The Canine-ality™ Assessment consists of six items administered to shelter dogs — after an MYM SAFER™ aggression assessment and before they've been made available for adoption. Both the MYM SAFER™ aggression assessment and the Canine-ality™ Assessment should be done within three to four days of the dog's arrival at your shelter. A minimum of four hours should separate the two assessments.* The dog receives a numeric score for each item, and the total score is tallied to determine the dog’s Canine-ality™. When a dog receives a score leading to a “Supervisor Alert”, refer to Chapter 11 of the Canine-ality™ Guide for information on behavior modification and other resources for these dogs.

One of the items, the Crate Item, is optional and is designed to gather information about the dog's acceptance of and tolerance for crating. This is for information-gathering purposes only and does not affect the dog's Canine-ality™ score. However, if you recommend crating to your adopters, the ASPCA® strongly recommends conducting this optional item.

* For more information about how soon to conduct the MYM SAFER™ aggression assessment after a dog arrives at your shelter, please refer to the MYM SAFER™ Guide.

equipment

- TV/blink cycle monitor
- Video camera with audio

props for get-acquainted room

- Comfortable but easy to clean chair
- Trash can
- Dog toy
- Dog bed or blanket
- Large dog crate

item #1: left alone

Bring a leash (and collar if the dog is not already wearing one) to retrieve the dog from his kennel. **Do not greet or interact with the dog.** Simply take him outside to give him an opportunity to relieve himself and record whether or not he urinated or defecated outside. Bring the dog into a get-acquainted room furnished with a trashcan, blanket or dog bed, chair, large dog crate with the door closed, and table or counter. Leave the dog alone in the room and observe the dog’s behavior on the TV/audio monitor for four minutes.

To keep track of the amount of time the dog spends sitting or lying down in the room, you will use the second stopwatch. The moment the dog sits or lies down, start the stopwatch. When he gets up, stop it. Click the stopwatch on any time the dog sits or lies down. This will allow you to keep a running total of sitting and lying during the four minutes.

### 1A | Duration - The dog moves about the room (choose one of the following responses):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One minute or less.</td>
<td>0 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 1 and 2 minutes.</td>
<td>add 1 pt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 2 and 3 minutes.</td>
<td>add 2 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remains active for more than 3 minutes.</td>
<td>add 3 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**total points for item #1A**

### 1B | Behavior - The dog does the following (check all that apply):

- Dog jumps on chair.
- Dog stands on hind legs to reach counter or table.
- Dog urinates or defecates.
- Dog exhibits behaviors that either jeopardize his/her safety or is destructive to items/equipment in the left alone room.
  
  Please describe: _____________________________

Dogs that spend the vast majority of the assessment within two feet of the door, panting, whining, scratching on the door or jumping on the door have a higher likelihood of separation anxiety than dogs that do not display these behaviors.

- Dog focuses on door, whining, scratching door, barking until you return.

**ALERT SUPERVISOR!**

Possible separation anxiety. Behavior modification strongly recommended prior to and after adoption. Be sure to perform the optional Crate Test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None of the above behaviors checked. (Dog only sniffs about the room)</td>
<td>0 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only one of the above behaviors checked.</td>
<td>add 2 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more of the above behaviors checked.</td>
<td>add 3 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**total points for item #1B**

**total points (add points from item #1A and item #1B)**

- The dog freezes, hides under furniture or in a corner.

**ALERT SUPERVISOR!**

This dog may need behavior modification and will need socialization before being placed for adoption.

**notes:**
item #2: greeting

After the Left-Alone Item, enter the get-acquainted room and shut the door behind you. Greet the dog with patting and a high-pitched, happy voice while standing as straight as possible. (This Item is done off-leash.) Continue for 20 seconds and choose one of the following responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The dog gleefully jumps and pounces on you.</td>
<td>add 3 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The dog jumps on you but ceases quickly</td>
<td>add 2 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The dog jumps and pounces <strong>around</strong> you, but does not place his paws on you.</td>
<td>add 2 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The dog keeps all four feet on the ground but is still exuberant.</td>
<td>add 1 pt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The dog gives a low tail wag, puts his ears back and seems to enjoy the greeting.</td>
<td>0 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ALERT SUPERVISOR</strong> This dog may need behavior modification and will need socialization before being placed for adoption.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

total points for item #2

notes:

item #3: crate (optional)

The Crate Item does not affect the dog's Canine-ility® score. However, if you recommend crating to your adopters, the ASPCA® strongly advises conducting this optional item. The Crate Item is designed to assess the dog's tolerance for being crated and left alone. It is comprised of two parts: ease and acceptance.

After the Greeting Item, wait 30 seconds and proceed with 3A.

3A | Ease

Open crate door and place the dog inside with a rawhide chewy or toy. If the dog does not enter willingly, attempt to guide the dog into the crate using the chewy or toy. If the dog will not enter the crate with guidance, gently attempt to put the dog in the crate, close the crate door and proceed to Item 3B. However, if the dog struggles or panics and will not go into the crate, stop and choose one of the following responses, and then move to Item #4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dog enters willingly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog enters with guidance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog has to be placed inside.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog panics, struggles, and is very difficult to get inside.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannot get dog inside crate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3B | Acceptance

**Leave the dog alone in the crate and exit the room. Using your TV/audio monitor, observe the dog for three minutes. Choose one of the following responses:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dog circles, investigates crate, then sits or lies down.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog barks, whines, circles, may paw at crate but eventually settles.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog barks, whines, continues to circle or paw at crate and does NOT settle.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog panics, barks, whines, bites at crate, drools, and pants heavily.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enter the room, leash the dog, and take the dog to your play area.

**Item #4: Play**

You'll need to have three size-appropriate toys of varying textures and shapes. A tennis ball, tug toy, and plush squeaky toy provide good variety. Once you have the dog inside the play area, remove the leash and give the dog up to 90 seconds to investigate the play area. If he comes to you, give him a smile and a small pat, but otherwise ignore him. If the dog is actively soliciting you to play, then begin play and do not wait the full 90 seconds.

If the dog does not solicit play after 90 seconds, attempt to engage him with a high-pitched voice, play body language, and a fun toy. Make sure you are active and move around the play area. Take the tennis ball and throw it several times to see if the dog plays fetch. Next take the tug toy and see if the dog plays tug. Lastly, take the plush squeaky and see how he responds to it.

Choose one of the following responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dog engages in the game with enthusiasm and continues to play for at least two minutes.</td>
<td>add 2 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog engages in the game with enthusiasm but then changes the game to something else such as keep-away, tug, chase, etc.</td>
<td>add 2 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog engages in the game but quickly loses interest in toy. Dog then chooses to play nicely with evaluator instead of toy.</td>
<td>add 2 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog immediately engages in the game but quickly loses interest. Dog chooses to sniff the ground or engage in some other activity not related to the toy or the evaluator.</td>
<td>add 1 pt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog wags his tail and is interactive with the evaluator, but does not engage in play at all.</td>
<td>0 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total points for item #4**

**Toy Preference:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tennis Ball</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tug Toy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plush Squeaky Toy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** Use this section to record any other behaviors observed.
**item #5: food motivation**

Place the dog on a six-foot leash. Holding a highly desirable food lure between your thumb and fingers, place your hand in front of the dog's nose and then move your hand six inches to the left. If the dog follows, release the food into the dog's mouth and then repeat to the right and again to the left. Now you're ready to determine if, and how hard, the dog will work for the food reward. You can attempt to turn him in a circle.

Choose one of the following responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dog follows the food lure and after a few repetitions learns the behavior.</td>
<td>add 3 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The dog is focused and responsive.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog follows the food lure and is enthusiastic, but gets distracted and needs to be redirected several times.</td>
<td>add 2 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog follows the food lure once or twice but then quickly &quot;zones out&quot;.</td>
<td>add 1 pt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog does not follow food lure but stays near you and wants to interact.</td>
<td>0 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog does not follow food lure, nor does he stay near you.</td>
<td>0 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now, without using any food lures, determine if the dog already knows any of the following verbal cues. Check the ones the dog seems to already know. This dog appears to know the following behaviors:

- SIT
- STAY
- DOWN
- COME

**notes:** Use this section to record any other behaviors observed.

**item #6: manners**

The Manners Item is designed to determine the dog's overall behavior and awareness of desirable behavior when interacting with people. The evaluator makes this assessment based on the dog's overall behavior throughout the previous five items.

During assessment, the dog (Check all that apply):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jumped on me at times other than during the Greeting Item.</td>
<td>add 2 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulled on the leash a lot.</td>
<td>add 2 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was rough and a bit difficult to handle, including mouthing using pressure; grabbing at clothing; body slamming; using forelegs to hit, scratch or hug; or other similar behaviors.</td>
<td>add 3 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was calm and well-mannered. (check here only if you have no other items checked in this manners section)</td>
<td>0 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had lots of energy yet was well-mannered. (check here only if you have no other items checked in this manners section)</td>
<td>add 1 pt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**notes:** Use this section to record any other behaviors observed.
In the event a dog’s response to a particular item indicates he needs behavior modification or socialization, he receives no points for that item and should be withdrawn from the Meet Your Match™ Adoption Program until his behavioral issues have been resolved. All five Canine-ality™ Assessment items should be conducted in order to obtain as much information about the dog as possible. If you recommend crating to your adopters, an optional sixth item (referred to in the Canine-ality™ Assessment as Item #3: Crating) should be conducted as well. See Chapter 11 on Enrichment, Management, and Behavior Modification.