

READING



Description/Objective:

- *The students will demonstrate their understanding of the story through guided reading discussion.
- *The students will identify vocabulary meanings.
- *The students will complete projects and extended activities
- *The students will understand the message of the book, which is to adopt from animal shelters or rescue organizations.



Materials:

- *One or more copies of [JJ the American Street Dog and how he came to live in our House](#)
- *Sentence Strips or Whiteboard for vocabulary words
- *Construction Paper, crayons, colored pencils
- *Lined writing paper, pencils



Vocabulary Words:

- *Prepare words to be displayed prior to reading (see Procedures below):
 - **Floppy** (pg.4) - loosely hanging or flapping; softy flexible
 - **Snout** (pg.11) - the protruding front part of an animal's head that includes the nose and usually the mouth and jaws.
 - **Concentrate** (pg.12) to draw together to a center; focus.
 - **Backside** (pg.14) - (informal) the fleshy portion of the body upon which one sits; buttocks.
 - **Ad** (pg.15) - a paid announcement, as of goods for sale, in newspapers or magazines, on radio or television, etc.

- **Shelter** (pg.15) - the condition of being in a home or other place where one is safe and protected.
- **Slinked** (pg.18) - to move as if afraid or ashamed; go quietly so as to avoid attention.
- **Siren** (pg.19) - a warning device that produces a loud, piercing noise, used esp. in firehouses and on police or emergency vehicles.
- **Supersonic** (pg.19) - exceeding or capable of exceeding the speed of sound waves through air.
- **Rescued** (pg.21) - to free or save, as from danger or confinement.
- **Concerned** (pg.21) - troubled or disturbed.
- **Reassured** (pg.21) - to give back confidence to.
- **Neglected** (pg.21) - to fail to take proper care of.
- **Homeless** (pg.22) - having no home
- **Organization** (pg.22) - a body of persons acting together for some purpose.
- **Abused** (pg.22) - to treat in a manner that causes injury or offense.
- **Adopting** (pg.22) - to become by law a parent of (a child who is not one's own offspring), or to accept responsibility for an animal as a pet.
- **Neutering** (pg.22) - to make sterile by removing all or part of the sexual organs (NOTE: for this age group you might use: **unable to help make puppies**)
- **Claimed** (pg.24) - to assert ownership; demand as one's right.
- **Gardener** (pg.26) - a person whose occupation is caring for plants, lawns, and the like.
- **Description** (pg.26) - variety; kind; sort.
- **Terrified** (pg.26) - filled with great fear or terror.
- **Sobbed** (pg.26) - to weep convulsively and with great emotion.
- **Peeked** (pg.27) - to look quickly or furtively, often through a small opening or from a hiding place; glance; peep.
- **Coaxed** (pg.28) - to persuade or try to do so by gradual, gentle means such as flattery, pleading, or promises.

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- **Puffy** (pg.28) - swollen; inflated.
 - **Relieved** (pg.28) - to ease or reduce (pain, suffering, need, worry, or the like).
 - **Snuggling** (pg.31) - to lie comfortably next to someone or something; cuddle.



Procedure:

*Place the sentence strips on the board or make a Word Wall (you will find many ideas on Pinterest.com). These words will be referred to in the story and may be integrated into students' writing activities.

*Survey students asking if they have dogs or cats at home. The educator may write the responses on the board.

*Of the students who have cats or dogs, ask if they know if their pets came from a shelter, breeder, stray, or purchased from a pet store. (The educator may wish to review these words briefly.) Graph these answers using the bar chart method and display them in the room, one for cats and one for dogs. Leave them up throughout the entire lesson.



Lesson-Guided Reading Discussion Questions:

- Show the students the book cover and state the title. Ask them to predict what they think the story is about. You may also review what "written by" and "illustrated by" means.
- Why is JJ called an AMERICAN street dog?
- Pg. 4: Can you identify the dogs pictured in the girl's bubble thoughts?

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- Pg. 5: Why would she want a dog since she has a cat for a pet?
 - She refers to the cat as “different.” What does she mean by this?
 - Pg. 6: What are some different caretaking requirements that dogs have from cats?
 - Pg. 7: How could Maya use the calendar to help take care of a dog?
 - Pg. 8: How does Dad feel about the dog after talking to Uncle Jerry?
 - Pg. 9: How would tags on the puppy’s collar help Uncle Jerry?
 - Pg. 10: Why did Uncle Jerry need to remove the collar?
 - Pg. 11: Which word best describes how mom feels? Happy, Worried or Excited?
 - Pg. 14: What worries is Mom having?
 - Pg. 15: Why is placing an ad in the paper, contacting local shelter and hanging posters important? Have the students discuss the definition of “shelter.” Have them research the definition of “sanctuary.” Then discuss the differences and ask if the word “shelter” is an appropriate word for pets. **Please be mindful with discussing euthanasia and kill for the students.**
 - Pg. 16: Why does the author state to buy “good” dog food?
 - Pg. 17: What should you do with a puppy after he has eaten and played?
 - Pg. 20: Who was the puppy named after and why?
 - Pg. 21: What do you think Dr. Welles will reply to Maya’s soccer field question?
 - Pg. 22: Why should Maya’s family NOT allow JJ to make puppies?
 - Pg. 23: Give some reasons why dogs and cats end up in the shelter?
 - Pg. 25: Can your heart really fall into your stomach? What is meant by this statement?

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- Pg. 27: What might Maya be feeling when the doorbell rang?
 - Pg. 28: Why is Maya “relieved?”
 - Pg. 29: What is it about JJ that makes him their “perfect” dog?
 - Pg. 30: What is meant by “shook the house?”
 - Pg. 31: Why is it important to tell her friends that they rescued?



Wrap-up:

*On page 6, Maya promised to help feed and walk JJ. Ask the students to write a letter to an adult promising that they will be responsible for a pet. If they already have a pet, ask them to think of a different kind they would like to have. Have them choose a pet, research what the pet would need then refer to these needs in the letters. Use the standard letter format to teach letter writing. You may also ask the students to use words from the vocabulary list.



Follow-up Activities:

- Schedule a presentation by local county shelter and humane society for the students.
- Compare and contrast stray dog and cats.
- Design a one-month calendar displaying what the dog’s needs are on a daily basis.
- Have students make lost pet (or one of JJ) posters to display in the classroom.
- Start a shelter animal club for a food drive.
- Teach a lesson on idioms or figurative language (e.g.: curiosity killed the cat) using the book, The King Who Rained, by Fred Gwynne. Have students come up with idioms that use animals in the negative like the example given and turn the phrase into a positive and design a poster with its true meaning.



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