rubric on the next page to determine criteria for excellence.

a. Explain why Lindsey received the "Be Kind to Animals Kid" honor. Include **four** details from the selection in your answer.

b. According to the selection, what are **three** steps, in order, Lindsey took to find homes for animals in shelters? Include information from the selection in your answer.

Points	Criteria
Score Point Two	
Score Point One	
Score Point 0	

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## **Quicksand**

by Max Gunther

You have probably read about quicksand in adventure stories. Perhaps you have seen a movie in which somebody was trapped in quicksand and sank from sight. The whole idea of quicksand seems terrifying, and people were terrified by it for centuries. They believed quicksand had some strange kind of suction that pulled victims under.

They believed there was little hope of getting out alive if you ever fell in. But all this was before scientists studied quicksand and found out what it really is. Despite those movies and adventure tales, the truth is that quicksand cannot hurt you if you know how to handle yourself in it.

Quicksand is not always made of sand. It can be any kind of loose soil. The thing that makes it “quick” is water flowing upward through it. The sand you walk on at a beach is not quick no matter how wet it gets—even when it is underwater. You cannot sink in it. This is because water is just lying on top of it or soaking downward through it. But when water wells up through sand or loose soil, as from an underground spring, it makes the whole sand mass swell. The sand is no longer packed, like beach sand. Each grain rests partly on a cushion of upwelling water. If you step in this, you sink.

But do not believe those old adventure stories. You will not sink out of sight. The depth to which you will sink in any liquid depends on the weight of the liquid. The heavier the liquid, the higher you will float. Since quicksand is heavier than water, you will float higher in it than you do in water.

Quicksand is found most often in valleys, bogs, and river or stream beds. You cannot always recognize it by looking at it, for it may be covered by dead leaves or water or grass. If you ever find you have stepped into quicksand, here’s what to do:

### **Quicksand Safety Tips**

1. Try to run. Some quicksand is just firm enough for this.
2. If you sink too fast to run, drop anything heavy you are carrying. If you are wearing a pack, unbuckle it and let it fall.
3. Lie flat on your back. The quicksand will buoy you up.
4. Shout for help. If you know help is nearby, just lie still.
5. If no help comes, slowly roll yourself to firm ground. This may take you an hour or more, but don’t panic. Remember, you can’t sink.
6. Whatever you do, make all your movements slow and deliberate. The quicksand must have time to flow around your arms and legs as you move them, and since it’s thick, it flows slowly. If you give it time, it will behave just as water does when you’re swimming. Otherwise you may pull yourself into an awkward position, and escape will be much more difficult.

1. What is the author’s most likely purpose for writing the selection “Quicksand”?
  - A. To persuade the reader to search for quicksand
  - B. To entertain the reader with an adventure story about quicksand
  - C. To inform the reader about the characteristics of quicksand