

INTRODUCTION

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Contents of this package

Worksheets

1. A blank vocabulary and reading comprehension worksheet where students can provide answers to a selection of questions from the guide.
2. A blank vocabulary worksheet where students can provide definitions to as many as 10 vocabulary words listed in the guide.
3. A blank comprehension worksheet where students can provide answers to several comprehension questions listed in the guide.

Guides

4. A teacher's guide containing vocabulary and reading comprehension questions with answers and vocabulary grade levels.
5. A student's guide containing vocabulary and reading comprehension questions without answers.

Workbooks

6. A set of 10 key questions covering the entire book with blank spaces for students to provide answers.
7. *Some packets contain in-depth workbooks with several questions for each chapter or section and blank spaces for students to provide answers. (We plan to add these in-depth workbooks to every packet.)*
8. *Some packets also contain special activities.*

Notes and suggestions for using the materials

The Teacher's Guide

The Teacher's Guide contains reading comprehension and vocabulary questions and answers that can be used during oral reading, or as part of a daily reading assignment.

This group of questions can also be used to test the comprehension of the student or students if they are assigned chapters to read silently. The questions can be asked and answered orally, or used in combination with the provided (blank) worksheets.

A Student's Guide has been included. It contains the vocabulary words and comprehension questions, but the answers and grade levels have been removed.

The Vocabulary Words

We have chosen to include a large number of vocabulary words in order to provide words for as many grade levels as possible.

Research shows that children can, on average, learn ten new words from any new reading assignment and in many cases less than five new words. It is suggested that you discuss the meaning of the vocabulary words in advance of reading so that the children will have some idea as to the meaning of these words as they read. Students should not be expected to retain all of the word meanings once they are finished with the chapter, but by introducing the meanings, we increase the chance that they will recall the meanings when they encounter them in a new context. Over time, repeated interaction will help the students develop mastery over word meanings.

We have elected to grade the vocabulary words according to the *EDL (Core Vocabularies in Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies)* which was published by Steck-Vaughn Company in 1989.

Grading of the selected words can be helpful. For example if you see that many of the words in the list have a grade of 6th, or higher, and your students are reading at a third grade level, you will, of course, need to choose a book that has a vocabulary more suited to your students achievements.

However, if you choose to have the students read this particular book even if vocabulary in the story is much higher than your student's skills, you will know

that much time will be needed to prepare the children to have success in the reading and comprehension of the story.

A blank vocabulary worksheet leaving a place for 10 words is included with the packet. It is only included as a suggestion. You may choose as few as 4 words based on your own criteria. You may use all 10 spaces for 10 *new* words to study. You may wish to pick more words. Or you may elect to choose none.

Other options for the use of the vocabulary list

Puzzles

Select words that would be meaningful to your group or child. Visit the following website: <http://puzzlemaker.school.discovery.com>. This site allows you to make crossword puzzles and/or other puzzles with chosen words. These choices could be made with the criteria of phonics, definitions, or other groupings such as archaic or cultural based words.

To promote retention, it is suggested that students draw a picture portraying the meaning of the word.

A Word Game

Write the words on cards or cut paper. Use at least three words per child in the group. Shuffle the cards. Go around the group asking each child to pronounce a word. (You may also require the students to define the word). If the child cannot do so go around the group until the word is correctly pronounced. The child who correctly pronounces a word gets to keep the card. The child is then asked to pronounce a second word. Again they get to keep the card if they answer correctly. If not, then continue around the group until this word is correctly decoded. If no child can decode the word then keep the word after telling the group the pronunciation. Keep going around the group giving each child a turn until the cards run out.

Now have each child chose one or two of their cards with which to quiz another student of their choice. If the chosen child can read the card the asker must give the chosen child the card, and a point. If the child cannot read the card, the asker gains one point.

After each child has had his turn everyone in the group counts the cards he has left plus each point he has earned. The one with the most cards (which are actually counted as one point) and points wins.

Reading For Comprehension Series
By Lee Ann Berg

A Dog's Life
The Autobiography of a Stray
By Ann M. Martin

Published by Scholastic 2005
182 pages

Sample of Selected Pages

Please note: Vocabulary – The first number listed in the parenthesis indicates the grade at which the student should know the definition of the vocabulary term. The second number indicates the page on which the word was found in the publisher's printed book. If the word only has an underline mark in front of it, this means it could not be found in the EDL Core Vocabulary booklet. (Word grade placement is per EDL Core Vocabularies in Reading, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. 1989)

Teacher's Guide

The subtitle of this book is “The Autobiography of a Stray”. Before you begin the book, you may want to ask the students: “What is an autobiography?”. You may also wish to tell the students that the word has three Greek root words. Auto, means “self.” Bio, means “life.” And graph, means “to write.”

Night pp, ix-x

Vocabulary

crackling (5, ix) making popping or sharp noises, usually associated with an open fire

hearth (4, ix) stone or brick floor of a fireplace

pampered (8, ix) spoiled; gratified to excess

Comprehension

1. What age is the dog in the prologue? Pp. ix-x (old age)

Sample of Selected Pages

Part I

The House in the Country pp. 3-10

Vocabulary

- sporadically** (13, 5) happening from time to time not constantly or regularly
communities (5, 7) groups living together in the same environment
nonhumans (, 7) animals who are not human
scurrying (5, 9) scampering; hurrying
surveyed (5, 9) to look something over and examine closely
burlap (7, 9) a coarse fabric usually of jute or hemp; used especially for bags of wheat or other grains
investigate (6, 9) to study by close examination

Comprehension

1. **Where did the stray live as a pup? P. 3** (piece of land where the Merrions' big house rose from and among the gardens)
2. **Where was the stray born? P. 4** (old garden shed)
3. **What kind of people were the Merrions? Pp. 5-6** (neat and clean; they did not want germs or animal hair and therefore did not want animals for pets)
4. **What was the original use for the garden shed? P. 7** (originally built as a chicken coop)
5. **What different animals did Mother find at the Merrion place? Pp. 8-9** (foxes, coyotes, mice, cats, kittens)
6. **Where did the cat and kittens live? P. 10** (in old nesting boxes built for chickens)

The Wheelbarrow pp. 11-16

Vocabulary

wheelbarrow (4, 11) a vehicle with handles and usually one wheel, used to carry small loads

nuzzled (6, 11) nestle; snuggle

slinking (, 13) to move stealthily or furtively

wary (7, 13) very cautious; careful in guarding against danger or deception

merged (6, 14) to rise; to come forth; to come into view

haunches (, 15) hindquarters

quivering (4, 15) to shake with a slight trembling motion

reckless (6,16) without caution; rash; brash

cheeky (,16) bold; rude or disrespectful

venture (6, 16) to undertake the risks of

Comprehension

1. What did Mother do to the runt of the litter? Pp. 11-12 (threw him out of the nest to die)
2. What did Mother do when the mother cat did not come back to her kittens for a long time and the kittens were mewling for milk? Pp. 13-14 (she took them out of their nest and laid on her side so the kittens could drink her milk)
3. Which animal in the community was Mother afraid of? Pp. 15-16 (the fox named Mine -- Mine had no sense of caution; she did not keep out of sight of the Merrions, and was bold, reckless and cheeky)

A Dog's Life
The Autobiography of a Stray
Student's Guide

Sample of Selected Pages

Night pp, ix-x

Vocabulary

crackling (ix)

hearth (ix)

pampered (ix)

Comprehension

1. What age is the dog in the prologue? Pp. ix-x

Sample of Selected Pages

Part I

The House in the Country pp. 3-10

Vocabulary

sporadically (5)
communities (7)
nonhumans (7)
scurrying (9)
surveyed (9)
burlap (9)
investigate (9)

Comprehension

1. Where did the stray live as a pup? P. 3
2. Where was the stray born? P. 4
3. What kind of people were the Merrions? Pp. 5-6
4. What was the original use for the garden shed? P. 7
5. What different animals did Mother find at the Merrion place? Pp. 8-9
6. Where did the cat and kittens live? P. 10

The Wheelbarrow pp. 11-16

Vocabulary

wheelbarrow (11)
nuzzled (11)
slinking (13)
wary (13)
merged (14)
haunches (15)
quivering (15)
reckless (16)
cheeky (16)
venture (16)

Comprehension

1. What did Mother do to the runt of the litter? Pp. 11-12
2. What did Mother do when the mother cat did not come back to her kittens for a long time and the kittens were mewling for milk? Pp. 13-14
3. Which animal in the community was Mother afraid of? Pp. 15-16

A Dog's Life The Autobiography of a Stray
Key Questions

Name _____

Answers should be written in complete sentences. The page numbers listed refer to the text where you should be able to find the answers.

1. Why did Mother throw the runt of the litter out of the nest? (Pp. 11-16)

2. Answer one of the following questions; either a or b. (Pp. 11-16)

- (a) Was it cruel to throw the runt of the litter out of the nest?
(b) What did Mother do for the seemingly abandoned kittens?

3. Why did George throw the two pups (Bone and Squirrel) out of the car window? (Pp. 44-50)

4. What important event occurred when Squirrel returned to the mall where she had lost Bone? (Pp. 61-67)

5. Why were Moon and Squirrel able to withstand the onslaught of the dog pack? (Pp. 75-82)

6. What unwelcome guests arrived after the two women began to bring food to the dumpsters twice a day? (Pp. 99-106)

7. Why did the Beckers take Moon and Squirrel to Dr. Roth (the veterinarian)? (Pp. 115-122)

8. What despicable thing did the Beckers do at the end of the summer? (Pp. 125-131)

9. How did Susan help to gain Squirrel's trust? (Pp. 147-154)

10. Why was Mrs. Oliver so disappointed in Susan? (Pp. 163-171)

Sample of Selected Pages

A Dog's Life The Autobiography of a Stray

Key Questions Answer Key

Name _____

Answers should be written in complete sentences. The page numbers listed refer to the text where you should be able to find the answers.

1. Why did Mother throw the runt of the litter out of the nest? (Pp. 11-16)

She recognized the pup was not strong enough to survive. She turned her concern to the pups who could service.

2. Answer one of the following questions; either a or b. (Pp. 11-16)

- (a) Was it cruel to throw the runt of the litter out of the nest?
(b) What did Mother do for the seemingly abandoned kittens?

a. It seems cruel, but practical. Survival of the fittest.

b. She gave them her milk.

3. Why did George throw the two pups (Bone and Squirrel) out of the car window? (Pp. 44-50)

Marcy and George tried to keep them as pets, without realizing they hadn't been pets before and were not housebroken.

4. What important event occurred when Squirrel returned to the mall where she had lost Bone? (Pp. 61-67)

She met and became friends with a female dog named Moon.

5. Why were Moon and Squirrel able to withstand the onslaught of the dog pack? (Pp. 75-82)

The pack dogs were hungry, sickly and old.

6. What unwelcome guests arrived after the two women began to bring food to the dumpsters twice a day? (Pp. 99-106)

The dog catchers.

7. Why did the Beckers take Moon and Squirrel to Dr. Roth (the veterinarian)? (Pp. 115-122)

Possibly due to guilt for hitting the two dogs with their truck. Moon was killed, and Squirrel was injured.

8. What despicable thing did the Beckers do at the end of the summer? (Pp. 125-131)

They left Squirrel to fend for herself without attempting to find her a new home.

9. How did Susan help to gain Squirrel's trust? (Pp. 147-154) She continued to provide nourishing food for Squirrel. She spoke gently, and didn't try to touch, or catch Squirrel.

10. Why was Mrs. Oliver so disappointed in Susan? (Pp. 163-171) Susan had adopted Squirrel (Addie), and Mrs. Oliver didn't think Susan could care for herself and a dog as well.
