

Name _____ Date _____

Key Vocabulary

fieldworkers	people who work outdoors (rather than in a controlled setting like an office)
spayed	surgically removed a female animal's reproductive organs to keep her from having babies
ailments	illnesses or injuries
vegan	someone who does not use animals, including for food, or something that does not come from animals
stimulation	excitement, interest, or arousal
neglect	lack of care
tethering	tying up animals with a rope or chain to restrict their movement
languished	suffered in an unpleasant situation, unable to get out of it

Miss Willie's Bucket List

Everybody loved Miss Willie. The little corgi mix was hard to resist, with her wagging banner of a tail, her sweet little face, and her jaunty, self-assured walk. She still looked puppyish and up for any adventure even after she had grown very old and sick.



PETA **fieldworkers** came to know and love Miss Willie over the course of more than a decade, paying her regular visits in Halifax County, North Carolina, where she was kept chained outdoors on a depressing patch of dirt.

They took her a sturdy doghouse and filled it with straw to offer her some protection from the winter cold. They got her **spayed** so that she would not,

like so many other dogs, give birth to litter after litter of puppies and contribute to the homeless-animal epidemic. They also gave her food, toys, and treats and cleaned and refilled her water bowl. And they always lingered after they were finished to scratch her ears, kiss her nose, and tell her how special she was.

Despite repeated pleas, PETA's fieldworkers could not persuade Miss Willie's owner to let them give her a chance at a better life. One day, fieldworker Jes Cochran arrived to find the little dog coughing, wheezing, and so weak that she was barely able to stand. Jes took her to the vet, but the news was grim: She was suffering from end-stage heartworm disease, lung tumors, two tick-borne diseases, and other **ailments**. She had only weeks to live. Then and only then did her owner agree to turn her over to PETA.

That's when Jes decided to make Miss Willie's final days the happiest ones of her life by coming up with a "bucket list" of dog-centric activities. (Watch the video here: **PETA.org/MissWillie**.) They included a canoe ride, a day at the beach, pizza and "Taco Tuesday" parties, a spa day with a massage, a trip to the local fire station (where she "thanked" the firefighters for their service), and a birthday bash, complete with balloons, party favors, and—best of all—**vegan** cake! For the first time in her life, the little dog slept inside on soft bedding after days full of fun and finally had the chance to experience joy, mental **stimulation**, and love.

Sixteen fun-filled days after her rescue, she died peacefully, surrounded by people who loved her. "We're grateful that we were able to give Miss Willie some joy after all the **neglect** she experienced," says PETA Senior Vice President Daphna Nachminovitch. "This story shows exactly why PETA wants to see the **tethering** of dogs banned everywhere, including in Halifax County, where this dog **languished** for over a decade."

In Miss Willie's memory, PETA is working hard to get chaining banned in Halifax County (and elsewhere) so that no other dogs will have to suffer chained up, forgotten and lonely, for 12 long years as Miss Willie did. Dogs are social pack animals, and keeping them isolated is like sentencing them to life in prison without parole. You can help dogs like Miss Willie by supporting PETA's efforts, working to get chaining banned in your area, and informing an adult whenever you see a dog who is being neglected.

Comprehension Questions: Miss Willie's Bucket List

1. How did PETA fieldworkers care for Miss Willie while she was chained outdoors?

2. How did Miss Willie become so sick?

3. Why do you think animals need mental stimulation?

4. Why does PETA work hard to ban the tethering of dogs outside?

5. How can people help chained dogs?

Answer Sheet: Miss Willie's Bucket List

1. How did PETA fieldworkers care for Miss Willie while she was chained outdoors?

Answer: They took her a sturdy doghouse and filled it with straw to keep her warm in the winter. They gave her food, toys, and treats and cleaned and refilled her water bowl. They also got her spayed and gave her love and attention. (Literal)

2. How did Miss Willie become so sick?

Possible answer: She was forced to live outside, where her basic needs were not met. She grew old and developed ailments that could have been prevented with proper care. (Inferential)

3. Why do you think animals need mental stimulation?

Possible answer: Like humans, dogs, cats, and other animals get bored and even anxious when they don't get adequate mental stimulation. Playing, being active, and experiencing new and exciting things give their lives meaning. (Inferential)

4. Why does PETA work hard to ban the tethering of dogs outside?

Possible answer: It's cruel to keep dogs tethered outside, where they're exposed to extreme weather conditions and diseases caused by insects. Their basic needs for adequate food, fresh water, routine veterinary care, and love and stimulation are rarely met. (Inferential)

5. How can people help chained dogs?

Answer: They can support PETA's efforts and work to get chaining banned in their community. They can also inform an adult whenever they see a dog who is being neglected. (Literal)