

Name \_\_\_\_\_ **Author Arguments**

## Analyzing Arguments

# Is Eating Grass Bad for My Dog?



**Directions:** Read the article. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, analyze the author’s argument. What is her claim? Does she support it with evidence? What kind of evidence? Is the evidence convincing? Why or why not?

One of the most common questions asked of veterinarians is, “Why does my dog eat grass?” The truth is that there is no single answer; different dogs may eat grass for different reasons. But in most cases the behavior is both normal and harmless.

According to Dr. Melvin Furland, of Good Pets, Happy Pets veterinary clinic, “Your dog will eat anything that tastes good, and . . . grass does.” Because dogs are natural scavengers, they are driven by instinct to look for food everywhere. If your dog likes the taste of grass, then he may just be going outside for a little snack. Or it could be a little more complex; for instance, if your dog isn’t getting enough fiber in his normal diet, he could be seeking to fill that nutritional need by gnoshing on grass.

They say that dogs are a lot like their owners, and one thing that dogs do just like we do is to eat when they’re bored. If your dog doesn’t get enough exercise, enough mental stimulation, or enough attention, he may just be trying to entertain himself.

Dr. Cindy McGuire, though, of the Fuller Animal Hospital, thinks differently. “Eating grass is a sign of stomach distress,” she says. “When dogs eat grass, they are self-medicating. If your dog vomits after eating grass, it isn’t because the grass is harmful; but it may be because there is some other problem that needs to be checked out by your vet.”

Nine out of the ten veterinarians surveyed while writing this article agreed that eating grass was both normal and harmless behavior for a dog. The tenth vet, however, brought up a very good point: “Eating grass can be harmful to your pet if your lawn is treated with dangerous fertilizers, pesticides or herbicides.”

So if you have a furry-four-legged lawnmower at home, be sure to use only non-toxic products on your lawn, and when walking your dogs, watch for signs warning that chemicals have been used on the grass. And then don’t worry. Let Rover have a salad if he wants one. It isn’t going to hurt him.