Here is your free curriculum for a four-week
Puppy Class, courtesy of [Train Canine](https://www.traincanine.com).

You are free to copy, modify or alter anything in this document for your personal business use. This material may not otherwise be shared, altered for distribution, sold or otherwise distributed in any manner without written permission from Sarah Filipiak.

**Introduction**

This curriculum is designed to be fun for the clients and pups, and is game-based. You will impart advanced behavioral knowledge and skills without confusing the client with terminology or complicated instructions.

**Concepts covered:**

* Active socialization with people
* Dog-dog socialization skills
* Bullying prevention and redirection
* Mouthing and bite inhibition
* Appropriate tug play
* Body handling and exam using classical conditioning and desensitization
* Acceptance of restraint using counter-conditioning and operant conditioning
* Attention to owner using the Premack Principle
* Dealing with prey arousal and prevention of over-arousal
* Object exchanges and resource guarding prevention
* Building toy drive
* Control for dog sports
* Self-control
* Sit
* Down
* Recall
* Real-life leash walking
* Built-in time for common questions on topics such as house training, jumping, etc.

**Equipment**

* Kongs stuffed with a high-quality canned food, then frozen
* Socialization handout (Operation Socialization)
* Leash walking handout (TrainCanine)
* Toilet paper tubes (Oriental Trading Co.)
* Stuffed toy attached to a leash or long line
* Extra treats
* Extra leads
* Exam table or bench

**Roles**

Instructor

Assistant (optional – Instructor may perform Assistant’s role if no Assistant is available)

**Special instructions to clients**

We encourage all family and household members to participate in training your puppy, both in class and out of class. Our classroom is small and seating is limited, so please keep this in mind when choosing whether children accompany you to class. **All children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult other than the one handling the dog.**

**Beginning of class**
**Assistant:** Sign in each puppy and family. Show each family/puppy team where to sit, hand them a frozen Kong and tell them they may help their puppies settle (lay) on their mats and that they can feed treats or encourage their pups to chew their Kongs anytime the puppy is settling down or looking at them. Demonstrate how to use a treat to get their puppy’s attention if it wanders, and how to prevent barking fits at other puppies by getting the puppies’ faces turned toward them.

| **Puppy Class - Week One** |
| --- |

*Welcome! I’m your instructor, \_\_\_\_, and this is your assistant \_\_\_.* Tell the clients a fact or two they might find interesting, such as when you started training dogs, or how many dogs you have at home, dog sports you like, etc. *We’re going to start each week by showing our puppies how great it is to be with you, even when there are other puppies around. So grab your treats and trade your puppy’s Kong for a treat. Put the Kong where your puppy can’t reach it. Now you’re going to feed your puppy some treats! Pretty easy — no fancy training right now, just feed five to 10 treats in a row. Your puppy should start to notice that you have all of the good treats!*

**Active socialization**

*Now my assistant and I are going to walk around the room and stand near your puppy. We are not going to look at or talk to your puppy, or say anything at all. We’ll stop briefly near each puppy\* (\**be sure to remind assistants to stand neutrally with their SIDES toward the puppy, not crouching and not facing the puppy), *and I want you to hold your puppies’ leashes at about half length, so they can’t reach us, like this* (demo with puppy or leash),*and feed two treats each time someone stops nearby, no matter what your puppy is doing. Any questions?* Pause for questions. *Remember — half a leash and feed two treats OK, if not, here we go!*

Go around the room as described above, encouraging owners to feed treats when you stop near their pup. *OK, great! So you’ve just taught your puppy a valuable lesson — that people coming near the two of you are great unless you say otherwise. This is how you’ll want to introduce your puppy to new people as the weeks go on.*

**Sit**

*OK, we’re going to work on Sit.* Demonstrate luring a sit and rolling out a treat to have the pup stand up. *Use the treat to lure your puppy into a sit. Try to only say sit one time for one treat. Practice sit every time you stop walking when you’re on a walk. And a quick tip about walks — when your puppy starts biting or tugging on the leash, or sits down and refuses to move, you’ve walked too far! Puppies tire easily. Next time your puppy balks or bites, take note of how long you’ve been walking and just walk that distance, away from home and back, next time. So if I go for a 20-minute walk and my puppy balks at 10 minutes, I know to go only 5 minutes out and 5 minutes back next time. Your puppy will get more stamina as he grows. Ready? Let’s practice Sit.*

Practice until each puppy has had 3-5 reps, and show them how to fade the lure.

**Toy play, Week 1**

Hand out toilet paper rolls. *These are our toys, because most puppies like them, they’re cheap and easily replaceable. Don’t leave them for your puppies to eat, OK? They’re just for playing, not eating. You’re welcome to bring your puppy’s favorite toy next week if he’s not interested in this one.* Roll paper roll out to attract puppy. Show them how to move it along the ground like a mouse, praise the puppies for biting or attempting to get the toy. Put a treat inside for disinterested puppies. *Our main goal is to get the puppy interested in the toy, so we can trade for treats. When your puppy has the toy, trade the puppy for a treat, then roll the tube again or give it right back. Don’t tease your puppy with a toy when s/he brings it back! Don’t hold onto the toy — give it back right away. It is very important that your puppy understands you are about good things; treats, not tricks. Tricking your puppy only teaches them to protect items from you — and how do dogs protect things they don’t want us to have?* (Pause for answers: growling, biting, snapping.)*You can see where a puppy protecting something he or she has picked up is not helpful to us. So let’s practice a few more times, remembering to reward our pups for letting us have the toy and giving it right back to them.*

Practice a few more times. OK, last time. *This last time you roll the toy, tell them, “Last one,” then after you have the toy, “All done” and feed two or three treats, then put the toy away out of sight. Give them their Kongs back. That way they learn the game is over, and you don’t trick them into giving it up. You can practice this with their toys at home, too.*

*Does anyone have questions about playing with toys?* Answer questions, or if more info is needed, offer to send an email to the group this week. If there are questions about tug, give the basic rules and note we’ll be covering it more in-depth in a later class.

[Potty break here or later – Instruct handlers where to take their puppies, and remind them to pick up, locate trash cans]

**Playtime**

*It’s time to let our puppies play a little bit!*

*We’re going to let them play together in a minute, and I want you to have several treats ready. We’ll feed them, let them play a bit, then go in and gently take them by the collars, feed and release. We’ll do that a couple of times: Let them play, go in and grab their collars, feed and release. First, remove your puppy’s leash but hold the collar and feed treats. When your puppy is settled or looks at you, tell him or her to “Go play!”*Let the puppies play for 30-60 seconds, as appropriate. Watch carefully for bullying and redirect or restrain/release those puppies as appropriate. *OK, now it’s time to take our puppy by the collar and feed treats. Good — now tell them “Go play” again.*Repeat until each puppy has had a successful take-feed-release, then end with, *OK, this time when you take your puppy’s collar, you may feed, tell them “All done" and take them back to their seats.*

*Anyone who needs to can feed his or her puppy five to 10 treats to get him focused on you again, and you can give them their Kongs back.*

**Socialization**

*Now’s the time to gently introduce your puppies to various people and new environments and experiences, as well as other vaccinated dogs who are good with puppies. 14-16 weeks is the cutoff for most of your puppy’s learning about other people and dogs, so we have a major opportunity right now to help them learn the coping skills they’ll need to be good dogs for life.*

*I have a socialization handout for you to take home at the end of class.* Hold up the handout and show the class where they will be, or pass them out if the puppies are quiet.*I’d like you to refer to it in the coming weeks as you create new and safe interactions and situations for your puppy. Keep practicing settle with your puppies now. See if you can get them to sit quietly in your arms or on the ground with you touching them. Don’t forget to feed treats or pet your puppy, whichever helps them settle best. Here’s a question to ask when you socialize your puppy:* Is my puppy having a good time? *If your puppy is not having fun, you are teaching the wrong thing: to be afraid of or unsure about that new person or situation. Look at your puppies now. What are some signs that your puppies are beginning to relax? What are some signs that they are still stressed?*

**Restraint**

*Trade your puppies’ Kongs for a treat, and put the Kongs where your puppy can’t reach them. Put your hand on your puppy’s chest, and then treat. Now I want you to put your hand on your puppy’s chest, drop the treat on the floor, then release your hand and say “Get it!” Increase the pressure on your puppy’s chest a little bit next time. We’re teaching your puppy to enjoy being restrained.*

*Now I want you to hook a finger under your puppy’s collar (or two fingers, for big puppies)! We’re going to do something similar, but this time instead of trying to increase the tension, we want it to decrease before we feed a treat. So, a hand on chest means the puppy can lean in and create pressure. Fingers under the collar means the puppy should back off and release pressure. Your puppy likely won’t back off much at first. You’re waiting for the puppy to release even a little tension on the collar, then feed.* Borrow a puppy and demonstrate. *Feed your puppy high and back, aim the treat between his ears (vs. on his nose, for the Sit) so he backs up to eat it. So it’s fingers under the collar, wait for pressure to decrease, feed and release.*

*You can see where this skill will come in handy as your puppy gets bigger and stronger!*

**Mouthing**

*Let’s talk about mouthing: Anyone have puppies who are eager to put their mouths on you, biting, chewing, so forth? OK, quick piece of advice and then we’re going to show you how to avoid all of that biting. We actually want to allow our puppies to bite! We want them biting on us from now until about 5 months. This is how we teach them to inhibit their bites, or to bite softly. This way, they learn to use their teeth appropriately and they learn that human skin is sensitive. Their mothers and litter mates taught them the same thing — don’t bite so hard!*

Demonstrate by petting and playing with a mouthy puppy, if possible. *When your puppy bites, you’ll allow it as long as it’s not too hard. What does biting too hard mean? I don’t want to see a red mark on my skin. So as long as the puppy is mouthing gently enough not to leave a mark, I allow it to continue. If the puppy mouths harder than that, I say “Ow” and take my hands away. Then I try again. Don’t squeak like a squeaky toy! Say “Ow” like you mean it. You can hide your hands in your lap or put them behind your back. Then try again, so your puppy has a chance to correct his behavior. If your puppy is super-wound and is having trouble calming down, it’s time to use a toy instead or to put the puppy away for a rest. Usually between 7-9 p.m. puppies have a really hard time controlling themselves, so this would be a good time to let them rest in their crates with a stuffed Kong or chew.*

*Remember the rules: No red marks, and no teeth on clothing. IMPORTANT: Kids should not do this exercise! Young children aren’t capable of knowing when the dog should stop. If your puppy is wound up around children, keep him on a leash and feed for calm behavior, or give him a good chewie in his crate while they play.*

**Playtime**

*We’re going to let the puppies play together again; remember to have several treats ready. We’ll feed them, let them play a bit, then go in and gently take them by the collars, feed and release. We’ll do that a couple of times: Let them play, go in and grab their collars, feed and release. First, remove your puppy’s leash but hold the collar and feed treats. When your puppy is settled or looks at you, tell him or her to “Go play!”*(Let the puppies play for 30-60 seconds, as appropriate.) *OK, now it’s time to take our puppy by the collar and feed treats. Good — now tell them “Go play” again.*Repeat until each puppy has had a successful take-feed-release, then end with, *OK, this time when you take your puppy’s collar, you may feed, tell them “All done" and take them back to their seats.*

*Anyone who needs to can feed his or her puppy five to 10 treats to get him focused on you again.*

**Body handling week one: tail and hindquarters**

*One thing we want to do while our puppies are small is teach them to enjoy being handled all over. Lots of times people tell me, “Oh, my puppy loves being petted,” or “I can touch him anywhere — no problem!” That’s great! But we’re going to take it a step further and teach our puppies to LOVE being handled. That way, when it’s time to go to the vet or the groomer, or children are visiting, and someone touches your dog in a way he might not like, he’s had lots of practice with that as a positive thing. This week, we’re going to work on getting our puppies to feel happy about paw touches. Remember, with all of our body handling work with our puppies, we don’t just want them to tolerate being touched, we want them to LOVE being touched!*

*So, you’re going to get a treat or two ready. Gently touch your puppy’s back, then feed a treat. Did your puppy calmly accept the touch or did he or she whirl around to see what you were doing? This time, watch your puppy’s face as you touch her back. Does your puppy keep her head still and glance at you, eager for a treat? Or does your puppy fling her head around, or try to bite your hand? f your puppy is keeping his mouth off of you and looking to you for the treat, you’re at the right level of touch and can move to the base of his tail.* Instruct clients to look for the same signs, once puppies are ready, move to the tail itself, again observing the signs*.*

[One more playtime, if time.]

**Simulated vet/groomer exam**

Five-10 minutes before class ends: *Great! We’re done for today! On your way out the door, I want you to walk back to the exam table, we’re going to practice a quick and easy exam, and then you’re off. Have a great week and please call or email if you have questions. Let’s start with \_\_\_\_\_.* Assist that puppy to the exam table.

Handler lifts puppy onto table, assistant feeds 2-3 good treats, that’s it! Tell handler they may lift their dogs off the table and go.

| **Puppy Class - Week Two** |
| --- |

Assistant greets puppies and handlers, directs them seats and assists them in getting puppies to settle with Kongs.

Instructor: *Any questions? How is housetraining going?* [Answer any questions.] *We’re ready to work! Go ahead and trade a treat for the Kong and put it somewhere the puppy can’t reach it.*

**Active socialization / recall**

*My assistant and I are going to walk around the room and stand near your puppy. We are not going to look at or talk to your puppy, or say anything at all, just last week. We’ll stop briefly near each puppy\* (\**be sure to remind assistants to stand neutrally with their **side** to the puppy, not crouching and not facing the puppy),*and I want you to call your puppy, “Pup-pup-pup!" each time someone stops nearby and then feed a treat. It’s OK if you have to call your puppy a few times, just feed a treat when they pay attention to you. Any questions?*Pause for questions. *OK, if not, here we go!*

Go around the room as described above, encouraging owners to call using “Pup-pup” and not the puppy’s name if the puppy isn’t responding to it. Have them feed treats when you stop near their pup. *OK, great! We’re continuing to teach your puppy about people — that you will control the introductions and interactions with other people when your puppy is with you. Practice at home by keeping your puppy on a leash when people are nearby. Give them permission to “Go say hi” or “Go play” with the nearby person ONLY if your pup is interested in that person. If your puppy is not interested in that person, simply feed the treat and keep moving. Don’t allow anyone to come up to your pup unless your pup initiates the interaction. Remember, we want puppies to have FUN!*

**Playtime**

*We’re going to practice letting the puppies play now and taking a break, just as we did the first week. We’re going to let them play in a minute, and I want you to have several treats ready. We’ll feed them, let them play a bit, then go in and gently take them by the collars, feed and release. We’ll do that a couple of times: Let them play, go in and grab their collars, feed and release. First, remove your puppy’s leash but hold the collar and feed treats. When your puppy is settled or looks at you, tell him or her to “Go play!”*(Let the puppies play for 30-60 seconds, as appropriate.) *OK, now it’s time to take our puppy by the collar and feed treats. Try to encourage your puppy to follow you a few steps while you’re holding the collar and feeding. Good — now tell them “Go play” again.*Repeat until each puppy has had a successful take-feed-release, then end with, *OK, this time when you take your puppy’s collar, you may feed, tell them “All done" and take them back to their seats.*

**Leash walking**

Provide the handout on leash walking. *Try to encourage your puppies NOT to mouth the leash by putting treats on the ground for them to scoop up. Anytime they look up at you, put another treat on the ground. This is hard to do while walking, so let’s practice it stationary first. Put a treat on the ground and say “Get it!” Now I want you to practice while standing up. Have your pup on whichever side you’d like to teach him to walk. Keep the treats on that side until he masters it, then you can switch and train the other side. Have 6-7 treats in your hand, your puppy’s nose and paws facing the same direction as your toes.*(Instructor and Assistant help people get their puppies lined up) *Now place the treats slightly behind your leg. Good! Now take a step and do the same thing! Great! We want our puppies to look up at us so we can give another treat, but you can put the treat down even if your puppy isn’t looking at you, just so long as he isn’t pulling. Here’s a handout you can take home to keep practicing.* Show and/or pass out handout. *While you’re teaching leash walking, take short walks, say to the mailbox and back, or two car lengths down the street and back, until your pup has mastered not pulling on leash. Exercise them in other ways in the meantime.*

**Toy play**

*Toy time again!* Distribute toilet paper rolls to those who need them. *Let’s alternate playing with the toy and building up some self-control. We’re going to be giving our puppies the toys and then taking them away. The first step is doing whatever you need to do to get the toy back. Running away, clapping, calling, treats, etc.* Instructors and assistants watch for resource guarding at this time, and refer to private lessons if necessary. *Don’t try to grab the ball or expect the dog to drop/give until they are reliably getting it and bringing it back.  Don’t chase your puppy around if it gets something it shouldn’t have! Call, clap, run away, use treats — whatever. Use two identical toys if you need to, so you can trade for the one the puppy has. But as much as possible, don’t make a big deal and encourage and reward the dog for bringing it to you. Try to make sure you have appropriate puppy toys available and either keep pup on a leash or clutter to a minimum — I know which it is at my house!*

*OK, once your puppy is playing with the toy, do an object exchange and trade the toy for a treat. Now hold the toy where the puppy can see it and wait — wait for a sit, a down, any position that requires the puppy to display self-control, even a stand.* Wait for the clients to do so. *Good — now, put the toy back into play, right away! Then, object exchange again; wait for some self-control. Great! Give the toy right back as soon as he sits, don’t make the puppy wait for it. Do a couple more, then we’ll put the toys away.* Wait for a couple more, coach. *OK, go ahead and put the toys away — say “All done" and trade for the Kong.*

[Potty break here or later]

**Restraint**

*Gently lift your puppy’s front feet off the ground, by holding the puppy under the chest and feed. Immediately put the puppy down. Feed while the puppy is up, put her feet back on the ground as soon as she’s done or before she’s done eating. We’re going to practice this a couple of times, then (my assistant) and I are going to come around and do the same thing.*

Watch for puppies who are struggling or whose body language indicates they are not enjoying the interaction. Ask those handlers to feed their puppies treats, and then quickly release, then try again. Remind them to only touch their puppy for a few seconds, and to let go the instant their puppy begins to struggle.

*Now, we’re going to practice the hand-on-chest from last week. Put a hand on your pup’s chest and roll a treat forward, tell them “Get it”!*

**Body handling week two: ears**

*Please get a treat or two ready. Gently touch your puppy’s ear, then feed a treat. Did your puppy calmly accept the touch or did he or she move away? This time, watch your puppy’s face as you touch her ear. Does your puppy keep her head still and glance at you, eager for a treat? Or does your puppy fling her head around, or try to bite your hand? f your puppy is keeping her mouth off of you and looking to you for the treat, you’re at the right level of touch and can move to the other ear.* Instruct clients to look for the same signs, once puppies are ready, move to each ear before feeding a treat, again observing the signs*.*

**Socialization**

*How did socialization go this week? Has your puppy been meeting new people? If you haven’t thrown a puppy party yet, try inviting several friends over at a time to play with and feed your puppy for short periods — a half hour is plenty! You can always put the puppy in her crate and have dinner or drinks afterward, etc. It’s really important to remember to let the puppy approach people on his own terms. Remember the handout from the first week! If you have any questions you can talk to me after class, or send me an email.*

[Playtime]

**Down**

Demonstrate how to lure the puppies into a down, feeding the treats as a reward, then practice fading the treat. Explain that not all puppies will be willing to do a down in class but will likely do so at home.

**Week 2 exam**

Five-10 minutes before class ends: *We’re done for today! On your way out the door, I want you to walk back to the exam table, we’re going to practice a quick and easy exam, and then you’re off. Have a great week and please call or email if you have questions. Let’s start with \_\_\_\_\_.*Assist that puppy to the exam table.

Handler lifts puppy onto table, assistant runs hands over dog, lightly checks ears, feeds 2-3 good treats and tells handler they may go.

| **Puppy Class - Week Three** |
| --- |

Assistant greets puppies and handlers, directs them seats and assists them in getting puppies to settle with Kongs.

Instructor: Any questions? Everything going well?

**Playtime**

*Right off the bat today, we’re going to do a play session. So let’s trade their Kongs for a treat, get our puppies’ attention, take the leash off but hang onto their collars. Feed a few treats for paying attention, and then we’re going to say “Go play.” Everybody ready?* Check to make sure everyone is ready and that no puppies are straining to escape from their handlers. *OK, go play! Handlers, gather a handful of treats. We’re going to wade right in and interrupt our puppies, now! Grab their collars, feed treats and release, tell them “Go play!” again. Great.* Let the puppies play for 5-10 more seconds. *OK, grab them again, this time I want you to feed, ask for a sit, feed that, then tell them to “Go play!” so it’s grab, feed, ask for a sit, feed the sit, then “Go play!” Wonderful. All right, last one — get some more treats if you need to, we’ll let them play just a bit more.* Let the puppies play 10-15 more seconds, or interrupt sooner if behavior starts to deteriorate. *OK, go and get them again, this time feed treats as you walk them back to their seats and tell them “All done.”*

**Restraint/recall**

*Put your hand on your puppy’s chest, and then treat. Now I want you to put your hand on your puppy’s chest, drop the treat on the floor, actually push back a bit this time, then release your hand and say “Get it!” Now my assistant and I are going to come around and do the same thing, except instead of rolling the treat on the floor, I want YOU to call your puppy! So he’ll be diving into your lap! Sound good?*

Instructor and assistant walk around the room and gently restrain each puppy by the chest. Encourage the client to call from 2-3 feet away (space permitting). Have them feed several good treats once the puppy arrives. Once all puppies have done two recalls each:

*Now I want you gently hold your puppy’s collar. We’re going to do something similar to the first time we did this, we want our puppy to back off and release pressure. Ready, go! Good. Now we’re going to make it harder. Put a treat on the floor and hold your puppy’s collar. When he gives any sign at all that he’s ready to pay attention to you — backs up and gives into the pressure, turns to look at you, etc. — praise wildly and feed 3-4 treats, but NOT the one on the floor! Got it? So we’re waiting for them to release the pressure and we are going to feed treats from our hands, not on the floor. We’ll do this 2-3 times. Go!*

*We want an automatic response to this pressure, not necessarily having to tell the dog leave it. Because you can see where this would apply to leash-walking as well — when your puppy feels collar pressure, we want them to back off, not keep steaming ahead. And we don’t want to be yelling “leave it!” every few seconds on a walk!*

[Potty break here or later]

[Playtime]

**Body handling: paws**

*Go ahead and get your puppy settled, just as you did last week. This week, we’re going to work on getting our puppies to feel happy about paw touches. Remember, with all of our body handling work with our puppies, we don’t just want them to tolerate being touched, we want them to LOVE being touched!*

*So, you’re going to get a treat or two ready. Gently touch one of your puppy’s paws, then feed a treat. Now, watch your puppy’s face as you touch a paw. Does your puppy glance at you, eager for a treat? Or does your puppy pant or show the whites of his eyes, or try to bite your hand? Where are your puppy’s ears? Are his eyebrows relaxed or scrunched together? If your puppy is keeping his mouth off of you and looking to you for the treat, you’re at the right level of touch and can move to the next paw.*

*Go ahead and give your puppies back their Kongs.*

**Socialization**

*How did socialization go this week? If you have any questions you can talk to me after class, or shoot me an email. Remember when you’re socializing your puppy with other puppies or safe adult dogs, to provide a break with treats every 10-30 seconds or so. Don’t allow your puppy to play uninterrupted with other dogs for long periods.*

**Toy play**

*It’s toy time! Get your toys ready or take one of ours, but don’t give them to your puppies just yet.* Hand out toilet paper tubes. *We’re going to show you how to teach your puppy some self-control*. *When you’re playing with your puppy, alternate between calm exercises and boisterous ones. Anytime you’re in the house, in public, etc., practice rewarding just “slightly calmer.” You’re not going to get a totally calm puppy when the kids are running in the backyard, right? So you have your puppy on a leash to prevent chasing and biting and you keep them far enough from the kids that your puppy can offer you a glance, or an ear flick back at you — and reward that. Start small and build up, don’t expect a perfectly calm dog in an exciting situation.*

*Go ahead and pick up your Kongs and trade for a treat.*

*We’re going to practice with your puppies now, so you can get a feel for what to do on a walk or when the cat walks into the room, catching them while they’re calm, before they get worked up. I’m going to drag a toy through here and I’m guessing many of the puppies will react — that’s fine. But first, take note: Are your puppies on-leash or off?* On. *So, at home to have the same level of success, you’ll need a leash, at least at first. I’m going to get out the toy and put it on the floor, and I want you to feed your puppy. Are you ready?* Get the toy and place it on the floor. *Feed your puppies for looking at (but not barking or trying to get) the toy.*

*Now I’m going to wiggle the toy a little bit, and I want you to feed your calm puppy again. If your puppy gets excited, just wait until he calms down to feed.* Jiggle the toy again. *OK, one more time. Are you ready?* Assistant can help coach those whose puppies might need help remaining calm. *Great! Now, get out your toy or cardboard tube and let them play with it a bit. They’ve had to control themselves, and we want to give them an appropriate release.*

[Playtime, if time]

**Week 3 exam**

Five-10 minutes before class ends: *We’re done for today! On your way out the door, I want you to walk back to the exam table, we’re going to practice a quick and easy exam, and then you’re off. Have a great week and please call or email if you have questions. Let’s start with \_\_\_\_\_.*Assist that puppy to the exam table.

Handler lifts puppy onto table, assistant runs hands over dog, lightly checks ears and paws, feeds 2-3 good treats and tells handler they may go.

| **Puppy Class - Week Four** |
| --- |

Assistant: Greet clients and puppies and direct them to their seats, get them settled with Kongs.

Instructor: *Any questions this week? OK, great. Let’s trade the Kongs for treats so we can get started.*

**Body handling: mouth**

*Let’s start with our body handling lesson this week: Mouths. Puppies usually enjoy this one, as you’re about to see. So I want you to start by just lightly scratching your pup under the chin, then feeding a treat. If that gets your puppy wound, start instead by rubbing his chest, feeding a treat, then taking your hand away and putting it under his chin, feeding a treat. Good!*

*Now we’re going to gently lift our puppies’ chins and feed a treat, like you are trying to get them to hold their heads up. Great! We’re going to do that a couple of times. Now let’s gently touch the tops of our puppies’ noses and feed a treat. If your puppy tries to bite or mouth your hand, do this a few times until he is eagerly awaiting the treat. Super! Now I want you to make a C with your hand and cup it over your puppy’s muzzle, like you were going to hold it — but don’t grab your puppy! Just cup your hand over his muzzle and feed. Great. Let’s do that a few more times. OK, now for the fun part. Lift your puppy’s lip on one side of his mouth and stuff a treat in there! Keep doing that. Wonderful, now do the other side! If your puppy is really relaxed, open his mouth and put a treat in. If not, save that for a time when you’ve worked up to lips again and try then. Any questions? You’re all doing a great job.*

[Playtime]

**Socialization**

*How’s it going with socialization? There are several places in town you can take your puppy. You’ll want to carry your pup if there are likely to have been unvaccinated adult dogs on the premises, including your vet’s office. For places to take your puppy, check hardware and farm supply stores, local pet stores. If you ask, sometimes places like libraries will let you carry puppies in. Ask your vet’s office if you can spend five minutes in the lobby feeding treats, or set up a couple of quick “get-to-know-you” appointments with the vet. If you have any questions you can talk to me after class, or send us an email.*

*How did socialization go this week? If you have any questions you can talk to me after class, or send an email.*

**Peek-a-boo/recall**

*Sit on or near the floor with your puppies, sit on the leash or if you have a small puppy, you can hold the leash. We’re going to play a game of peek-a-boo to increase the puppies’ interest in being with you. Cover your eyes with your hands, like this (demonstrate and “cheat” by peeking a little) and call your puppy’s name, or if you’d prefer, you can say “Pup-pup-pup or Puppy! Puppy!” You can cheat and peek while you play, so you aren’t surprised by puppy teeth! You’re going to call to your puppy and as soon as they nose your hands or face or try to reach you, uncover and praise and play, and feed a few treats. If your puppy bites, just try to be a little less exciting next time! This is a great game to play at home to teach your puppy to respond to his name.*

[Potty break here or later]

**Toy play**

*This week we’re going to talk about playing tug.* Get out strips of braided t-shirt/towel/fleece. *This is an easy tug you can make at home, remember to never leave the tug with your puppy or any cloth toy, because he could bite off pieces and swallow them.* Show handlers how to wiggle the tug on the floor like a snake. *Wiggle the tug along the floor and see if you can get your pups interested. Some puppies might need a treat tied into the end to get them started.* Demo how to do this.

*Has anyone here ever been told you shouldn’t play tug with your puppy? That’s old advice, and we trainers now know that tug is a great way to encourage control as well as exercise your pup. But there are a few rules to the game. We start with a beginning cue, like “Get it!” and if puppy bites your hands or clothes, game is over, at least for a minute. Wait for your puppy to settle then bring the tug out and try again.*

*Present the tug with two hands, away from your body, and use a word or phrase, like “Get it!” or “Tug!” to teach the puppy to target the toy, not you! If you yank the toy up towards your face like this* (demo pulling the tug up one-handed and perpendicular to the ground), *where is the puppy going to target?* Your hands, your face and your body.

Show them how to hold the tug parallel to the ground and perpendicular and out from their body to encourage the pup to strike the toy. *Don’t yank your puppy around or make it not fun to play with you — don’t out-muscle them. If you watch an older dog playing with a puppy, the dogs who are good players adjust their play style so the puppy can stay in the game.*

*Trade the tugs for treat/kong.*

[Playtime]

**Adolescence**

*Nobody gets anything for free, not even trainers! We ALL have to work to get our dogs to behave the way we would like. When you see a well-trained dog, you can guarantee that someone has put in a lot of time and effort to get the dog that way. So don’t get discouraged. I have a two-year-old German Shepherd who I won’t consider really where I want him, behavior-wise, for another year! And I’ve had him since nine weeks. So don’t feel discouraged when you encounter setbacks or bad manners. Here in a couple of weeks you’ll start to see your puppy not doing things he used to do automatically — like come when called! It’s your responsibility to put the work in. When you hit those trouble spots, just keep working. Your pup will pick it back up and when he’s an adult, you’ll forget you ever struggled with it!*

**Self-control exercise**

*We’re going to do a little self-control exercise before we go. I want you to show your puppy a treat and close your fist; just like with the toy, we’re going to wait for our puppies to offer a control behavior, such as sit or down, before giving them a treat. But — here’s the key. Instead of feeding them the treat in our hands, we’re going to roll another treat along the floor. So it will look like* (demo using your fist and other hand) *closed first held where the puppy can smell it and attempt to get the treat, wait for the puppy to stop trying to get the treat, then roll a treat on the floor and say “Get it!” We’ll do this 2-3 times. Ready, go!*

**Week 4 exam**

Five-10 minutes before class ends: *We’re done! You guys have been a great class, congratulations — there are certificates waiting for you on your way out. Before you go I want you to walk back to the exam table, we’re going to practice a quick and easy exam, and then you’re off. Thank you so much for being in class, please be sure to pick up your certificate and toy from* (assistant) *on the way out! Please call or email us if you have questions, this week or next year! Let’s start with \_\_\_\_\_.*Assist that puppy to the exam table.

Handler lifts puppy onto table, assistant runs hands over dog, lightly checks ears, paws and muzzle, feeds 2-3 good treats and tells handler they may go. Instructor thanks each client, shakes hands where possible and hands out certificates (if using) on the way out the door.

###