

# Do Dogs Understand Human Language?

While your dog (or your friend's) may understand sit and stay, in this experiment you will see if the dog can understand English

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- \* Dog trained to understand at least three commands
- \* Pencil
- \* Journal to write down results



## EXPERIMENT PROCESS:

- \* First, make sure that the dog you are working with in this experiment can respond to at least three commands. The dog should be very familiar with these commands.
- \* Create a hypothesis: If you ask your dog to do something in a voice that's similar to the voice you use when you say "sit" and "stay," will the dog still obey?
- \* Be prepared to write down the results of each spoken word experiment.
- \* Now think of the words your dog is trained to know. If your dog can stay, you might say "pay" or "may" instead of "stay". These words sound alike. Can your dog tell that you're using the wrong word?
- \* Call the dog over, and tell it to sit, using the word that you've chosen as an alternative. Use the same tone of voice that you would if you were telling the dog to sit. Don't use any hand commands.
- \* Try each word five times, moving through them in a different order each time. How does your dog react to each one?
- \* Try a word that sounds completely different than "sit" or "stay," but use the same tone of voice. How does your dog react this time?