Favorite Foods

In the far corner of the Carter family's back yard there are some grapevines. The grapes get ripe in the summer, and everyone enjoys them. There are three kinds of grapes on the family's vines. There are tiny yellow grapes that are very sweet. There are medium sized red grapes that are nice and crisp. There are big purple grapes that have seeds, and skins that are a bit tough. Inside the tough skins the grapes are sweet and juicy.

The birds and bees love to taste the grapes every summer. Sometimes Tom ties streamers to the vines to scare the birds away so there will be grapes for the family to eat. But someone else likes grapes, too. Can you guess who it is? It's Pixie! Grapes can make many breeds of dogs very sick. Pixie does not get sick, but Bobby will so he does not eat grapes.

Pixie's favorite grapes are the crisp red ones. These grapes have no seeds.

She trots right up to the vine and bites down on the big bunches of grapes. But Pixie is very clever. She knows that Tom doesn't like her to eat the grapes because they are not good for dogs to eat. When he sees the empty vines he tells her that she has done a naughty thing. So Pixie has figured out another way to eat grapes. She goes to the big purple grapes and gently puts her teeth on one of

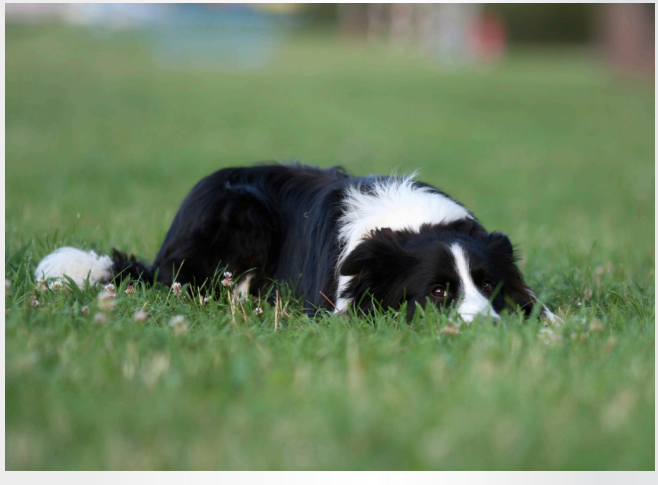
them. This breaks the tough skin. Then she sucks out the juicy grape. If she is careful, the empty skin stays on the vine. If a person doesn't look too closely, it looks like the grapes are still there. But it is very disappointing to pick a cluster full of empty grape skins!

Pixie is not the only animal at the Carter family's house that chooses interesting foods. Of course, many dogs like to eat grass. Bobby likes to eat grass in the yard just as much as any other dog. But there is one patch of grass Bobby thinks is special. Every night Tom and Susan take Bobby and Pixie for a walk before bed.

They go out from the house and turn left. They walk a little and turn right. They walk a little longer and then turn left. Then Bobby starts getting excited. He pulls on the leash. He pants. After a few minutes the road curves a little, and there is Bobby's special patch of grass.

Nobody knows what makes it so special except Bobby. He walks into the grass and begins to eat. The grass is about two feet tall, and Bobby looks like a little bear grazing in a field! He chomps away happily for as long as Susan will let him, and then moves on down the road. He knows he'll be back the next night.

Pippi has her own favorite food. When she smells it she meows louder and louder until she gets some. You'll never guess what it is. It's cantaloupe! And it's not just the sweet melon she likes. The part she loves the best is the chewy rind. Just cut Pippi a slice of cantaloupe rind and she's a happy kitty! She chews and munches until it's all gone.



Another food Pippi loves is dog chow. When Susan feeds the dogs at night, Pippi runs to Bobby's bowl. Bobby is not in a big hurry to eat, and Pippi knows she can eat some of his food before he gets there. Sometimes Bobby chases her away. But most nights Pippi has a big snack of dry dog chow before she eats her own dinner.

When Susan goes to the Farmers Market she often buys Franky's special treat. He loves the tender shoots of wheat grass when it is about two inches long. Susan buys it in a little pot and waters it every few days. Franky nibbles it many times throughout the day. It gets taller and taller, except the places where he chews it down. After a few weeks it starts to turn yellow. Then Franky doesn't like it anymore. Susan dumps it out in the compost and starts over with a new pot.

Just like Pippi, Franky has a special food he likes to eat before bed at night.

If his banana chips are not waiting in his bowl, he stands and meows until Susan gives them to him. He has a special, extra loud meow that means "Give me my banana chips, please!" Franky thinks banana chips are the best treat in the world! He eats two of them every night. Sometimes he gets one in the morning as a surprise.

Perhaps learning about the animals' favorite foods has made you think about things you and your family like to eat or don't like to eat. Grass doesn't sound too yummy.

The End!