

Unit 3: Right Dog for the Job

Narrator: This is the Canine Assistants Canine Camp. At the canine camp, animal trainers teach dogs to help people. The trainers teach their students to open and close doors, turn on lights, and even find help when their owner has fallen down or is sick. If their owner is in trouble, the dogs have to press a big button which will call the police.

To teach the dogs to love their jobs, the trainers give them food each time they do something right. One day, these dogs will be given to people who are sick or need help around the house. But, first, they must learn to think for themselves and be trained to want to help their owners.

As Canine Assistants founder Jennifer Arnold explains . . .

Jennifer Arnold: Our dogs have to love what they're doing. And when they leave us and they go home with their recipient—when the recipient says, "Will you pick this up for me?" Well, I mean, it's all up to the dog.

Narrator: Jennifer wants her students to be super-dogs. For the first year and a half of their lives, these dogs go through some very difficult training. Scientists think this kind of training makes the dogs better learners.

Handler: C'mon pups, let's go!

Narrator: Welcome to the puppy room! At the camp, the dogs start training in the puppy room before they are 16 weeks old. The puppies learn things they will keep for a lifetime. This is an important time for them. In the puppy room, they will face situations they will find in their new homes. They learn to play with and be comfortable with lights, other animals, even themselves.

At eight weeks, they hit a time of fear, where just about everything is frightening. If they don't get past it now, they never will. So this is an important time for the trainers to show the pups there's nothing to be afraid of. The trainers take each puppy on a trip outside the camp. They want the puppies to experience the world outside, and get used to all the places they might go with their owners when they grow up, like the supermarket. When the dogs

are old enough and their training is complete, these super-dogs are ready to go into the human world and do their jobs.

Jennifer Arnold: These dogs are such lifesavers. I'm so happy for the people who are getting them.