

## Detector Dog Selection Test

**Test 1 – Reward Arousal Test** This phase of the test evaluates the dog's arousal level when exposed to a toy. Watch the dog closely as the toy is shown to the dog. Do not give the toy to the dog during this test. Simply watch to assess the level of arousal in the dog when it becomes aware that you have a toy. You should keep the toy just out of reach of the dog, but toss it around and play with it excitedly while the dog watches. If the dog loses interest quickly and looks away, a core of 0 should be chosen. If the dog never seems to lose interest and remains highly excited the entire time the toy is in view and stays interested and focused for a few minutes even after the toy is put away, a score of 20 points should be awarded.

**Test 2 - Sudden Noise Distraction Test** This test is meant to gage the dog's focus in the presence of some loud and surprising noise. To begin the test, stand in front of the dog while holding the toy and playing with it excitedly. Have a helper position themselves behind the dog and out of the dog's field of vision. The helper should perform the drop tests, one by one at your direction so that you are prepared to closely watch the dog's reaction.

The three phases listed are suggestions and may be changed to fit the circumstances at the discretions of the evaluator. However, the items used should produce loud noises. It is important that the noises happen behind (or out of sight of the dog) but close enough to induce a response. Watch the dog's reaction to each noise as it is produced and award 0 points if the dog's reaction is pronounced and it seems to forget about the toy. Award the max score for each phase if the dog clearly ignores the noise and remains focused on the toy during each phase.

**Test 3 – Other Person Distraction Test** – This test will help determine how distracted the dog becomes by another person interacting with it when the toy is available and in the dog's view. For Test 3a, your helper should approach the dog from behind while you play with the toy excitedly. The helper is to touch the dog on its rump or tail while it is focused on the toy. In Test 3b, the helper should push against the dog's rump. Enough to move it to one side or the other while the dog is focused on the toy. The helper should push the dog's rump both ways a couple of times to ensure a comprehensive test.

*Care should be exercised here to make sure the helper remains safe from an accidental bite by an aggressive dog. This test should only be conducted by an experienced and trained helper for safety reasons. You should control the leash to prevent the dog from turning and biting the helper and the helper should be aware of and prepares for the potential for an aggressive reaction from the dog. If the dog exhibits and level of aggression toward the helper, stop the test and note that the dog is aggressive.*

If the dog is easily distracted and/or turns to stare at the helper, losing interest in the toy during either test, a score of 0 is awarded for that test. If the dog never loses focus on the toy or never turns to look at the helper, the max score of 5 points is awarded for that test. If the dog simply

glances back at the helper, but then returns its focus to the toy, award points consistent with the intensity of the reaction to the distraction that you observe.

**Test 4 – Reward Intensity** the goal here is to determine how persistent the dog is in trying to access toy when it knows where the toy is, but cannot access it. To begin the test, your helper should hold the dog while you tease the dog with the toy. The toy should be presented to the dog while using a high pitched excited voice, Let the dog almost grab the toy but never actually get it. The closer you can come to letting the dog grab, but not quite getting it the better. As the dog watches then, place the toy under a bucket or other concealing object. Then have the handler release the dog and observe the dog's reaction. Does the dog immediately run to where you hid the toy? Does it dig excitedly at the object concealing the toy.? Does it bark excitedly or bite at the concealing object/ Does the dog look at you as if to ask for help? Award a score that reflects the dog's persistence to gain access to the toy.

**Test 5 – Search Test** This test will show you the dog's level of hunt drive. Have your helper hold the dog while you tease it excitedly with the toy as you did in **Test 4**. When the dog is aroused for the toy, turn and run away with the toy and hide it somewhere that dog cannot see you hide it.

In **Test 5a** Tease the dog until its state of arousal and focus on the toy is high. Then throw the toy somewhere that the dog can't see it. It is Ok for the dog to see the throw. Release the dog and observe whether the dog uses its nose and is persistent in finding the toy. 0 to 5 points are awarded based on the dog's level of persistence.

In **Test 5b** Tease the dog until its state of arousal and focus on the toy is high. As your helper holds the dog, you should turn and run away with the toy now concealed and hide the toy somewhere. You should act as if you hide the toy in several other places. 0 to 5 points are awarded based on how much energy the dog shows in searching for the toy and whether the dog finds the toy.

In **Test 5c** Tease the dog again as in the last two phases, then run away after concealing the toy from the dog's view. Act like you hide the toy in several places, but keep it in your possession. Put the toy somewhere out of the search area quickly, then have the helper release the dog. Observe how long the dog persists in searching for the toy before giving up. 0 to 10 points are awarded based on how persistent the dog is in searching for the toy in an area where no toy is available.

In the **Evaluator Notes** section, the evaluator should make any remarks relevant to the assessment of the dog's likelihood of becoming a successful toy rewarded detector dog that are not fully covered on the accompanying form. List any attributes or short comings that should be noted when deciding on whether to choose this dog as a candidate. The evaluator should offer his or her opinion as to the dog's suitability and explain the reasoning behind that opinion.