

Thorndike Press®

Teacher's Guide

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MY LIFE ⁱⁿ Dog Years

Cookie - A Dedication

Vocabulary:

Pg. 7	dedication	a written piece at the beginning of a piece of literature or a performance, meant to show honor, love, or respect for the persons named
Pg. 8	unabashedly	without embarrassment; without shame
Pg. 8	lead dog	in a sled dog team, the front dog who follows the musher's commands
Pg. 8	pounds	shelters from which stray, lost, or unwanted animals may be adopted or destroyed
Pg. 8	mandatory	needed; required; necessary; essential

Choose the vocabulary word to best complete the following sentences:

1. Despite the blizzard conditions, he knew he could count on the _____ to follow his commands and take the team and himself to safety.
2. _____ often accept donations of pet food and money to help support the animals they hope will be adopted.
3. At the beginning of the movie was a _____ to the movie producer's father.
4. Before you can get your driver's license, it is _____ that you pass the written test to show that you understand the rules of the road.
5. After being away in the army for months, he _____ kissed all of his relatives at the family holiday gathering.

Comprehension questions:

1. What are two things that make the ice near beaver lodges thin?

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2. What two things saved Paulsen?

3. After Cookie rescued Paulsen by rallying the team to pull him out, what danger did he still face and what did he do to save himself?

Explore some of the books in your classroom library and copy three of the dedications that you find. Pretend that you are about to publish your first novel. Consider whom you would like to honor by a dedication and why. A dedication is usually to someone the writer knows personally, but it may also be to any heroic figure, including an animal. Write a dedication as you would have it appear on the dedication page of your novel:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Your dedication:

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Snowball - The First Dog

Vocabulary:

Pg. 16	Philippine Islands	also known as the Philippines, it is a country of more than 7000 islands that was established as a republic in 1946. The Philippines was a possession of the United States prior to World War II and was controlled by the Japanese during the war, from 1941–1944
Pg. 18	haggle	to argue back and forth to arrive at a price the seller thinks is high enough and the buyer thinks is low enough
Pg. 19	civilian	a person who is not a member of the police force or of any branch of the military services
Pg. 20	ravaged	destroyed
Pg. 20	Filipino	someone from the Philippines
Pg. 20	devastated	destroyed
Pg. 21	evolved	gradually changed
Pg. 23	Manila	located on the large island of Luzon, the largest city (and now the capital) of the Philippines
Pg. 24	cockfights	deadly fights between roosters, sometimes with spurs attached to their legs, staged for human entertainment and gambling
Pg. 24	conical	shaped like a cone
Pg. 24	paddies	wet fields in which rice grows
Pg. 26	mosquito netting	netting hung from the ceiling above and around a bed to keep mosquitoes out
Pg. 27	jauntily	playfully; in a carefree manner
Pg. 27	beckon	call or invite

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Choose the vocabulary word to best complete the following sentences:

1. What two synonyms would describe the countryside after a battle had been fought there? _____ and _____
2. What sport is banned in the United States because it is so destructive to animals? _____
3. How might a young girl skip as she got off the bus on her last day of school? _____
4. What might you have to do to buy your groceries at a market in the Philippines? _____
5. What shape are the small orange safety markers that are put up around a construction area? _____
6. Telephones have changed from crank to rotary to touch and beyond. They have _____.
7. What device is used to help fight malaria? _____
8. In what kind of rice fields might you find water buffalo working? _____
9. If you are far away from someone and you would like to talk with him, how might you show him that you want to talk? _____
10. Which of these might be a civilian? A paratrooper, a drill sergeant, a county sheriff, a Red Cross volunteer? _____

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Comprehension: Circle the correct answer.

1. Why did young Paulsen first take the puppy?
 - a. He wanted a pet.
 - b. It was a gift from the headman.
 - c. He wanted to save it from being killed and eaten.
2. How did Snowball get her name?
 - a. She had a white circle on her side.
 - b. It was snowing when Paulsen first found her.
 - c. She was fat like Frosty the Snowman.
3. Which is **not** true about Paulsen's parents?
 - a. They were becoming alcoholics.
 - b. They were involved in the civilian government.
 - c. They made sure that they ate three meals a day with their son.
4. Which is **not** true about the setting of the story?
 - a. It was a former battle area.
 - b. Those killed in the war were all buried in beautiful cemeteries around Paulsen's home.
 - c. The Philippines had been occupied by the Japanese.
5. How did Snowball save Paulsen's life?
 - a. She detected an unexploded mine.
 - b. She saved him from drowning.
 - c. She killed a poisonous snake that was on Paulsen's path.
6. How did Snowball die?
 - a. She was hit by a military truck.
 - b. She died of old age.
 - c. She was bitten by a poisonous snake.
7. How much time did Paulsen spend in the Philippines?
 - a. Eight years.
 - b. Four years.
 - c. Two and a half years.

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Writing Prompt:

Paulsen says of himself and Snowball, “We grew up together.” While they were both growing physically, Paulsen was also growing in his understanding of the world. What lessons did he learn?

Ike - A Good Friend

Vocabulary:

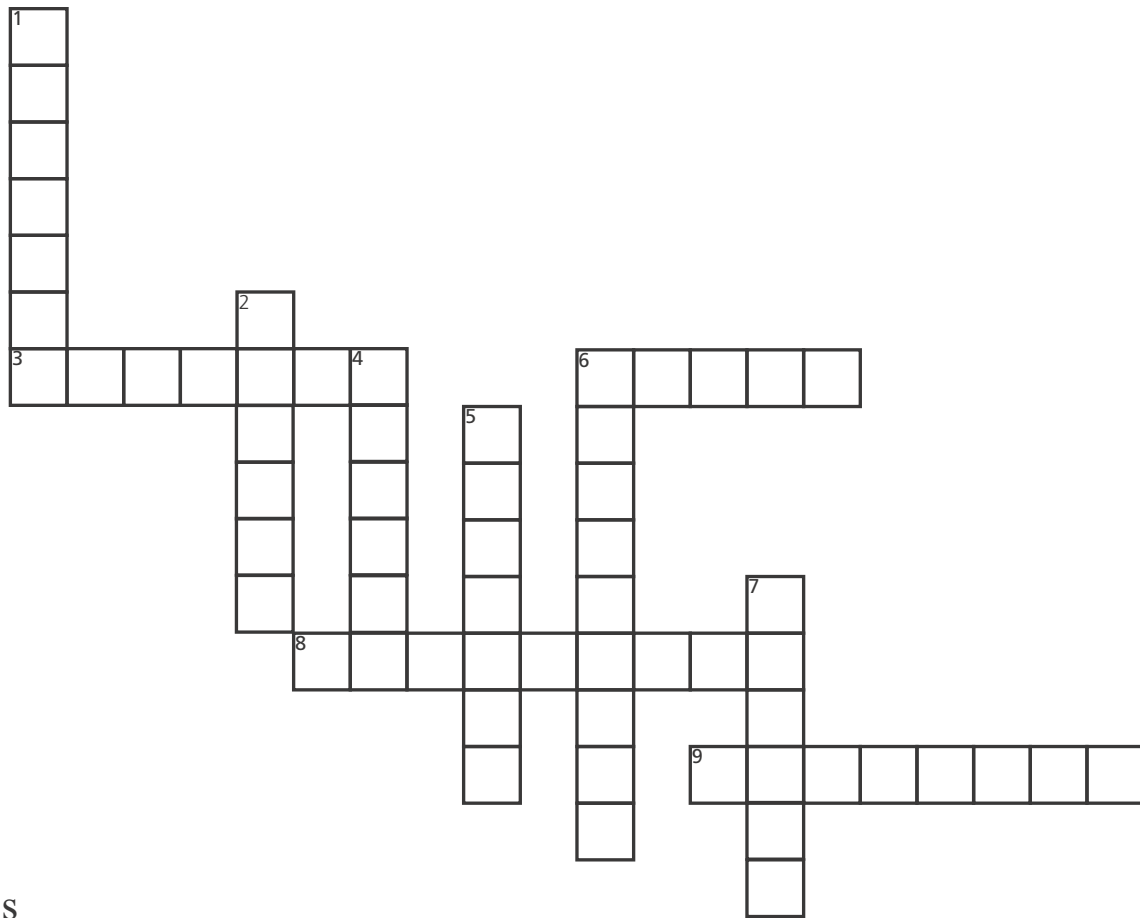
Pg. 29	solitude	a state of aloneness; isolation; having little or no contact with other human beings
Pg. 29	isolation	solitude; physical separation from other humans
Pg. 30	excruciatingly	painfully
Pg. 30	salvation	being rescued or saved
Pg. 32	visceral	emotional; able to be felt within the body
Pg. 32	palpable	able to be felt or touched; clear; evident
Pg. 32	dappled	spotted
Pg. 33	decoys	models of wild birds used by hunters to attract or lure the real ones
Pg. 33	blinds	hiding areas for hunters; camouflaged areas to conceal hunters
Pg. 35	entity	a being; an individual
Pg. 36	roundhouse	a circular building with a turntable on which railroad engines can be turned around
Pg. 41	mallard	a common wild duck, having a white ring around its neck and a green-blue head
Pg. 41	teal	a small, freshwater duck
Pg. 46	scorn	mocking; contempt; disgust
Pg. 46	compelled	forced; required
Pg. 46	absolve	pardon; forgive

Vocabulary Exercise:

Ten of the words from the vocabulary list are used in the crossword puzzle. Find and use the correct words.

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Ike – A Good Friend



Across

3. the light shining through the trees
5. the look Ike gave when Paulsen missed a shot
8. separation from other humans
9. a kind of emotion your body feels

Down

1. this duck has a white ring around his neck
2. hunters may hide in these
4. used to trick the ducks into landing
5. to pardon or forgive
6. hunting and fishing gave Paulsen this
7. Ike was this rather than a pet

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Cloze Activity for Reading Comprehension:

After reading the story, choose a word or words to complete the thoughts.

Paulsen's childhood was very _____ until he turned _____ and his uncle gave him a _____. Then he discovered his new, lifelong hobbies of _____ and _____. He lived in Twin Forks, _____. He bought himself a _____ in which to carry his bread and his cooking supplies. In the fall, he bought a _____ with the money he had earned by _____ in a bowling alley. When Paulsen first met Ike, he thought he was a _____. Paulsen knew Ike was not a stray because he was wearing a _____ and a _____ and because he was _____. If Paulsen missed a shot, Ike looked at him with _____. Paulsen hunted with Ike for about _____ but then he disappeared and he didn't find out what happened to him for another _____ years, when Paulsen met his owner at a slide show he was giving about the _____ race. Ike gave up hunting because his owner returned from the _____, in which he lost the use of his _____.

Dirk - The Protector

Vocabulary:

Pg. 55	(bowling) leagues	groups of (bowling) teams organized to compete against each other
Pg. 56	singular	one of a kind: unique
Pg. 56	predatory	living by stealing from others
Pg. 58	alcove	an area that is set back from the surrounding space; a nook
Pg. 58	menace	threatening
Pg. 59	impasse	a deadlock; a situation from which there is no escape; a passage with only one exit
Pg. 62	brindled	gray or brown, with darker spots or streaks
Pg. 62	rangy	slender and having long limbs
Pg. 68	cohorts	group, team, or gang members

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Comprehension:

1. Although Paulsen had parents, he calls himself a “street kid.” Why?

2. In the summers, Paulsen worked on farms. During the school year he set pins in a bowling alley. What was his second job?

3. Why was going home after work scary for Paulsen?

4. What different route did Paulsen take that led him to Dirk?

5. According to Paulsen, what were the three parts of the alley dog’s breeding?

6. Why does Paulsen name the dog Dirk?

7. What food, in addition to the hamburger, do Dirk and Paulsen share during their first night together?

8. What role did Dirk take on as Paulsen walked to and from work?

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9. What happened to Dirk when school ended?

Rex - The Farm Dog

Vocabulary:

Pg. 74	combine	a piece of farm equipment with which a grain crop is harvested and threshed
Pg. 74	hopper	the part of the combine in which the grain is stored and then released
Pg. 75	manure	animal waste used to fertilize the soil
Pg. 75	palomino	a horse or pony with golden color and a silver mane and tail
Pg. 77	perversion	a change from the normal form
Pg. 77	course	chase after; pursue
Pg. 78	materialized	appeared unexpectedly
Pg. 84	venison	deer meat
Pg. 85	veld	open, grassy country
Pg. 85	forays	raids to steal things

Comprehension:

1. What about collies made Paulsen curious and how did he satisfy his curiosity?

2. What theory about a collie's ability to herd stock did Paulsen doubt?

3. How does Rex help the weakest kitten?

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4. How does Rex stay warm on cold winter nights?

5. How does Warren explain Rex's ability to lead the cows to grass?

6. What is Rex's second job, when he is not keeping track of the farm animals?

Writing prompt:

If there is dignity in work, Rex was very dignified. Write a paragraph supporting this topic. Use concrete examples.

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Caesar - The Giant

Vocabulary:

Pg. 91	secondary	second in order of importance
Pg. 91	prolific	producing many young
Pg. 92	disseminating	spreading; scattering
Pg. 94	hound of the Baskervilles	a giant, horrifying, ghost dog
Pg. 95	moot	subject to discussion; debatable
Pg. 95	emaciated	starved; skinny
Pg. 97	comatose	very tired and confused; as if in a coma
Pg. 104	monosyllabic	having just one syllable; making short, simple sounds
Pg. 106	montage	a series of scenes or images
Pg. 106	quail	to act scared; back away
Pg. 109	heirloom	a treasure passed down from one relative to another
Pg. 115	dysplasia	abnormal growth of body tissue or body parts

Use the words:

1. Paulsen's primary passion is dogs, but his _____ love is writing.
2. If you have ever had rabbits or guinea pigs for pets, you may know how _____ they are and why they have to be kept separated by gender.
3. After spending three weeks on a deserted island, he was found, but he looked very thin and _____.
4. Hallee's grandmother made a _____ from some of her favorite family photographs to give as a family _____ to her granddaughter.
5. When he saw the skunk on the path, he decided it was time to _____ and find another route to the chow cabin.
6. _____ made the old dog so crippled that he had to have help to get up in the morning.

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Comprehension questions:

1. What is Caesar grieving and how does he express his sorrow?

2. What food choices does Caesar make after breaking his fast?

3. What was Paulsen wearing when he took Caesar outside to do his business?

4. Why did Paulsen get dragged along by Caesar?

5. How did Caesar play ball?

6. What mementos does Paulsen have of the day of hotdogs and ball?

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Writing prompt:

Paulsen writes about Caesar with a great deal of affection and humor. Write about Caesar from another point of view. Describe Caesar’s entrance into the Paulsen household from the point of view of Mrs. Paulsen, pretending you are Mrs. Paulsen and writing in the first person narrative.

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Fred and Pig

Vocabulary:

Pg. 120

terminally

incurably

Pg. 121

dismembered

pulled into pieces; mutilated

Pg. 127

peckish

hungry

Comprehension questions:

1. Why did Paulsen buy Fred even after Fred bit him?

2. Why did he give the puppy the name Fred?

3. Paulsen describes their life as “close to the land.” What does that mean? Give some examples.

4. What was the neighbor’s recommendation for keeping Pig out of the garden?

5. What did Paulsen forget when he put the fence around the pigpen?

6. How did Fred react to the electric fence wire?

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7. Why does Paulsen say that Fred won?

8. Was Paulsen successful in raising Pig for bacon and ham?

Quincy - Wild Dog of the Alaskan North

Vocabulary:

Pg. 131	White Fang	the heroic dog figure in the Jack London novel by the same name set in the 1898 Alaskan Gold Rush
Pg. 132	misgivings	doubts; fears; qualms
Pg. 132	convoluted	complicated; involved; complex
Pg. 132	demented	insane; crazy
Pg. 134	devious	roundabout; dishonest
Pg. 137	daunting	scary; frightening
Pg. 145	tableau	a picture
Pg. 145	mother lode	the main vein of a mine, such as a gold mine
Pg. 146	exacted tribute	forced someone to make a payment
Pg. 146	wreaked havoc	caused great destruction
Pg. 147	rogues	destructive animals whose behavior is different from that of most of their species

Vocabulary exercise. Choose the reasonable answer:

- About which might you have misgivings?
 - accepting a good grade from your teacher when you have earned it
 - climbing into a pen with a full-grown Nile Crocodile
 - eating your favorite food prepared by your favorite cook

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2. Which might be convoluted?
 - a. a story told to cover a lie
 - b. the string on a kite in perfect flight
 - c. saltine crackers

3. What might make someone demented?
 - a. being tortured as a prisoner of war
 - b. having all of their wishes come true
 - c. seeing all of their family members happy and healthy and loving

4. Which would be devious?
 - a. taking money that you see someone drop onto the floor and saying that you didn't steal it
 - b. giving someone a nice birthday present
 - c. cleaning your room

5. Which task might seem daunting?
 - a. washing your breakfast dishes
 - b. brushing your teeth
 - c. climbing Mount Kilimanjaro

6. What do you need to make a tableau?
 - a. a camera
 - b. molasses and raisins
 - c. a flamethrower

7. What might you be able to buy if you struck the mother lode?
 - a. enough groceries to last your family for one day
 - b. enough groceries to last your family one week
 - c. enough groceries to last a village a lifetime

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8. Which might exact tribute?
- a. hornets, if you step on their nest
 - b. hummingbirds, if you give them nectar
 - c. the mailman when he delivers your mail
9. What might wreak havoc in your kitchen?
- a. a well-trained cook
 - b. a family of hungry raccoons who get in through a screen
 - c. a sleeping baby
10. Which of these is an example of rogues?
- a. a herd of cattle peacefully going out to their pasture
 - b. dolphins swimming together and playing in the waves
 - c. individual male elephants who move into long-established villages and trample everything in sight

Comprehension Activity

The following are events from the chapter. Put them in the correct order or sequence, starting with a number 1 for the one that happened first and ending with 5 for the one that happened last in each of the two sets.

SET I. (1-5)

- _____ a. Paulsen and his friend the carpenter drove to Alaska in an old truck.
- _____ b. Quincy journeyed 30 miles through Alaskan wilderness to the cabin of a woman and her two children.
- _____ c. Bemidji held fundraisers to help Paulsen finance his dream of competing in the Iditarod.
- _____ d. Paulsen decided he wanted to run the Iditarod.
- _____ e. Paulsen discovered that his Siberian Husky could haul only thirty miles.

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SET II. (1-5)

- _____ a. Paulsen traded his Siberian Husky for Quincy.
- _____ b. Quincy saved Mrs. Paulsen when he attacked a rogue bear in the garden.
- _____ c. The disgusting visitor told Paulsen and the carpenter that they could get a salmon dinner in exchange for building the woman in the log cabin a set of stairs.
- _____ d. Paulsen and the carpenter set up camp in the bush.
- _____ e. Quincy jumped through the Dairy Queen drive-through service window.

Josh - The Smartest Dog in the World

Vocabulary:

Pg. 154	staid	settled; quiet; sedate
Pg. 154	quintessential	the perfect example of; essence
Pg. 158	wont	accustomed; used to
Pg. 158	disconcerting	upsetting and embarrassing
Pg. 162	canapés	appetizers in the form of crackers or small breads spread with various toppings
Pg. 164	tethered	confined or limited to an area of movement by a rope or chain
Pg. 168	élan	dash; spirited movement
Pg. 168	facile	quick; easy to persuade
Pg. 173	infantry point	a foot soldier who walks ahead of his main unit, looking for the enemy or any difficulties the unit might come up against
Pg. 175	volition	will; desire

Comprehension True or False:

- _____ 1. Josh is a Border collie.
- _____ 2. Josh had an owner before Paulsen who thought he was “naughty.”
- _____ 3. Josh is afraid of horses.
- _____ 4. Josh doesn’t like to get his paws dirty digging at things.

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- _____ 5. When there are guests at the house, Josh tries to herd them into one room.
- _____ 6. Josh escorts all house guests to their cars.
- _____ 7. At the international Border collie field trials, Paulsen saw hundreds of Border collies on short leashes following their owners.
- _____ 8. Border collies love to listen and learn.
- _____ 9. Josh will fetch an object as many times as Paulsen will throw it.
- _____ 10. After feeling insulted that Paulsen would have him catch a rat, Josh left a dead gopher in his boot.
- _____ 11. When Josh is too serious, Paulsen tickles his ribs.
- _____ 12. When Paulsen was depressed, Josh tried to tickle his ribs.
- _____ 13. Josh refused to be harnessed as a sled dog with the team.
- _____ 14. Paulsen has a heart condition that keeps him from competing in sled dog racing.
- _____ 15. On the Bighorn Mountain trail, Josh plays the role of point before the horses, thus making sure Paulsen won't be thrown from a spooked horse.

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Teacher's Pages

Before starting the book (if you are reading it as a large group) prepare a bulletin board with dog and cat paw prints, and bird tracks around the border. Invite students to bring in pictures with captions about their pets. Suggest to students that have never had pets or are unable to have pets for medical reasons that they may contribute to the board by including drawings or computer images of animal characters from movies and books and preparing captions about them. Suggest that they include such characters as Benji, Lassie, Old Yeller, Snoopy, or Scooby.

Cookie - A Dedication

Vocabulary exercise:

1. Despite the blizzard conditions, he knew he could count on the lead dog to follow his commands and take the team and himself to safety.
2. Pounds often accept donations of pet food and money to help support the animals they hope will be adopted.
3. At the beginning of the movie was a dedication to the movie producer's father.
4. Before you can get your driver's license, it is mandatory that you pass the written test to show that you understand the rules of the road.
5. After being away in the Army for months, he unabashedly kissed all of his relatives at the family holiday gathering.

Comprehension questions:

1. What are two things that make the ice near beaver lodges thin?
The ice may be thin near beaver lodges because of the air bubbles exhaled there by the beavers and because they rub their backs against the ice.

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2. What two things saved Paulsen?

Paulsen was saved because he was able to grasp the cargo rope that was tied to the sled as he fell through the ice and because he was able to scream to Cookie as he slipped under.

3. After Cookie rescued Paulsen by rallying the team to pull him out, what danger did he still face and what did he do to save himself?

He still risked freezing or exposure to the cold air so he used stove fuel to ignite a tree and dry himself and his clothing.

Snowball - The First Dog

Vocabulary Questions:

1. What two synonyms would describe the countryside after a battle had been fought there? ravaged and devastated.

2. What sport is banned in the United States because it is so destructive to animals? cockfights

3. How might a young girl skip as she got off the bus on her last day of school? jauntily

4. What might you have to do to buy your groceries at a market in the Philippines? haggle

5. What shape are the small orange safety markers that are put up around a construction area? conical

6. Telephones have changed from crank to rotary to touch and beyond. They have evolved.

7. What device is used to help fight malaria? mosquito netting

8. In what kind of rice fields might you find water buffalo working? paddies

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9. If you are far away from someone and you would like to talk with him, how might you show him that you want to talk? beckon
10. Which of these might be a civilian? A paratrooper, a drill sergeant, a county sheriff, a Red Cross volunteer? Red Cross volunteer

Comprehension:

1. Why did young Paulsen first take the puppy?
 - a. He wanted a pet.
 - b. It was a gift from the headman.
 - c. He wanted to save it from being killed and eaten.
2. How did Snowball get her name?
 - a. She had a white circle on her side.
 - b. It was snowing when Paulsen first found her.
 - c. She was fat like Frosty the Snowman.
3. Which is **not** true about Paulsen's parents?
 - a. They were becoming alcoholics.
 - b. They were involved in the civilian government.
 - c. They made sure that they ate three meals a day with their son.
4. Which is **not** true about the setting of the story?
 - a. It was a former battle area.
 - b. Those killed in the war were all buried in beautiful cemeteries around Paulsen's home.
 - c. The Philippines had been occupied by the Japanese.
5. How did Snowball save Paulsen's life?
 - a. She detected an unexploded mine.
 - b. She saved him from drowning.
 - c. She killed a poisonous snake that was on Paulsen's path.

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6. How did Snowball die?
- a. She was hit by a military truck.
 - b. She died of old age.
 - c. She was bitten by a poisonous snake.
7. How much time did Paulsen spend in the Philippines?
- a. Eight years.
 - b. Four years.
 - c. Two and a half years.

Ike - A Good Friend

Across:

3. dappled

5. scorn

8. isolation

9. visceral

Down:

1. mallard

2. blinds

4. decoys

5. absolve

6. salvation

7. entity

Cloze Activity for Reading Comprehension: After reading the story, choose a word or words to complete the thoughts.

Paulsen's childhood was very (lonely, isolated) until he turned (twelve) and his uncle gave him a (.22 rifle). Then he discovered his new, lifelong hobbies of (hunting) and (fishing). He lived in Twin Forks, (Minnesota). He bought himself a (pack) in which to carry his bread and his cooking supplies. In the fall, he bought a (blanket) with the money he had earned by (setting pins) in a bowling alley. When Paulsen first met Ike, he thought he was a (bear). Paulsen knew Ike was not a stray because he was wearing a (collar) and a (tag) and because he was (fat). If Paulsen missed a shot, Ike looked at him with (scorn or pity). Paulsen hunted with Ike for about (one year) but then he disappeared and he didn't find out what happened to him for another (thirty) years, when Paulsen met his owner at a slide show he was giving about the (Iditarod) race. Ike gave up hunting because his owner returned from the (Korean War), in which he lost the use of his (legs).

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Dirk - The Protector

Comprehension:

1. Although Paulsen had parents, he calls himself a “street kid”. Why?
His parents were alcoholics, so he lived in the basement and had to buy his own clothing and food.
2. In the summers, Paulsen worked on farms. During the school year he set pins in a bowling alley. What was his second job?
He sold newspapers in bars at night.
3. Why was going home after work scary for Paulsen?
There were gangs waiting to rob him.
4. What different route did Paulsen take that led him to Dirk?
He went up the ladder to the roof, then down the fire escape to the alley.
5. According to Paulsen, what were the three parts of the alley dog’s breeding?
The dog looked to be part Airedale, part hound, and part alligator.
6. Why does Paulsen name the dog Dirk?
He names him Dirk after a tough guy in a detective novel.
7. What food, in addition to the hamburger, do Dirk and Paulsen share during their first night together?
They share Ritz crackers with peanut butter and grape jelly.
8. What role did Dirk take on as Paulsen walked to and from work?
Dirk became Paulsen’s protector and would not allow anyone near him.
9. What happened to Dirk when school ended?
Dirk went to Olaf’s farm with Paulsen and became the sheep’s guard dog there, at his new home.

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Rex - The Farm Dog

Comprehension:

1. What about collies made Paulsen curious and how did he satisfy his curiosity?
He wondered how they lived when they weren't with him, so he decided to follow Rex around on a rainy day.
2. What theory about a collie's ability to herd stock did Paulsen doubt?
He doubted that this ability was left over from the wolf pack's hunting practices because the collies are so careful not to hurt the animals they are herding.
3. How does Rex help the weakest kitten?
Rex makes room for the kitten at the milk dish and nudges her into position.
4. How does Rex stay warm on cold winter nights?
Rex sleeps curled up with the cows when it is very cold.
5. How does Warren explain Rex's ability to lead the cows to grass?
Warren suggests that Rex learned to look for the green grass by watching the cows.
6. What is Rex's second job, when he is not keeping track of the farm animals?
Rex is a nanny of sorts to the little girls on the farm.

Caesar - The Giant

Vocabulary:

1. secondary
2. prolific
3. emaciated
4. montage, heirloom
5. quail
6. dysplasia

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Comprehension questions:

1. What is Caesar grieving and how does he express his sorrow?
He grieves his owner's leaving and he waits by the door and fasts for six days.
2. What food choices does Caesar make after breaking his fast?
He eats a whole chicken, a beef sandwich, and half a lemon meringue pie.
3. What was Paulsen wearing when he took Caesar outside to do his business?
He was wearing boxer shorts and a pair of sandals.
4. Why did Paulsen get dragged along by Caesar?
Caesar was in pursuit of Arnie the cat and the leash was wrapped around Paulsen's wrist.
5. How did Caesar play ball?
He played center field, behind the outfield, retrieving grounders and carrying them to the nearest player.
6. What mementos does Paulsen have of the day of hotdogs and ball?
He has a crayon picture a little girl gave him of Caesar and stick figure people playing ball. It says, "WE LOVE YOU SEEZER."

Fred and Pig

Comprehension questions:

1. Why did Paulsen buy Fred even after Fred bit him?
Fred smiled at him.
2. Why did he give the puppy the name Fred?
He named the puppy after a friend who had recently died.
3. Paulsen describes their life as "close to the land." What does that mean? Give some examples.
It means that they had to produce most of what they needed themselves. For example, they had to cut wood to heat their cabin. They had to grow their

MY LIFE ⁱⁿ Dog Years

vegetables and can them, and they had to hunt or fish or raise animals to eat, including Pig.

4. What was the neighbor's recommendation for keeping Pig out of the garden?
The neighbor recommended an electric fence.
5. What did Paulsen forget when he put the fence around the pigpen?
Paulsen forgot about the friendship between Pig and Fred and that Fred would have to go through the fence to visit his friend.
6. How did Fred react to the electric fence wire?
He attacked it and finally managed to break it.
7. Why does Paulsen say that Fred won?
The electric fence kept Pig out of the garden, but it did not keep Fred out. He still raided the garden, just as he would have with Pig.
8. Was Paulsen successful in raising Pig for bacon and ham?
No, he ended up keeping him as a pet, and Pig died of old age.

Quincy - Wild Dog of the Alaskan North

Vocabulary:

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. b | 6. a |
| 2. a | 7. c |
| 3. a | 8. a |
| 4. a | 9. b |
| 5. c | 10. c |

Sequencing:

- | SET I: | SET II: |
|--------|---------|
| 1.d | 1.d |
| 2.c | 2.c |
| 3.b | 3.a |
| 4.a | 4.e |
| 5.e | 5.b |

Josh - The Smartest Dog in the World

Comprehension True or False:

- | | | |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. T | 6. T | 11. T |
| 2. T | 7. F | 12. T |
| 3. F | 8. T | 13. F |
| 4. F | 9. F | 14. T |
| 5. T | 10. T | 15. T |

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Websites to visit:

You can visit the Iditarod website at: <http://www.iditarod.com>

To learn more about various breeds of dogs, you may wish to visit the “A to Z Index of Dog Breeds” at <http://dogs.about.com/cs/breedprofiles/a/breed>

This collection of short stories is a good way to teach characterization. Prepare a summary sheet for each individual dog with two headings for each: BEHAVIORS and ATTRIBUTES. Discuss the difference between behaviors and attributes and how behaviors may be evidence of attributes. At the conclusion of the book, ask students to find the dog they **are most like** and write an essay justifying their choices, requiring that they use specific examples of the behaviors and attributes of themselves and the dogs they have chosen.

To build skills in oral communication, you may tell students that you are going to award a canine excellence award to a dog from those named in the book. Assign small groups to present the case for each of the dogs included. Have them prepare a banner, a cheer, and a speech on behalf of their assigned dog. Decide if you want the class to elect the winning dog or if you want to make the choice based on the presentations. When the choice has been made, have the class design an award and an award letter, drafted by working as a whole class, and send it to the author with all of the classroom signatures.

To make more text-to-world connections, choose materials from some of the many sites you will find by using the key words “dog heroes” in an internet search, or invite the students to find and share some of the amazing stories.

To make connections with pets and occupations, you may wish to invite a veterinarian or a veterinary assistant, a dog groomer, or a dog trainer to visit your class. You may also wish to invite sportsmen/women to describe recreational opportunities with hunting dogs or sled dogs. This is also a perfect opportunity to introduce an understanding of the roles of service animals. If you do not know anyone who uses a service animal, contact a veterinarian’s office or your local Center for Independent Living to ask for assistance in making contact with someone who might be willing to demonstrate how a service animal enriches his/her life. This would also be a good opportunity to visit an animal shelter or do a donation/food drive for one or for support of service animal training.