

PROJECT INSTRUCTIONS

Let's Make Adopt Me Bandanas

Design a colorful bandana to help a shelter pet get noticed.

APPROX. TIME

30 – 60 minutes

Could be faster

PLANNING NEEDED

Easy

Gather materials in advance

GRADE LEVEL

3rd Grade & Up

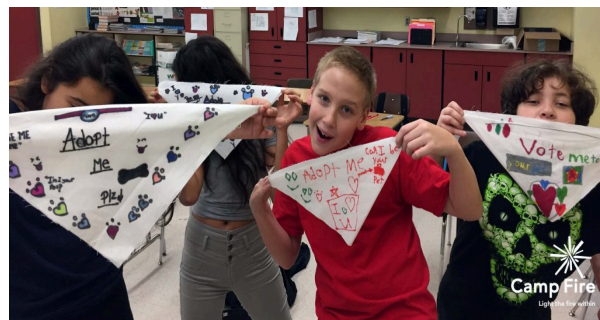
BEST FOR

Everyone!

ANIMALS HELPED Dogs, Cats, Rabbits   

Purpose

Help shelter pets get noticed! Decorate colorful “Adopt Me” bandanas with creative messages and designs, then donate them to a local animal shelter or rescue. This is an easy, flexible project for classrooms, Scout troops, youth groups, families, or individual students.



Materials List

- ☐ Plain cotton bandanas OR squares of lightweight cotton fabric
- ☐ Non-toxic fabric markers
- ☐ Cardboard or scrap paper to place underneath while decorating
- ☐ Pencils and paper for sketching designs (optional)
- ☐ Pinking shears if cutting your own fabric bandanas (adult use)

Teacher Tip: Ready-made bandanas aren't required! Squares of lightweight cotton fabric can be folded diagonally to make simple bandanas. If cutting your own, pinking shears can help reduce fraying. **Check with your shelter first about the sizes and materials they prefer.**

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Check with your local animal shelter or rescue before purchasing supplies. Ask if they accept decorated bandanas, what sizes they can use, and whether they have any specific material or decorating requirements.

Instructions

1. Plan Your Message

Think about the purpose of your bandana: **to help a shelter pet get noticed by a potential adopter!** Choose a short, positive message such as:

**ADOPT ME! • LOOKING FOR LOVE • BEST FRIEND WANTED •
TAKE ME HOME • LET'S BE FRIENDS • READY TO LOVE YOU**

You can also create your own adoption-friendly message.

Teacher Tip: Have students sketch their message and design on paper first. Encourage **large, bold lettering** that will be easy to read.

2. Prepare Your Bandana

Lay the bandana flat with the side you want to decorate facing up.

Place a piece of cardboard or scrap paper underneath the fabric to prevent markers from bleeding through onto the work surface.

3. Get Creative!

Use non-toxic fabric markers to add your adoption message and decorate the bandana.

Add **paw prints, hearts, stars, flowers, rainbows, smiley faces**, or your own original designs. Make it colorful and eye-catching!

Remember, the bandana may be seen at the shelter, at an adoption event, or in a photo online, so make the words big and easy to read.

4. Keep Decorations Flat

For the pet's safety, **keep all decorations flat.**

Do not attach buttons, beads, sequins, pom-poms, bells, googly eyes, ribbons, or other small objects that could come loose and become a **chewing or choking hazard.**

Want to add something fun? Draw it instead!

5. Let It Dry

Lay the finished bandana flat and allow it to **dry completely**. Follow the fabric marker manufacturer's directions for drying and setting the design before donating the bandana.

6. Donate Your Bandanas

Collect the finished bandanas and deliver them to your local animal shelter or rescue. If possible, involve kids in the donation so they can see where their bandanas are going and how their work is helping shelter pets.

Standards Connections

Framework	Connection
Common Core ELA	Reading — Students read and follow multi-step directions to complete the project safely and correctly. Writing — Students create short, purposeful adoption messages using words and phrases appropriate for their audience and purpose. Speaking & Listening — Students discuss ideas, explain their design choices, and share how their messages and designs may help shelter pets get noticed. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.3, RI.4.3, RI.5.3, RI.6.3, RI.7.3, RI.8.3, RI.9-10.3, RI.11-12.3; W.3.4, W.4.4, W.5.4, W.6.4, W.7.4, W.8.4, W.9-10.4, W.11-12.4; SL.3.1, SL.4.1, SL.5.1, SL.6.1, SL.7.1, SL.8.1, SL.9-10.1, SL.11-12.1)
Common Core Math	Limited direct Common Core Math connections. Students may use spatial reasoning to plan the size and placement of words and designs on their bandanas. If working with bandanas in different sizes, students may also compare or sort bandanas by size.
SEL Competencies	Social Awareness — Students recognize the needs of shelter animals and consider how thoughtful messages and designs may help adoptable pets get noticed. Responsible Decision-Making — Students choose pet-safe materials and designs and follow safety guidelines when creating their bandanas. Relationship Skills — Students share ideas, give and receive feedback, and work together to create bandanas that support shelter pets.
Service Learning	Community need identified (<i>helping shelter pets get noticed by potential adopters</i>); students create bandanas for a local animal shelter or rescue while learning how their creativity and service can help animals waiting for homes.

Project Photos

South Pacific County Humane Society Kids & Bandanas



Finished Bandanas



Reflection & Discussion Questions

1. How could a colorful bandana help a shelter pet get noticed by someone looking to adopt?
2. What message or design did you choose for your bandana, and why?
3. Why was it important to think about the pet's safety when designing and decorating the bandana?

Extension Ideas

- **Design for a Pet Waiting for a Home:** Ask your local shelter or rescue if students can choose a specific pet currently available for adoption. Create a bandana just for that pet, using colors, messages, and designs inspired by their personality.
- **Write a Pet Adoption Blurb:** Create a short, positive message to go along with the bandana that tells potential adopters something special about the pet. If working with a specific animal, use information provided by the shelter or rescue.
- **Create an Adoption Display:** Design a poster, bulletin board, slideshow, or social media post featuring adoptable pets and explaining how small things like colorful bandanas can help them get noticed.
- **Share Your Project:** Document your project with photos and share on social media — tag [@pawsupprojects](https://www.instagram.com/pawsupprojects) and your local shelter.



Projects for Kids Who Love Animals

[*pawsupprojects.org*](https://pawsupprojects.org)

Did you do this project?

We'd love for you — or an adult — to post your project on Paws Up Projects to inspire others.

pawsupprojects.org/post-your-project