



EDUCATOR GUIDE

TOP DOGS

True Stories of Canines that Made History

by Elizabeth MacLeod

GENRE: children's non-fiction

THEMES: domestic animals, ancient civilizations, geography, medicine, modern history, occupations, science, technology, war, wild animals, women, world cultures, bravery; heroism; nature; exploration

SUITABLE FOR: Grades 4–7, Ages 9–11

GUIDED READING LEVEL: Fountas and Pinnell I

LEXILE: 1010L

COMMON CORE STANDARDS:

L.5.3,4,4a,5,6	RI.5.1,2,3,4,5,6,8,9,10
W.5.4,7,8,9,9b,10	SL.5.1,1c,1d,2,3,4,5,6
RF.5.3,3a,4,4a,4c	

SUMMARY:

History has never been so fascinating as seen from the viewpoint of how dogs helped make it. For the millions of kids who love dogs, this book tells the stories of 8 amazing canines through the ages whose actions influenced the course of history. Author Liz MacLeod's kid-friendly, narrative style captures the time and place when the events took place as well as the sense of adventure that colors every story.

Among the dogs featured are Stubby, a mutt who rescued American soldiers in the trenches of WWI, Buddy, the first seeing-eye-dog in North America, Brandy, a German Shepherd who discovered a bomb aboard a plane, and Seaman, the Newfoundland, who accompanied Lewis and Clark, helping them complete their expedition by protecting them from wild animals and providing them with food.

Scattered throughout the book are side bars filled with information about the exploits of many other dogs as well as the history, habits, and characteristics of various breeds.

Please remember that the suggested questions and activities within this educator guide are meant to serve as a starting point. Educators are encouraged to select items from each part of the guided inquiry process that work best for their style of teaching and will help them meet their goals when covering the topics in this book. Activities and prompts should be tweaked and/or reformatted to best fit your students, context, and community to ensure equity and inclusion.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

1. Pretend you're one of the dogs in the book. Describe a typical day in your life. How does the world look from a dog's point of view?
2. Design a postage stamp featuring one of the dogs in the book.
3. Compare two of the dogs in the book. In what ways are they different? How are they the same? Which would you like to have as a pet?
4. Find out about other animals besides dogs that served in World War I or II.
5. What are five facts about dogs you discovered in the book that surprised you? Explain why you were surprised by each of these facts.

HOWLERS AND GROWLERS!

What dog keeps the best time? *A watch dog!*

Why is a tree like a big dog? *They both have a lot of bark!*

What do you call a great dog detective? *Sherlock Bones!*

What is a dog's favorite kind of pizza? *Pupperoni pizza!*

What did the dog say when she sat on a piece of sandpaper? *That's rufffff!*