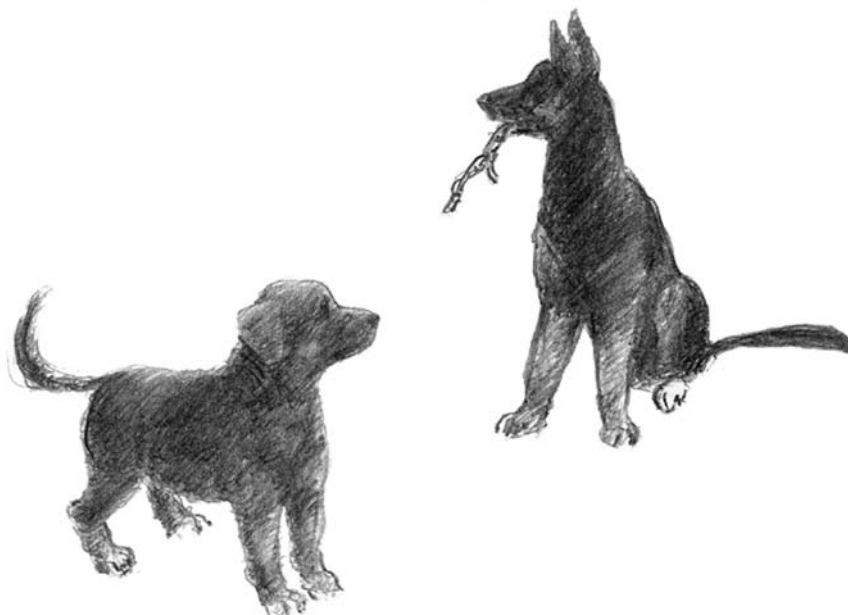




Swedish Working Dog Association
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INSTRUCTIONS MENTAL BEHAVIOR DOG



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Instructions revised at Swedish Working Dog Association's conference for mental health description instructors, Rosersberg 7-11 November 2001. Compiled by T. Eriksson & L. Boqvist, February 2002, after review by mental health instructors and Committee for dog mentality during December -01 to January -02.

General information

Dogs

Dogs that will be participating in the test should not be kept in close proximity to e.g. clubhouse for risk of coming into contact with functionaries or spectators before the description has been conducted.

Spectators

It is important to inform spectators of the following:

- any movements between tests should be made quickly and without delay,
- mobile (cell) phones should be turned off during tests,
- spectators should remain standing as soon as dog arrives at each test and during tests,
- spectators who wish to film tests will be directed to designated areas,
- spectators with children in buggies or strollers should be provided with a description of the area.

Day for test

- the track must be placed in an appropriate terrain (not on the mustering plan or training area) and should be ready on time, i.e. no later than 30 minutes before the first dog arrives,
- marshals must be aware of their task and take responsibility for their test(s)
- officials who will be describing the dogs should be given the opportunity to inspect the test track together with test leader, before arrival of first dog,
- information about gunshots being fired should be posted.

Describing behavior in the summertime

Handlers are advised to bring water for their dogs. This info should be communicated in the memo.

Describing behavior in the wintertime

It is of great importance that opportunities for describing be provided also during the wintertime, to ensure equal access during the whole year.

The following must be taken into consideration if describing is to take place in winter:

Preparations must take place before the ground freezes, e.g. holes in the ground for *Track and grab*. Ensure snow removal on transport routes.

Depth of snow: max approx. 30 cm

Temperature: no lower than -10 degrees.

Note that capes (Distance play) and rags for *Track and grab* must be dark in color to contrast against snow.

PERFORMANCE

Test leader must:

- instruct all functionaries and make sure they are present.
- appoint assistants to take care of spectators if needed.
- inform handler about next test at least 10 m. behind starting point. This occurs when dog and handler are moving, appropriately between tests. (Exception: test no. 1 when functionary informs handler).
- see to it that the time interval between end of one test and start of next is at least two minutes.
- make sure that non-choke chains are used on dogs when they must be on the lead.
- provide leads of correct length (approx. 1,8 meter).
- check that every test that includes recollection has a straight and flat stretch 10 m. before and after the object in the test.

ID-marking

Dog owners are obliged to show dog's id marking to committee, who makes sure this control takes place in connection with the start of the description, i.e. before the team is allowed on to the track (arena).

Each test (stimulation situation) consists of three stages:

1. Activation

Each stimulation situation must start in the same way for all dogs. If a dog shows little or no interest, the test should not be made more interesting or different in order to activate the dog.

2. Actions program

Simulation situations that initiate actions should be the same in form and intensity for all dogs.

3. Final phase – curiosity and remaining fear

The final phase must be formed so as not to be a new stimulation situation. For example, test leaders or handlers should not jolt any of the objects, nor should the marshals move at the wrong time.

The time factor is very important to the dog, so enticing measures should take place in 15-sec. intervals in each sequence.

End phase – curiosity and remaining fear

1. Handler is passive, dog works on its own, without any help.
2. Some help from handler, who goes halfway towards object.
3. Handler stands beside object.
4. Handler speaks to marshal (or handles object) and coaxes the dog if it is not in direct proximity to handler.
5. Handler may help marshal to remove his disguise.
6. When the dog has made contact it should be put on lead and recollection commences. Even if the contact was very quick, the dog should not be forced to investigate further. A dog that does not react easily should leave the test with its handler and go for a walk, then return and walk past the place a few times until its fear has subsided.

WILLINGNESS TO MAKE CONTACT - test no. 1.

Purpose

- to describe dog's ability to make contact as well as react to contact from strangers.

Materials

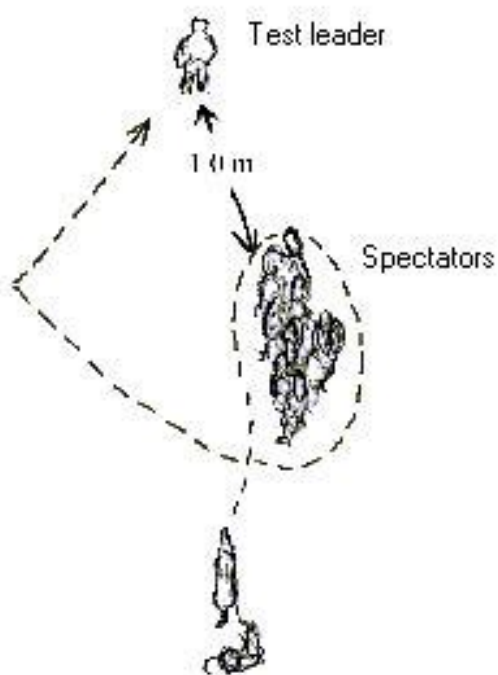
No materials are used during this test.

Performance

Functionaries, as well as spectators, should be in designated areas when each dog arrives. Test leader should not be familiar with the dog, nor should he have had contact with the dog prior to the test. If he has, then the official describing the dog must conduct test no. 1. A functionary should accompany the team to the site for the test, whereby the describer instructs the team during points 1 and 2 (see below).

Making contact

1. Dog and handler walk round the spectators, who are passive.
2. Dog and handler walk up to test leader, who is passive and quiet, about 10 m from the group of spectators.
3. Test leader greets the team vocally as well as by shaking hands with the handler. If dog makes contact with test leader, this should immediately be reciprocated!
4. Test leader proceeds to greet dog by saying its name (if dog has not made contact already). If dog is cautious, test leader should not persist.



Co-operation

5. Test leader takes dog by the lead and moves 10 m. from area. Dog should actively be encouraged to go! If it refuses, the test should be interrupted!
Test leader completes the test by turning around for a short halt. This ends the test. Test leader may clap the dog before returning to the handler to return the lead.

If the dog refuses to go with test leader, it should not be forced to do so. If this occurs, the test should be cancelled!

Examination

6. The dog should be standing at the start of the test. If it sits during examination, it should be allowed to remain sitting. Test leader begins by sliding his hands along either side of the dog's brisket, further down its sides, over loins and down towards hind legs. Then the test leader checks the dog's teeth.

If the dog refuses to be touched it should not be forced. If this happens, the examination should be cancelled!



PLAY 1 – test no. 2.

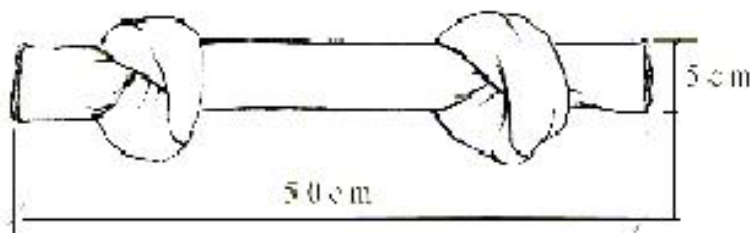
Purpose

- to describe the dog's reactions when playing with an object.
- to describe whether the dog wants a tug of war with the test leader.

Materials

Objects = sturdy object, approx. 50 cm long and about 5 cm thick. The object should have 2 knots on either end.

A similar object should be available for the purpose of distraction should the need arise.



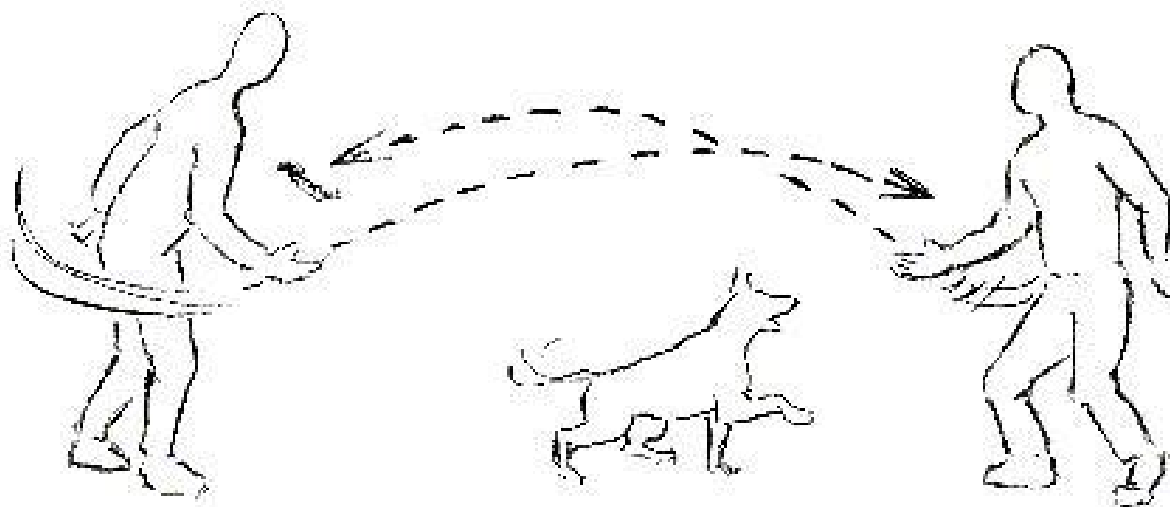
Performance

Dog and handler walk to designated area, approx. 10 m. from spectator group. Dog is then let off the lead and remains off the lead during the whole test. Handler and test leader should stand approx. 4 m. apart.

Play and grab

1. Test leader instructs handler to get dog interested in object by dragging the object on the ground twice, in short, quick movements.
2. Handler throws object to test leader, who throws it back to handler, who then throws it back to test leader.
3. Test leader then throws object about 10 m. away.
4. If the dog grabs the object, the handler is instructed to turn around and run a few steps away from the dog while at the same time encouraging the dog to come to him/her. If the dog can not be encouraged to come with the object, then test leader takes spare object and lets handler get dog interested in it, *diversion*.

Points 1 to 4 will be conducted twice!



Tug of war

5. After this game the handler takes care of object and hands it over to the test leader.
6. The test leader encourages the dog to grab the object by holding it with both hands and moving it up and down over the ground in short, quick movements.
7. If the dog grabs the object then the test leader has a tug of war with the dog.

Maximum duration 30 sec. The test leader should be facing the dog and should pull the object *away* from the dog.

The dog should have all four paws on the ground during the whole test!

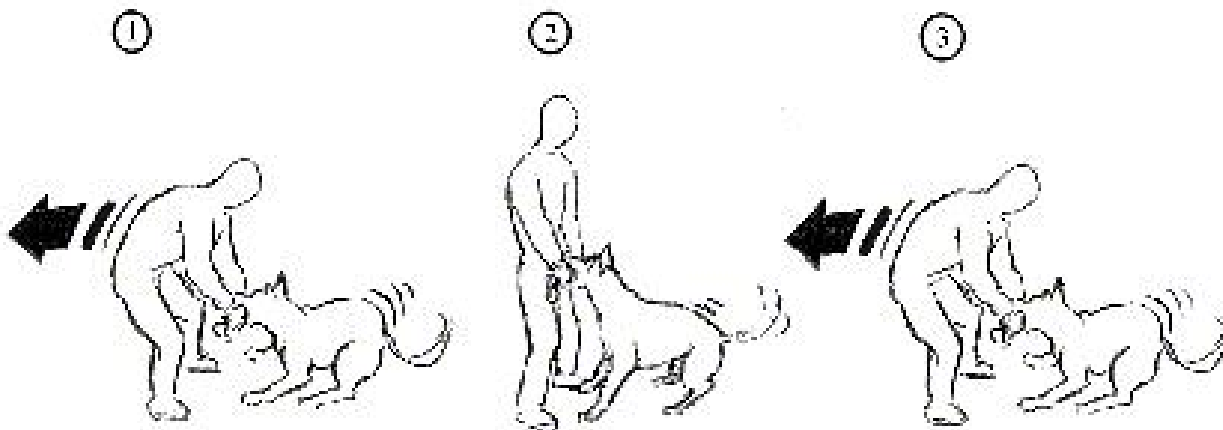
During the tug of war the test leader should become passive for 5 sec, then continue the tug of war.

1 Active test leader pulling.

2 Passive test leader not pulling, approx. 5 seconds.

3 Active test leader pulling.

4 Test leader lets go of object



PURSUE AND GRAB - test no. 3.

Purpose

- to describe dog's willingness to pursue a moving object (trophy) and grab it.

Materials

Object (trophy) = sturdy rag, approx. 40 – 50 cm long and approx. 5 cm thick, of sturdy fabric.

Note that the color of the object should be contrasting to the background!

Each object should have a loop for easy mounting.

Each object should be replaced after each dog has grabbed it.

Wheels = approximately 10, depending on the terrain. Wheel number 5 should be marked, for example with a visible streamer.

Line = approx. 60 m long.

Surroundings

This test should take place at a location that is flat, a wider path or the like, or in close proximity to a grove but not to any gathering grounds.

Performance

Place wheels according to diagram (see diagram). The fifth wheel should be marked, e.g. with a visible streamer.

The line is swirled round the wheels in a zig-zag design.

The functionary should not be visible to handler or dog and the wind should not reveal his position. The functionary runs as quickly as possible to a place marked beforehand by him/her, to ensure smooth performance. Upon reaching the marked place, functionary stops and pulls the line twice to make the object move. This should be done 3 seconds apart.

The object should be visible to the dog from the start and until the last pulls!

Note that the wheels should not squeak or make any other kind of noise!

If mechanical "pullers" are used, these should not be disturbing, by making noise or by constituting a visible distraction.

The starting point should be marked (see diagram)

1. Initial position for the team.
2. Starting point, 10 m ahead, where the team should stop.

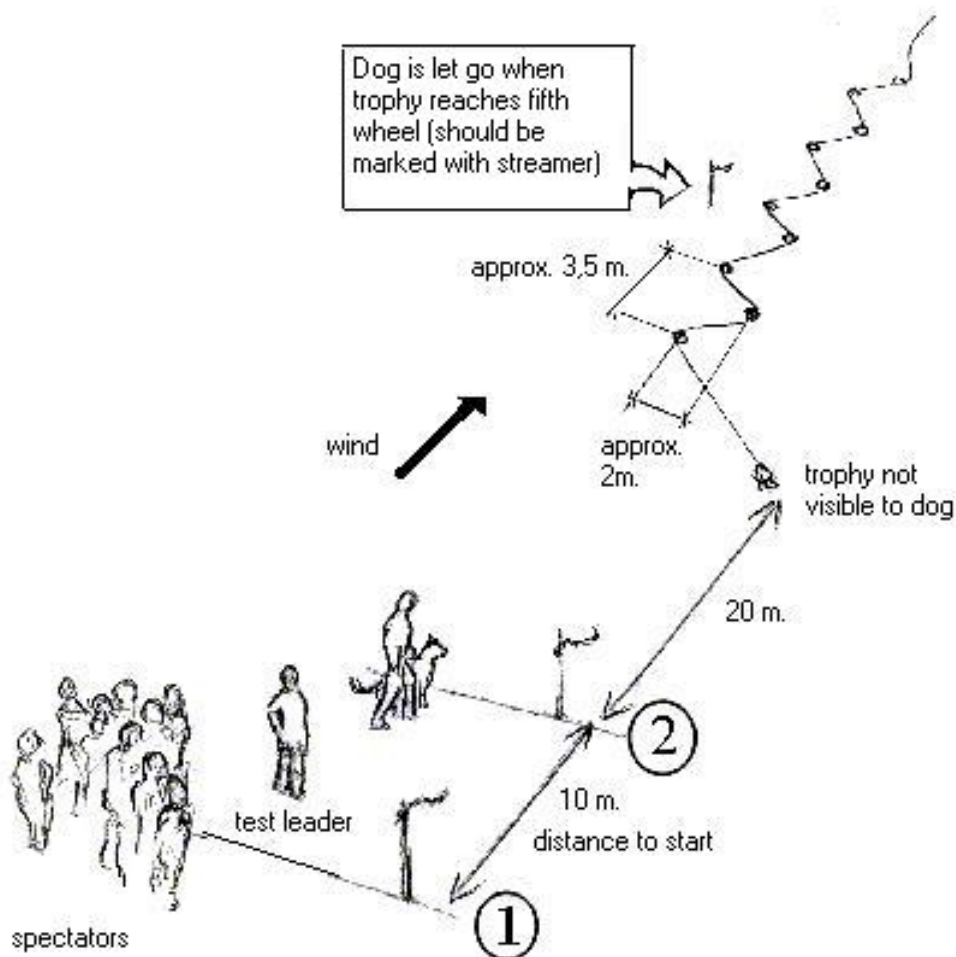
Test leader

1. The team walks up to **initial position** with the test leader. The handler receives instructions on where to stop.
2. The handler lets the dog off the lead, holding on to dog's collar as they walk the 10 meters to the **starting point**. The object must be set in motion within 1 (one) second after the team reaches this point!
3. The handler takes one step forward and lets go of the dog on the test leader's recommendation, i.e. when the object passes the marked wheel (no. 5)

Points 1 - 3 will be repeated once again. The team is led away between times so that the dog doesn't see the trophy being replaced.

Comments:

If the dog does not reach the trophy, i.e. area within a 2 m. radius from the trophy, it should be put on lead, and together with the handler and the test leader they walk along the track, moving forward up to the last wheel. *At this time the trophy should not be shown to the dog, nor should the dog be allowed to grab it.*



ACTIVITY LEVEL - test no. 4.

Purpose

- to describe dog's reactions in a situation where expected activity does not take place.

Materials

None

Surroundings

A **natural** area with branches, sticks, rocks, etc. on the ground should be chosen for this test. It should be free from distractions. Alternative places should be available (*see Comments below*)

Performance

Describer and spectators take their places as in previous tests. Handler and dog walk past spectators and functionaries and stop at designated area 10 meters from the group. The dog should be allowed full length of the lead during the test. Handler should be passive.

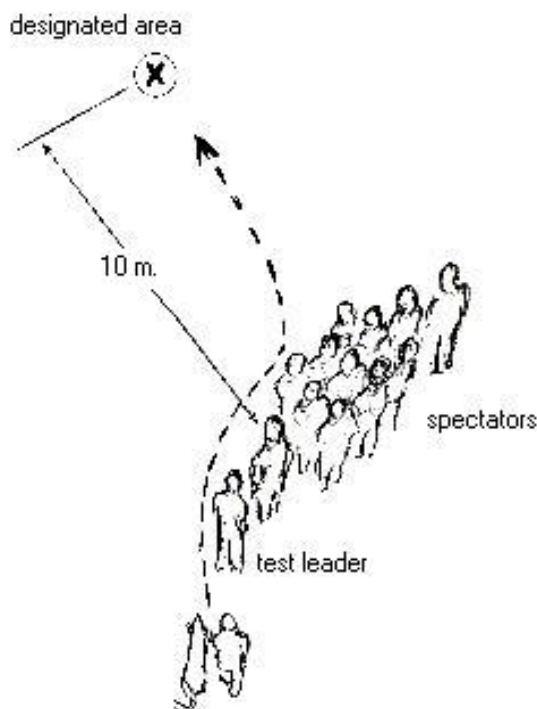
Test leader

Test leader informs handler of test requirements, of designated area, and accompanies team up to spectator group, where he/she remains. When team is in place, start of test is announced and timing starts. When time is up, test leader announces end of test.

Test time: 3 minutes.

Comments

If dog should relieve itself in test area, a new area must be used for the next dog.



DISTANCE PLAY - test no 5.

Purpose

- to describe dog's capacity for activity/co-operation with a stranger when it is away from its handler.

Materials

Knee-length cape with hood (see diagram), of color contrasting to surroundings – avoid yellow and orange.

Play objects of the same type as in previous play test.

Start lead (possibly) = leather strip without knots or clasp, or rope.

Surroundings

The test should be held in a spacious terrain, at least 50 m. deep and 15 m. wide.

There should be two hiding places. The final hiding place should be so open that the describer can see what happens when the dog reaches it.

Performance

Test leader

1. Test leader informs handler and checks dog's equipment (possible start lead = either leather strip without knots or claps, or rope).
2. Positions team 40 meters from marshal and then starts test
3. Handler is instructed to let dog go when marshal has gone behind hiding place no. 2.
4. If dog does not make contact with marshal on its own before the second play is over, handler will accompany dog to marshal. Test leader may also go, for support.

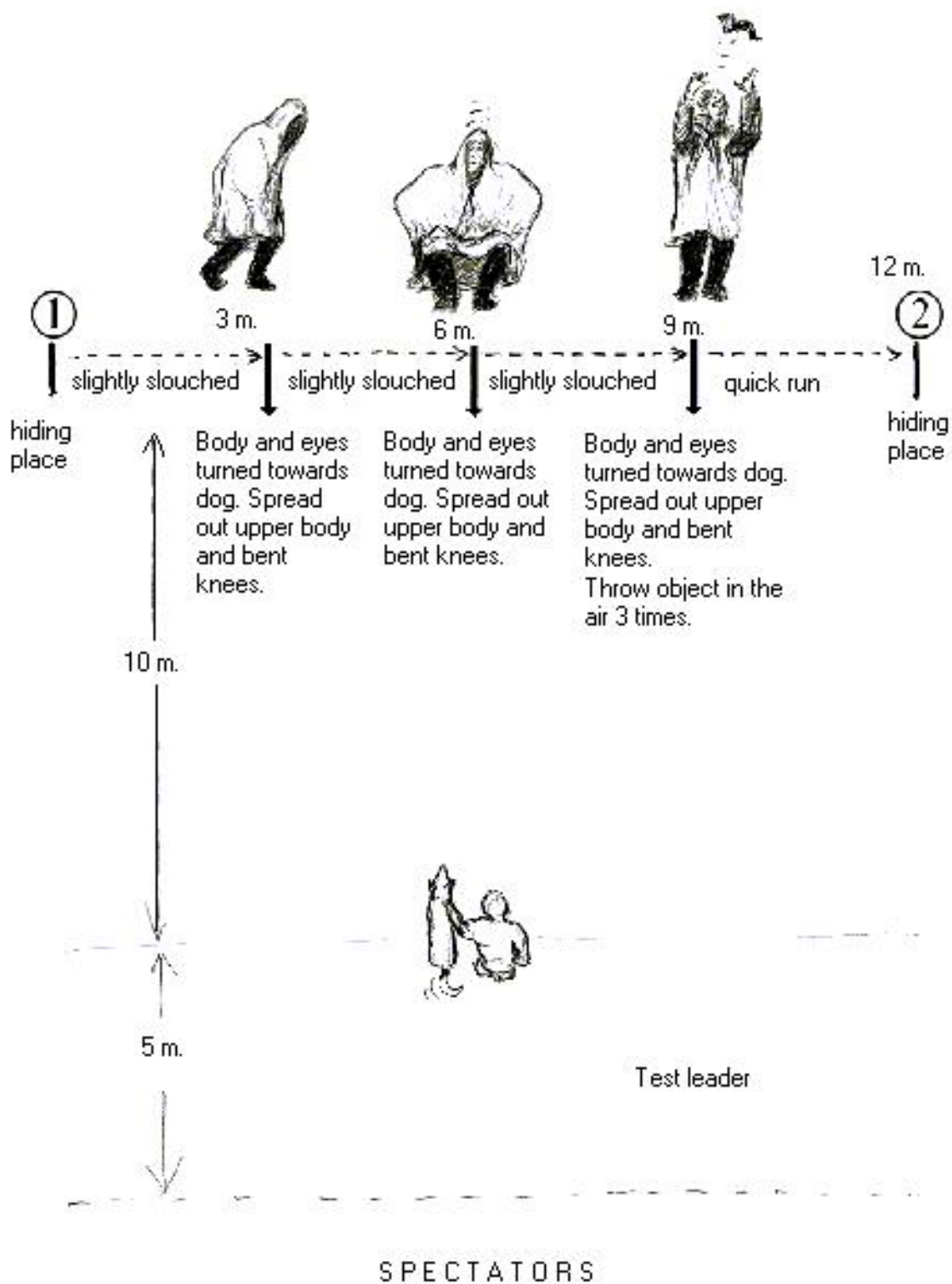
Marshal

The marshal is positioned in hiding place 1 and starts test at instructions from test leader by making four short noises (knocking branch on tree stem).

Note: any dog that arrives at the last minute should be given the opportunity to play for a short while.

1. Marshal moves forward about 3m, slouching slightly, turned sideways to the dog.
2. Next marshal turns facing the team, focuses the dog, broadens upper body at the same time bending his knees up and down (short curtsies).
3. Moves forward three more meters and repeats actions.
4. Moves forward three more meters and repeats actions.
5. Takes hood off, throws object in the air three times.
6. Runs quickly to hiding place 2, unmasks himself and sits down on his cape with the object.

IF DOG APPROACHES	IF DOG DOES NOT APPROACH
Perceive positive contact from dog.	Sit quietly for 10 seconds
Calmly leave hiding place. Keep to the "line".	Speak loud and clear for 10 seconds.
Extend the object to the dog. Remember that describer must be able to see dog seizing it.	If dog approaches, proceed as in left column.
Play with the dog for 10 seconds. Keep to the "line".	Leave your hiding place and play actively along the line for 10 seconds.
Let go of object after 10 seconds if dog has a hold of it.	If dog approaches and wants to play, proceed as in left column.
Play actively for 10 seconds. If you still have the object, extend it to the dog. If dog wants to give object to you, take it. If dog comes without the object, activate it by using body movements and your voice. Do <u>not</u> pick up the object, even if you can.	If dog does not approach during first play, test is considered over. Marshal remains passive. Handler and dog walk up to marshal, perhaps accompanied by test leader.
Let go of object if dog has a hold of it. Remain passive for 10 seconds. Do not look at the dog.	
Play actively for 10 seconds as described above.	
Test is over.	



SURPRISE - test no. 6.

Purpose

- to test the dog's capacity to act in an unexpected situation, when it is not involved in any other action.

Materials

Long-sleeved overalls, unpadded (men's size 50-52), without hood, in a contrasting color. The upper part, with sleeves, is stabilized with a wooden cross. The legs must be tied down properly, so that they do not fill with air. Snap fasteners on the legs and frame can be used to hold down the overalls. Sew a double hem on the bottom of the overall legs to strengthen for fastening.

Place two hoops on the upper part of the wooden cross to fasten the rope in.

NOTE – there should be no obstacles set up on the ground in front of the overalls.

Surroundings

The place for this test should be chosen so that the judge can see the dog during the test and so that the dog is able to run away without risk of hurting itself. Dog and handler should be able to pass easily. The overalls should not be hung up in front of tree stems or the like. It is important to make the passage through which the team will proceed after reaction free and even, and that it is marked with streamers at beginning and end, i.e. 10 meters before and after.

Performance

Test leader

Handler leads dog on shortened lead, so as to prevent dog from moving sideways away from test area. Handler is instructed to stop and let go of lead when dummy pops up and to turn body and glance towards the overalls. Handler remains completely passive until otherwise encouraged by test leader. If dog stops or starts sniffing or goes behind handler before overall pops up, the team will be called back to starting point to restart walk towards surprise. If dog is extremely uneasy in reacting, handler should lead dog away, overalls should be taken down and dog given new opportunity to come forward for abreaction. Note that overalls should be pulled up during recollection phase.

Marshal

Three meters in front of dog overalls are pulled up quickly and then should remain completely immobile. Any new movements made by the overalls will stimulate the dog. Mark the spot where the dog should be when the overalls are pulled up (3 m.).

Abreaction / Curiosity

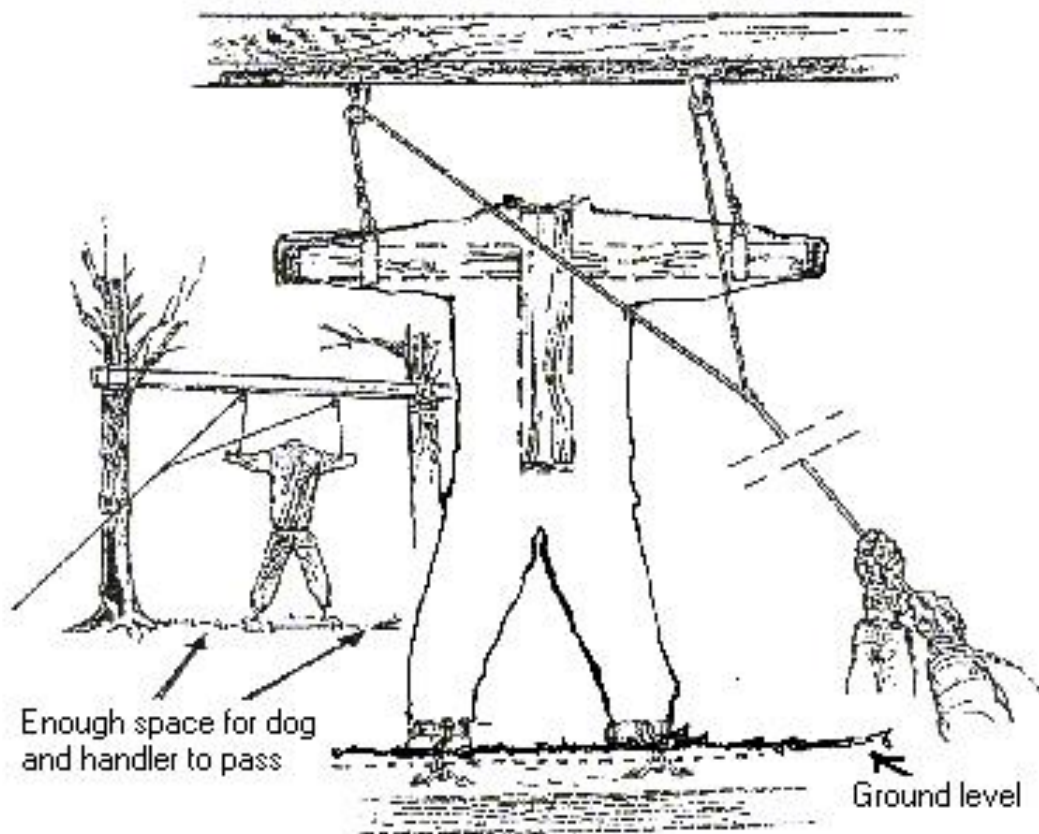
15 sec. intervals

1. Handler passive.
2. Handler moves forward half the distance.
3. Handler approaches overalls.
4. Handler starts to speak, squats next to overalls and entices dog.
5. Handler leads dog away and overalls are set down. Dog is then led back again to act out.

Remaining fear / interest

To control remaining fear and interest, the team starts 10 meters in front of the pulled up overalls. Dog is led on loose lead so that it is able to turn away to the side.

Team passes overalls and continues 10 meters behind overalls, where they turn around and walk past other side of overalls, up to the starting point 10 meters in front of overalls. Dog should be between handler and overalls when passing. This procedure is then repeated.



SENSITIVITY TO NOISE – test no. 7.

Purpose

- to describe dog's reactions to unexpected noises.

Materials

“Rattling noise” is made by a 1 – 1,5 m. long chain and two (2) pot lids dragged along a 3 meter long corrugated sheeting. The sheeting should not touch the ground, only it should be raised above the ground (0,2 – 0,4 meters) so as not to muffle the noise (see diagram).

This test should be conducted so that dog and handler pass on the right side of the noise, at a distance of 1 to 1,5 meters.

Surroundings

The place chosen for this test should allow the person describing the dog to see the dog during the whole test. The dog should be able to run away from the place or hop away without risk for injury. The dog should not be forewarned by the presence of any odd devices and the rattling frame should consequently not be placed in the open. It is important to make the passage through which the team will proceed after abreaction free and even, and that it is marked with streamers at beginning and end, i.e. 10 meters before and after.

Performance

Test leader

Handler walks parallel to noise frame with the dog on short lead on his left side (to prevent dog from turning towards or away from test site). The noise should come suddenly and unexpectedly. Handler lets go of lead and stands facing the noise when it starts. Dog is allowed to act freely when investigating where the noise is coming from. Handler does not act until he receives recommendation from test leader. If dog starts to sniff or goes behind handler, before the noise starts, the team is called back to the starting point to restart the walk.

Marshal

The test is started exactly when the dog's head passes the middle of the frame. the noise should last for 3 seconds

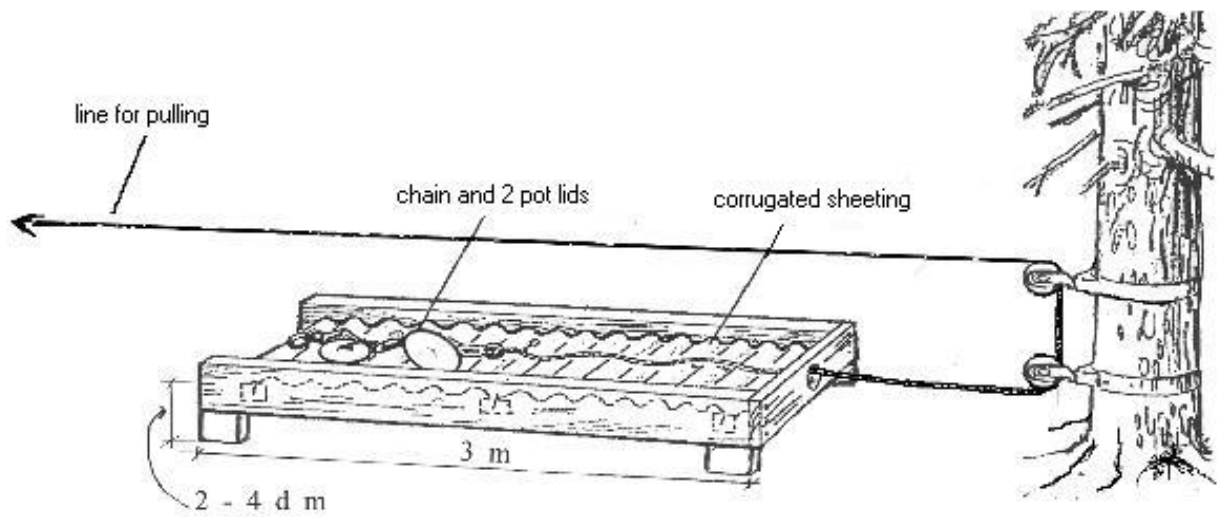
Abreaction / Curiosity

15 sec. intervals

1. Handler is passive.
2. Handler moves forward half the distance.
3. Handler approaches source of noise.
4. Handler starts to speak, then squats by the source of the noise and entices the dog.
5. Dog does not approach.

Remaining fear / interest

To control remaining fear, the team starts at the starting point 10 m. from the source of the noise. The dog is led on a loose lead so that it is able to turn away to the side. The dog should be between the source of the noise and the handler during passages. The team passes the source of the noise and proceeds 10 m. past it, from where it returns to the starting point upon recommendation from the test leader. The procedure is then repeated.



GHOSTS - test no. 8.

Purpose

- to describe dog's reaction to threatening, moving objects, approaching slowly.

Materials

Costumes should be made of white fabric, color contrasting to surroundings and consist of three parts: **skirt**, **top** and **hood**.

Skirt

The skirt should be long enough for marshals of varying height to wear it. The bottom hem should rest on the upper part of marshal's foot. Elastic band at the waist to keep skirt up (*easy to roll up to adjust skirt length*). The bottom hem should have some kind of weights sewn in to prevent unnecessary skirt movements such as flapping. The bottom of the skirt should not be more than 160 cm. around.

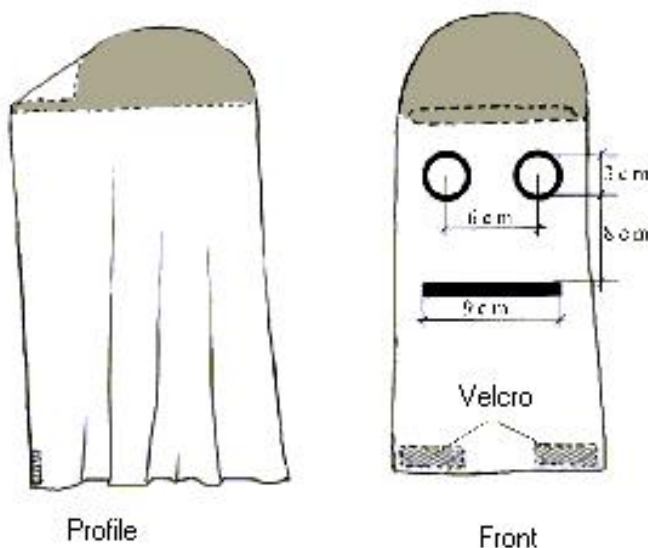
Top

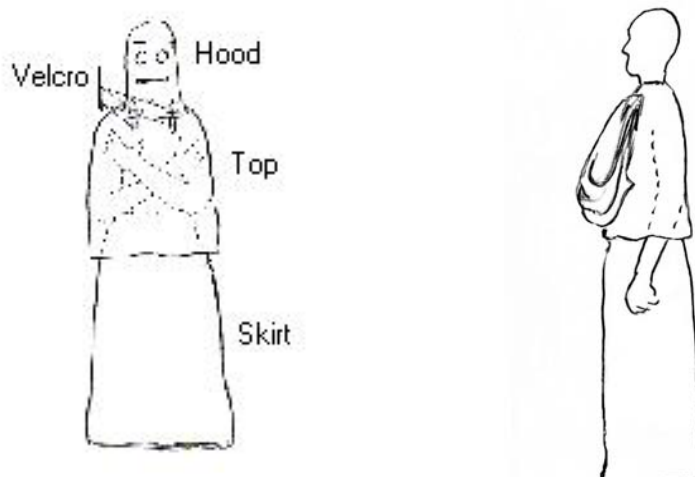
50 – 70 cm. long, with elastic band at the neck. Two 20 cm. long Velcro strips should be sewn on vertically, 15 cm. from the top hem and 25 cm. apart.

Hood

The hood should be fastened onto a cap with a straight brim, sticking out 3 cm. beyond the bridge of the marshal's nose. Two 5 cm. long Velcro strips should be sewn horizontally onto the bottom edge of the front, so as to fasten onto the Velcro strips on the Top.

Two holes, 3 cm. in diameter, 6 cm. between their centers, should be cut in the front of the hood. There should be a 0,5 cm. black rim around the edges of the holes, which are the eyes. The mouth should consist of a black line, 9 cm. long and 1 cm. wide, placed 8 cm. under the lower rim of the eyes.





Surroundings

The test should take place in a partly open, flat terrain so that the dog can clearly see the ghosts (contrasting to surroundings). During the winter snow should be shaken off tree branches. Make sure to check which way the wind is blowing so that the dog can not catch the marshal's scent before/during the test. Alternative areas should be available for the test, which should not take place on animal training grounds or the like.

Performance

Test leader

Test leader shows handler the place for the test and instructs him/her not to let go of lead, other than if the dog chooses to leave the place (flee/distance itself). Marshals start on signal (as unnoticeable as possible) from test leader. Marshals' movements are directed with very slight signals at starts as well as at finishing turns. Marshals take turns, moving in 3-meter intervals. Dog, handler, judge and spectators are at positions according to diagram, test leader as well.

Marshals

must be at their stations well in advance of test start, to mark stop positions together with test leader. At starting point marshals stand facing each other and have eye contact to ensure simultaneous start on test leader's signal. Start commences after 3-5 seconds delay. Test leader decides which marshal starts once they are visible. Marshals make slow, stereotype, non-impulsive moves, making stops at places marked earlier (approx. 3 meters apart) and starting on test leader's signal. Marshals turn on signal from test leader. Marshal lowers his/her hands when turning around (giving dog the chance to make contact).

Curiosity / Abreaction

Marshals stand completely still during this phase. Handler does not act until he/she receives recommendation from test leader, as follows:

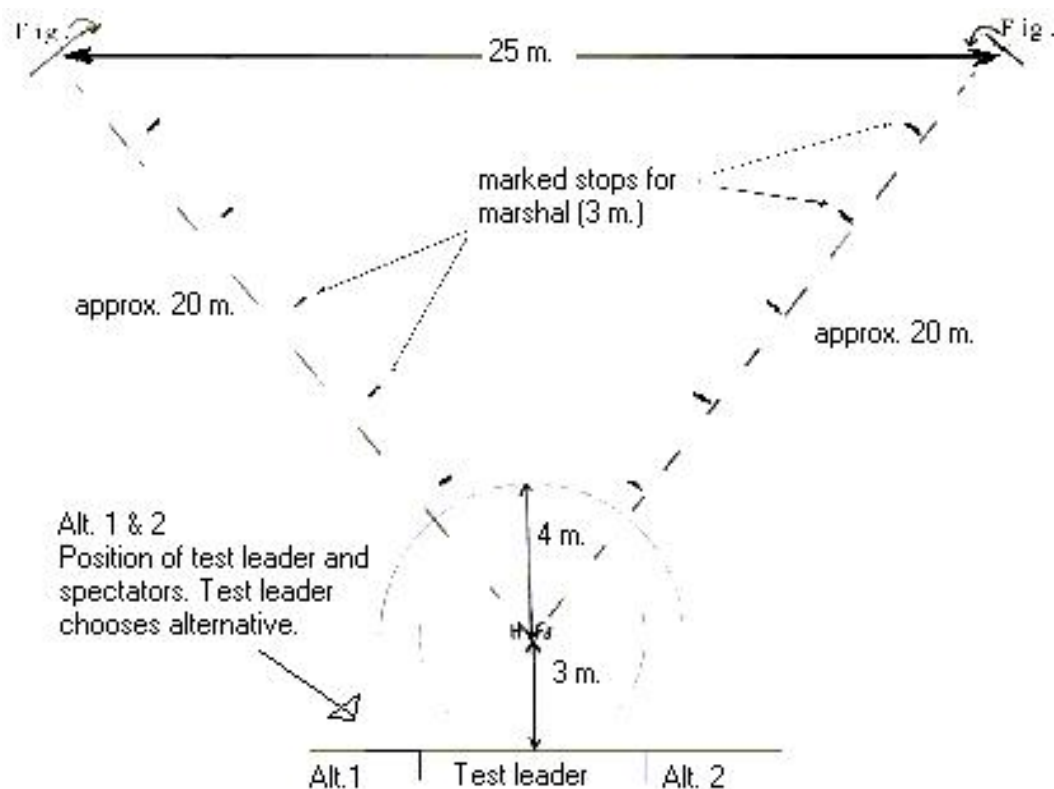
Curiosity and contact

1. Handler drops lead or unpins it if dog is close to him, whereby handler remains passive. The dog usually chooses on its own which of the marshals it wants to approach.

2. Handler goes halfway (2m.) towards the marshal chosen by the dog. If the dog shows no interest or does not choose any of the marshals, then the handler walks straight ahead, 2m. in between the two marshals.
3. Handler walks up to marshal, standing face to face with him (close enough for a hug).
4. Handler and ghost talk. Handler can entice his dog to come.
5. Handler removes hood from ghost's head by pulling it off forward and leaving it hanging (see diagram on previous page) while they continue to talk. Marshal is passive towards the dog. If the dog comes up to the marshal, he greets it quickly.
6. Marshal continues contact with the dog for 15 seconds in standing position.

When the dog has made contact with the first ghost, the same abreaction is repeated with the second ghost in accordance with points 4, 5 and 6. In cases when the marshal doesn't make contact with the dog, the ghost is unmasked totally and handler, dog and marshal go for a short walk together.

Note that marshal must always stand upright!



PLAY 2 - test no. 9.

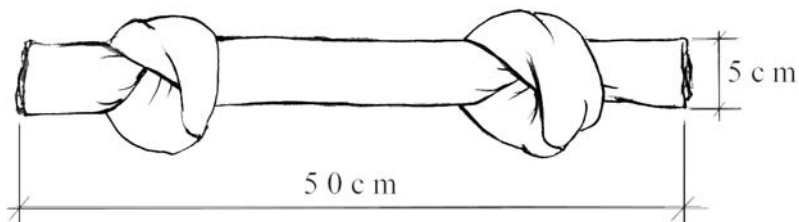
Purpose

- to describe whether dog's reactions when playing with a new object have changed since Play 1.

Materials

Object = sturdy object, approx. 50 cm. long and 5 cm. thick, with 2 knots, one on each end of the object.

A similar object should be available in case needed for distracting.



Performance

Dog and handler go to designated position, approx. 10 m. from spectator group. Dog is let off lead and remains off lead during the whole test. Handler and test leader should be approx. 4 meters away from each other.

Play and grab

1. Test leader instructs handler to get dog interested in object by dragging the object on the ground twice, in short, quick movements.
2. Handler throws object to test leader, who throws it back to handler, who then throws it back to test leader.
3. Test leader then throws object about 10 m. away.
4. If the dog grabs the object, the handler is instructed to turn around and run a few steps away from the dog while at the same time encouraging the dog to come to him/her.
5. If the dog can not be encouraged to come with the object, then test leader takes spare object and lets handler get dog interested in it, *diversion*.
6. Handler starts tug of war / play with the dog before the next test.

GUN SHOT – test no. 10

Purpose

- to describe dog's reaction to shots being fired. Dog is tested during activity (playing), as well as when it is passive. The handler is involved in playing with the dog.

Materials

9 mm starter gun, ear guards, play object or alternative object.

Surroundings

This test takes place in connection with PLAY 2. Try to avoid echoing from nearby buildings or the like. Take wind direction into consideration.

Performance

During activity

Handler activates dog off lead, using play object or other object of his choice. If this does not activate the dog, then some other way should be used, e.g. handler and dog run around in a circle. The activity should proceed about 10 seconds before the first shot is fired. After another 10 sec. a second shot is fired, after which the dog will be tested while it is passive.

Passivity

Handler has dog on lead without giving the dog any commands. Two shots are fired, 10 seconds apart.

Conclusion

The dog is activated with playing, this time no shots are fired.

Comments

If activating the dog fails, then the dog is tested with all 4 shots fired while it is passive.

Test leader

is positioned so that he is in view of handler and the shot. Test leader informs marshal about the signal for firing and cease fire. The dog should play for approx. 10 seconds before the first shot is fired. Approximately 10-second intervals should pass between remaining shots. Two shots should be fired during activity (play) and 2 during passivity.

After the first two shots during activity, test leader instructs handler to put dog on lead, take the object and tuck it away under his jacket/sweater, so that the object is totally out of sight for the dog. Then handler goes halfway to test leader and then back, behaving in a neutral manner.

Marshal (person firing shots)

The marshal stands approximately 20m. away, totally out of sight for handler and dog. The wind should not distract the dog. Marshal and test leader agree on signals for firing shots as well as cease fire.

