

Puppy Selection Process

** Most important

Following is a description of what we are trying to accomplish in this process of selecting the best puppy for our project. Please reference the end of this lesson for an example of the scoring sheet. “**” These are most important. Failure of two of these can be grounds for rejection

****Human Attraction.** We want pups that are attracted to humans, and maybe even consider themselves to be one of us. In this test, I stand quietly for about a minute after the pup has been put in the room, to see if it spontaneously approaches me. If yes, then a good score. If no, I kneel down to see if that helps. If yes, a moderate score. If no, a zero score.

Contentment. This is an extension of the above. Here, I hold the pup, and pet it, and speak to it. A quiet, passive response is desired.

Handling Tolerance. Here, we are moving into the pack instincts of these wolf descendants. In a pack world, there are leaders (Alpha) and followers. We want the later. I will handle the dog by lifting it by the belly, handling its feet and other unnatural positions. I want a dog who accepts this handling, as though I was the Alpha dog doing the handling.

****Submissiveness.** This is the ultimate test of the dogs pack aspirations. I will place the dog on its back, and place myself in its face and speak loudly. I expect it to accept this passively. This will be immediately followed by cuddling and praise, so the pup knows I still like it.

Startle Response. When the pup has his back turned, I will drop a clipboard on the floor behind it. I expect the pup to be startled and to even run away. What I am looking for is the pup who will then return to the clipboard to investigate it. This is an indication of self confidence, as well as intelligence.

Excitability. With a toy, as well as with verbal cues, I will try to get the pup highly excited. This indicates high energy, as well as intelligence.

Settle after Excitement. A pup can be too excitable, to the extent of being hyperactive. Following the play, I will hold and pet the pup, and speak soothingly. I expect the pup to settle back to the contentment mode within a minute, or less.

Retrieve. For our purposes, retrieving is not a necessity. However, it is an indicator of curiosity and intelligence. I simply toss a wadded up piece of paper where the pup can see it. I expect the pup to, at least, chase after it, if not actually retrieve it.

Playfulness. As a bonus, I like to see the pup play with the paper after retrieving it. Again an expression of energy and intelligence.

Discomfort Tolerance. Yes, I am going to hurt the pup – but just a little! I will pinch the webbing between their toes and will squeeze their tail. A little whining or attempt to escape is OK. I do not want them to attempt to bite me.

****Curiosity.** More intelligence testing. I will toss an assortment of items on the floor (keys, pencil, coins, etc.). I hope to see the pup check them all out.

Strange Object. This is just to check their self-confidence, and any fearful traits.

Mouthiness. All pups are somewhat mouthy. That's the way they learn about their new world. However, I like to see them taste something, then leave it alone, rather than continue to chew it.

Scent Detection. This is simply a test to measure the pup's ability to recognize and locate a familiar scent. Clearly, it is critical to our project goals.

****Intelligence.** This is not a specific test, but rather a subjective judgment based upon many of the above observations.

****Affectionate.** Another subjective assessment.

Group Play (submissive). I do not want the dominant one in the group. I want one who accepts being less than the Alpha.

Group Play (activity). However, I do expect the pup to actively engage in play activities, even though he usually does not win the contests.

Size. All else being equal, we slightly prefer smaller dogs. However, their size at this age only weakly indicates their full grown size.

See next page for scoring sheet.

Pup #	#1	#2	#3
Collar Color			
Human Attraction	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Contentment	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Handling Tolerance	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Submissiveness	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Startle Response	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Excitability	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Settle after Excitement	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Retrieve	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Playful w paper	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Discomfort Tolerance	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Curiosity	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Strange Object	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Mouthiness	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Scent Detection	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Intelligence	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Affectionate	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Group Play (submissive)	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Group Play (activity)	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Size	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Comments			
Total Score			