

## **TEACHER'S GUIDE**



**Children's novel for ages 8 and up available on Amazon.**

## Book Review

No Dog Food, Please! by Linda Costarella is a heartwarming and profoundly educational narrative for young people, told from the point of view of its central character, Jack – a yellow Labrador Retriever transplanted from his Florida home to a farm in upstate New York. Jack’s perceptions of the world around him are refreshingly uncomplicated, making them a perfect match for young readers, whose emotions and perspectives are similarly pure and unfiltered. The author conveys Jack’s story in simple sentences and straightforward language perfectly suited to emerging readers, yet never steers away from addressing complex issues such as death, loss, hardship, aging and infirmity, belonging, family dynamics, and life-altering events with wisdom, grace, and compassion. No Dog Food, Please! is an invaluable primer for young people seeking to understand and embrace life, love, and the inevitability of change.

Jack’s adoptive family has Costa Rican heritage; hence, the narrative is generously peppered with Spanish words and phrases, worked into the text with natural ease and supported by surrounding contextual clues – the result being that the narrative flows seamlessly and young readers will get the added benefit of language acquisition. If, by chance, the context clues do not offer sufficient support, the author includes a glossary at the end of the book to clarify when necessary. In addition, the text is enhanced with beguiling photographs that will help readers feel personally connected to the characters. Last, a list of educationally astute discussion questions ensures that readers will experience maximum benefit from the many lessons this book has to offer. No Dog Food, Please! by Linda Costarella ranges beyond simple entertainment or diversion into the territory of essential life lessons and, as such, becomes an important work with the potential to span generations. (Rich Follett for Readers’ Favorite)

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by teachers and parents reading the novel with children.

## **A Message from the Author**

No Dog Food, Please! began as a poem inspired by my dogs. It evolved into a full-length novel focusing on the lives of a dog named Jack and a boy named Ben, both of whom were recently adopted by a farm family living in New York.

The book incorporates many interesting and important aspects of life, including the adoption of children and pets, sibling relationships, the challenges of living with an aging grandparent who is becoming more forgetful, differences of opinion in multi-generational families, and the joys and difficulties of running a small farm. Life lessons are an integral part of the story.

This Guide is provided as a resource for schoolteachers and parents who are homeschooling their children. Included in the Guide are aims/objectives and questions to consider for each chapter. These can be used before, during, or after reading the chapter. A class activity and a worksheet or graphic organizer are included for each chapter as well. Detailed lesson plans are not included because they would vary based on factors such as the students' grade level.

Many thanks for sharing my work with the children in your lives.

Dr. Linda Costarella

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 1 – I've Been Moved

### Aim/Objectives:

1. How can we describe Jack's feelings at the beginning of the story?
2. Why does he feel this way? What happened to him?

*(Revised Bloom's Taxonomy – Understanding)*

### Questions to Consider:

1. What is Grandpa doing at the beginning of the story? Why is he doing this?
2. What is the slippery stuff that makes Jack's butt cold?
3. Who is New Master? Who are the other members of Jack's new family?
4. Jack says that life on the farm is different from life in the city? How is it different?
5. Who is Angelica? Compare and contrast Jack and Angelica. How are they the same? How are they different?
6. Why does Nice Lady let Jack out the back door every afternoon?

7. When the kids enter the back door of the house, what room are they in? What do they do there? What room comes next?
8. What does Grandpa do as soon as the dogs come into the back door with the children? Why does he do this?
9. Why do Melanie and Lily protest when Grandpa tries to send the dog outside again? What do they say is out there?
10. What does Grandpa say he will build for the dogs? Where does he think the dogs should stay until he builds it?
11. Does Grandma agree with Grandpa about dogs on the farm staying outdoors? What does she say about this?
12. Why are Grandma and Grandpa living in the farmhouse temporarily? What happened to their place?
13. Why does Grandma say that the girls should not be upset with Grandpa? What does Melanie say about Grandpa? Has she noticed a change in him? How is he different now?
14. Why does Grandma sneeze a lot? What does Grandpa do when Grandma sneezes? Why?
15. What do Melanie and Lily want Grandpa to stop doing? Why?
16. Referring to Grandpa, what does Nice Lady say is not easy?

17. Why do the girls have to get their homework done after school? What do they have to do after dinner?
18. What does Jack think about Grandpa building a doghouse?
19. Did Jack ever hear of a dog living in a doghouse or a barn before? Where did he and his old master live?
20. There are more people in Jack's new home than there were in his old home. Do they play with Jack very much? What did Jack's old master used to do with him every day? Does Jack want to stay in his new home at the farm or go back to his old master's house? Why?

**Class Activity:**

Complete the first two sections of a KWL (Know, Want to Know, Learned) chart before starting the book. (See p. 4 for graphic organizer.) Have students list what they know and want to know about the adoption of a pet.

## KWL Chart

Do you have a pet? What do you **KNOW** about adopting a pet?



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What do you **WANT** to know about the adoption of pets?



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What did you **LEARN** about adopting a pet?



Share all of your ideas and consider everyone else's ideas, too!

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*Completing a KWL chart is a fun way to connect what you already know about a topic with new information that you will learn in your class.*



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 2 – Farm Life

### Aim/Objectives:

1. How can we write a diary/journal entry describing life on a farm? *(Creating)*
2. Pretend that you lived on a farm. Would you enjoy doing farm chores? Why or why not? *(Applying)*

### Questions to Consider:

1. What do Grandma and Nice Lady do on the farm? What do they make?
2. How do Melanie and Lily help their mom and grandmother with the food and other items that they have prepared?
3. Do shoppers at the farmers' market like the products sold by the Ferandez Family Farm? How do you know?
4. In what town is the farm located?
5. Each merchant at the farmers' market loads some of the items they have brought with them onto a truck. Why do they do this?

6. Does the family like donating some of their products to charity? How do you know?
7. What does Grandpa in charge of doing on the farm?
8. Why does Grandma say that the children need to be disciplined?
9. Why doesn't Jack like dog food? What did he used to eat in his old home?
10. Does Jack seem to like the cold weather at the farm? How do you know? What does he say?
11. Does the cat on the farm seem to like cat food? What else might the cat be eating on the farm?
12. What does New Master do on the farm? Does Grandpa Help? How does he help?
13. Melanie and Lily go to school. How old is Ben? When will he start school?
14. Which child spends a lot of time with Jack? What do they do together?
15. Is Jack getting used to the snow? How do you know?
16. What do the girls like to do when they have some free time?

17. How old are Melanie and Lily? What else does Lily like to do?
18. What does New Master like to do in his spare time?
19. What does Jack say about life with his old master compared to life on the farm?
20. Was it easy for Jack to be moved to a new home? How do you know?

### **Class Activity:**

Based on what you learned about farm life in Chapter 2, write a diary entry (or a letter to a friend) in which you describe life on the farm. (See p. 12 for optional writing template.) Include specific information about the chores you do on the farm and whether you like them. Write one paragraph consisting of several sentences. Include a topic sentence, three or more detail sentences, and a concluding sentence.

## Let's Write

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

As you know, my family and I moved to a farm this year,  
and life on the farm is \_\_\_\_\_.

Some chores that I have to do include \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

These chores (are/are not) fun. I feel this way because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

I hope you will be able to visit my family's farm someday. If you  
visit, I will give you a tour of the farm and teach you how to  
\_\_\_\_\_.

I know you would have a good time visiting. You would like  
seeing all of our animals, especially \_\_\_\_\_,  
and \_\_\_\_\_. Hope to see you soon!

Your friend,

\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 3 – An Outdoor Game

### Aim/Objectives:

How can we examine Grandpa's conduct in the story? Should Grandpa tell everyone in the family that dogs should eat dog food and sleep in the barn, or is he wrong to act that way in his son's home? Explain. (*Evaluating*)

### Questions to Consider:

1. What does Melanie offer to make for her sister and brother after they've been playing outside in the snow?
2. Lily notices that something is different about Grandma. What has changed?
3. What does Grandpa do that Lily doesn't like?
4. Grandma explains the reason for Grandpa's views. What does she say?
5. Who seems to be more old-fashioned, Grandma or Grandpa? How do you know?
6. How does Jack feel about living in a dog house or in the barn?

7. What does Grandma say about life in Miguel and Isabel's home?
8. How long has Ben been living with the Fernandez family?
9. Which of the children is usually the one who wants to share food with Jack?
10. What does New Master give Ben to play with while the girls are doing their homework?
11. Does Jack like playing with the flying disc? How do you know?
12. What breed of dog is Jack? What does it mean to *retrieve* something?
13. What does New Master think Jack will be good at someday? Why?
14. Does Jack like New Master? Why?
15. What do the girls wish Grandpa would stop doing?
16. Why does Melanie want Jack in the house, especially at night?
17. Do the girls like playing with Jack and the flying disc, too? Why?

18. What do Grandpa and New Master like to do for fun?
19. How long has Jack been with the family? Who arrived first, Ben or Jack?
20. Why do you think New Master has to tell Grandpa *once again* how Jack joined the family?

### **Class Activity:**

Have students stand and move to one side of the room or the other depending on their views regarding Grandpa's conduct. For instance, if they agree with the way Grandpa expresses his opinions, they could move to one side of the room. If they disapprove of the way he persists with his views, they could move to the other side of the room. Once students decide "where they stand on the issue," have all students on one side express their views aloud. Then do the same with the other group. After every student has had a turn to speak, give the class the opportunity to stay with the same side or switch sides if they have changed their opinions. Finally, ask one of the students to summarize the views of the class. Did the majority of the students support or oppose Grandpa's conduct? Why?

## Literary Elements

Cells, blood, bones, etc. are some of the components of the human body. As we know, people cannot live without these body parts. Stories also contain vital components.

Some of the building blocks of literature include **characters**, **setting**, **plot**, and **conflict**. They are the basic components of all stories. Authors cannot create stories without including these basic literary elements.

We learn about **characters** by seeing what they say, what they do, and what they think. **Setting** is where and when the story takes place. The **plot** is the storyline. It includes a beginning, a middle and an end. **Conflict** is the struggle in the story. If there is no conflict, there is no story. The conflict is the main character's problem. It's what s/he wants. Readers will find out if the main character gets what s/he wants by the end of the story.

### Sample Questions about Literary Elements

- How does the author characterize \_\_\_\_\_?
- What is the setting of the story? Where and when does it take place?
- What is the most exciting event in the story?
- What is the problem in the story? How is the problem resolved by the end of the story?



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 4 – Jimmy’s Offer

### Aim/Objectives:

1. Grandpa says that dogs are smart animals. Do you agree with him? Why?
2. Who else besides Jack was adopted by the Fernandez family? Why do you think he was adopted? (*Evaluating*)

### Questions to Consider:

1. This chapter is a flashback. Who calls New Master at the beginning of the chapter?
2. Who is Jimmy? How does New Master know him?
3. Why does Jimmy have to find a new home for his dog?
4. Why does the Fernandez family agree to adopt Jack?
5. Where does Jimmy live?
6. What does New Master do besides tend to his farm?
7. Why does New Master say that Jack seemed to know that he was going to be leaving his old master? What did Jack do?

8. Grandpa says that dogs are smart animals. Do you agree with that statement? Why?
9. What was Jack fascinated by during the plane ride from Tampa, FL to NY?
10. Who was waiting for New Master and Jack at the Autumn Blaze Station? What were they looking forward to doing?
11. Why does Jack think that Grandpa likes hearing about how he got to the farmhouse? Why do you think Grandpa asks about it over and over again?
12. Did it snow where Jack used to live? Is he starting to like the snow?
13. Jack is adjusting to life at the farmhouse, except for a couple of things. What doesn't he seem to like?
14. What does Grandpa say about animals eating food that has been made for them rather than table food?
15. Grandpa explains why dogs should live in a doghouse or in the barn. What does he say?
16. New Master tells Grandpa why the kids want the dogs in the house. What does he say?
17. What is Grandpa's response to what New Master said?

18. Why do you think Grandpa starts to doze off while Melanie is talking to him?
19. Why does New Master say they will tell Ben that he was adopted when he's a little older?
20. Is Jack hoping that his old master will come back for him? Why?

**Class Activity (small group or whole class discussion):** Do you have a dog? How do we know whether dogs are smart animals? What can they be trained to do? Have you had other pets? Did you find them to be just as smart as dogs? Explain.

## Hamburger Paragraph Organizer



**BEGINNING:**

The topic sentence tells what the paragraph is about.

**MIDDLE:**

The middle tells all the juicy details and gives examples.

**END:**

The conclusion tells the main idea again.

A paragraph is like a big, juicy burger!

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# Let's Write a Paragraph!

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Topic  
Sentence

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Detail

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Detail

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Detail

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Conclusion

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 5 – Party Time

### Aim/Objectives:

1. How do authors show readers what characters are like?
2. How did the author characterize Melanie in this chapter?  
What is she like? How do you know? (*Analyzing*)

### Questions to Consider:

1. What grade is Melanie in this year? Is she in a new school?
2. Does Melanie like her classes? Which subject is difficult for her?
3. According to Lily, what did Melanie say about middle school?
4. What does New Master say about school? What does Nice Lady say about it?
5. What did Lily give Melanie for her birthday?
6. What did Melanie's parents give her?
7. Did Grandma and Grandpa have a gift for Melanie also?  
What was it?
8. Did Ben give Melanie something? What did he give her?

9. Melanie tells her dad that she is worried about Grandpa.  
Why is she concerned?
10. Is Melanie glad that Grandma and Grandpa live in a cottage on the farm? Why?
11. Melanie notices that Ben is not as quiet as he was when he first moved in with the family? What does he like to do?
12. What does Lily say when her sister asks if she is happy that the family adopted Ben? What would she like, if it were possible?
13. What happened to Ben's dad?
14. What does Jack do when he wants attention from Melanie?  
Does your pet have ways of getting attention, too?
15. What does Lily think about being the middle child now instead of the younger one?
16. What does Melanie tell Lily about her position in the family?
17. Why is Ben familiar with farm life?
18. Nice Lady jots something down in a small pad that she keeps in her pocket? What do you think she might be writing?



19. Why does Melanie keep thinking about Grandma and Grandpa? What does her mom tell her?
20. What does Jack think about girl-talk? Does he like it? Is dog food better or worse than girl-talk?

**Class Activity:**

Have students work in small groups and discuss what Melanie said, did, and thought about in this chapter. (See p. 8 for characterization worksheet.) After they complete the worksheet, each group should talk about what Melanie is like and whether they have ever known anyone like her. After students have had time to work within their groups, one member of each group can share their responses with the class.

## Characterization



What did Melanie **say** in this chapter that told us something about what she is like?

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Did Melanie **do** something in this chapter that gave us a clue as to her personality?

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Does Melanie seem to **think** about things a lot? What were some of her thoughts in this chapter?

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 6 – No Dog Food, Please!

### Aim/Objectives:

1. Do people have the ability to learn from their environments as well as their mistakes?
2. What about dogs? Do they also learn from their environments and their mistakes? (*Evaluating*)

### Questions to Consider:

1. New Master flips Jack's food around his bowl, and Jack looks at it to see if the flipping has changed the food. Has it? Dogs are considered to be very intelligent animals. How intelligent are they compared to a young child?
2. Jack misses the food he ate at his old master's house? What did his old master give him?
3. Jack got hurt once when he jumped up on his old master's barbecue. What did he learn from that experience?
4. What does Ben share with Jack when no one is watching him? Why does Ben like to share what he has with Jack?
5. What happens when Ben asks his mom and dad if he can share his food with Jack? What do they say?

6. Does Ben listen to his parents?
7. Do New Master and Nice Lady give Jack table food or dog food? What do the pets in your family eat?
8. Would Jack like to go back to his old home? How do you know?
9. Does Jack like it when Ben and Lily say, "Doggie breath again," or does he like it better when Melanie pets him? What do your pets like?
10. Does Jack like it when Melanie and Lily put hats on his head? What would he prefer instead of hats? Why?

## **Class Activity:**

Divide the class into groups. Have them create a picture/poster, including a caption, or a short skit based on one or more events from Chapter 6 of the novel. (For instance, one group could draw a picture showing that Jack has learned he can get food from Ben, another group could write a skit about how Jack got hurt at his old master's house and what he learned from that experience). Students should communicate with each other, divide the work within their groups, and be prepared to share what they have created with the class. ***(Creating)***

## Research Assignment

### How have dogs (or other animals) been trained to help humans?

Using the Internet and/or library books, find five ways in which dogs or other animals are currently helping their human companions. Which of these ways seems most important to you? Why? Be prepared to share your answers with the class.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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4. \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 7 – Spring is in the Air

### Aim/Objectives:

1. The Fernandez Family Farm is mostly a produce farm. What does that mean? What do they grow?
2. Who taught New Master how to be a farmer?
3. What does Grandpa do the old-fashioned way on the farm? Does Melanie want to do things the old-fashioned way?

*(Understanding)*

### Questions to Consider:

1. What is Jack wondering about the rooster? Does he understand that animals have different characteristics?
2. What does Grandpa make Jack do some nights? Does Jack like this? Why?
3. Where does Jack sleep when Grandpa's not around?
4. Why does Ben follow Jack around?
5. What do New Master and the girls talk about on their way to check on the animals? What did Melanie say she learned in school?

6. How did Grandpa learn farming many years ago? What did you learn from your parents or grandparents?
7. What does Lily like seeing on the farm?
8. What does Melanie like about winter?
9. Have the girls been helping out on the farm since they were little? What have they been doing?
10. Why does the family milk the cows and goats by hand instead of using milking machines? Why do other farmers use milking machines?
11. Why does New Master say that people get set in their ways sometimes, and change happens slowly for them? Have you found this to be true?
12. What does the Fernandez family do with the sheep on their farm? Do they milk them?
13. Which farm would Melanie like to visit in the spring?
14. Has Ben milked goats before? Where? Does he want to help out on the Fernandez family farm?
15. Why does Jack think cows don't like being milked?



## **Class Activity (small group or whole class discussion):**

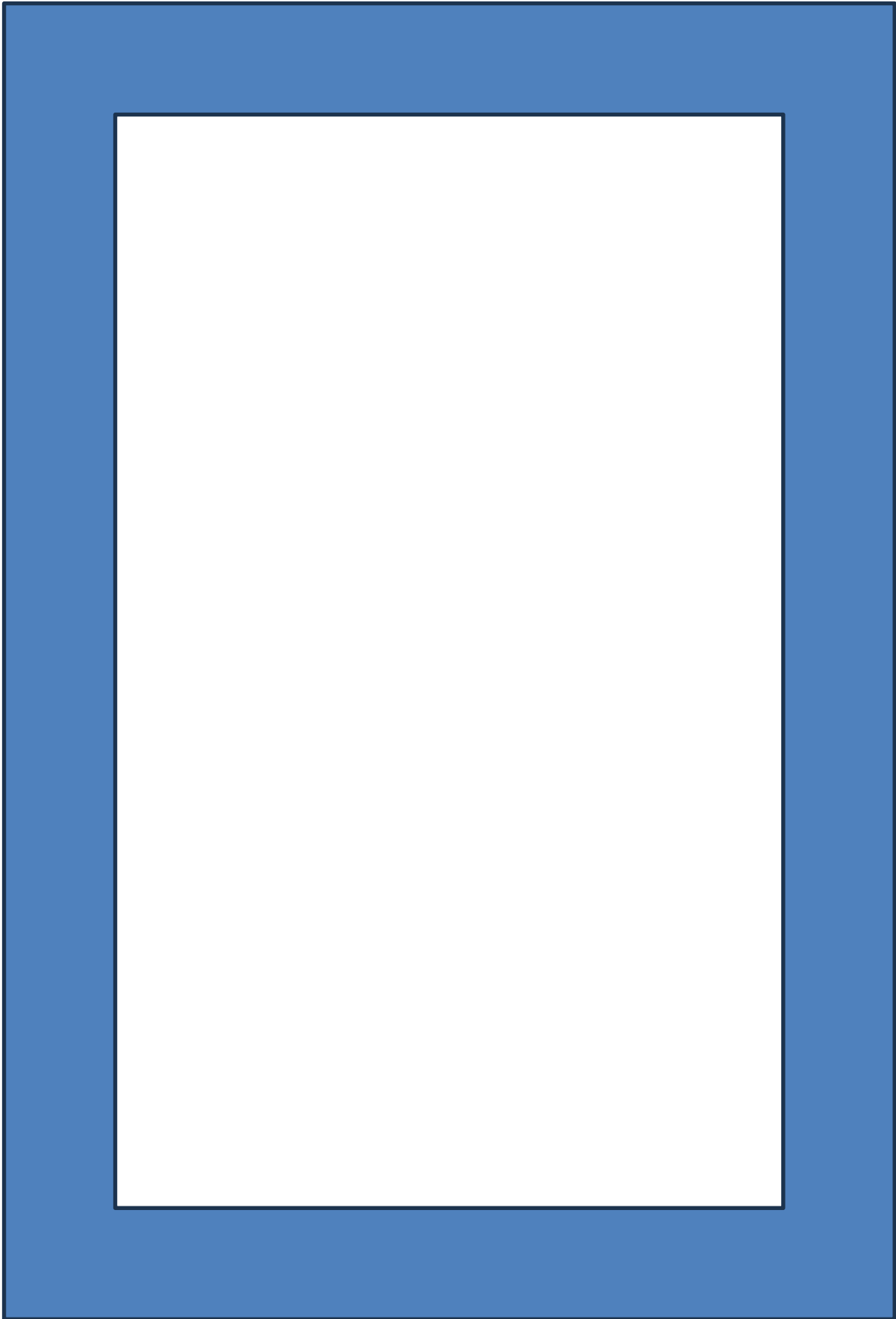
Does each generation seem old-fashioned, or old school, to the succeeding generation? Is technology the same from one generation to the next? Does each generation communicate in the same way as the previous generation, or listen to music in the same way? For instance, do you listen to music on your phone, but know someone who prefers to listen to music on the radio? Do you think your way of doing things might be considered old-fashioned (old school) by future generations? Why?

## **Cartoon Creations**

**CREATE A CARTOON** based on any of the chapters in the book we have read so far. Your cartoon can be funny or it can make a serious point about some aspect of the story. Use the panel on the following page and include the following:

- one or more characters from the story
- the name of the character somewhere in the design
- text in a dialogue box anywhere in the panel
- a caption at the bottom of the panel

Be prepared to share your work with the class.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 8 – Strange Happenings

### Aim/Objectives:

1. How does the author characterize Ben? Is he similar to Melanie, or different from her? Why?
2. How does Ben feel about Jack and the other animals on the farm? How do you know? (*Analyzing*)

### Questions to Consider:

1. Does Nice Lady cook outdoors a lot like Jack's old master did? Why do you think she prepares meals indoors more often?
2. Who took the bread that Nice Lady made? Why did he take it?
3. Something special is happening in this chapter? What is it?
4. What is Melanie tired of hearing Grandpa say?
5. What does New Master say about people having different opinions? Are they entitled to their own opinions? Do you have to agree with them?

6. Does New Master get upset when Melanie says she'll like it better when Grandpa and Grandma are back in their own house? Why or why not?
7. What does Melanie want to do when she's older?
8. New Master explains that there are fewer farms in the United States than there were years ago, yet they produce more than farms did previously. Why do you think that's the case? What has changed a lot over the years? (Hint: Did people have cell phones a century ago?)
9. Why does New Master work in construction at times in addition to being a farmer?
10. Does Melanie like helping out at the farmers' market? What does she find difficult?
11. Why do New Master and Grandpa move the ewe to the center of the stall?
12. Why does New Master wipe the baby lamb's face with a dry towel?
13. Why does the sheep start to lick the newborn lamb?
14. How long after its birth will the baby lamb stand up?
15. Has Ben seen a lamb being born before? Where?

16. Does Ben want his new family to visit his grandad's farm?  
Who does he want his grandparents to meet?
17. What does Jack say when Grandma goes to the house to get a small blanket for the lamb? What might this indicate?
18. What does Ben do while his sisters are at school?
19. Melanie and Lily like to write songs that are actually rhyming poems. Do you like to write songs or poems? What do you enjoy writing?
20. What do you predict will happen next? Will Jack stop wishing for his old master to return? Will he get used to dog food? Will he have to sleep in a doghouse or the ban like Grandpa prefers?

### **Class Activity:**

Working with a partner or a small group, create a Venn diagram in which you compare Melanie and Ben. First, write some adjectives that describe Melanie in the section on the left. Then write some adjectives that describe Ben. Do the two children have anything in common? Are they alike in any way? Write that in the middle section. (See p. 11 for Venn diagram.)

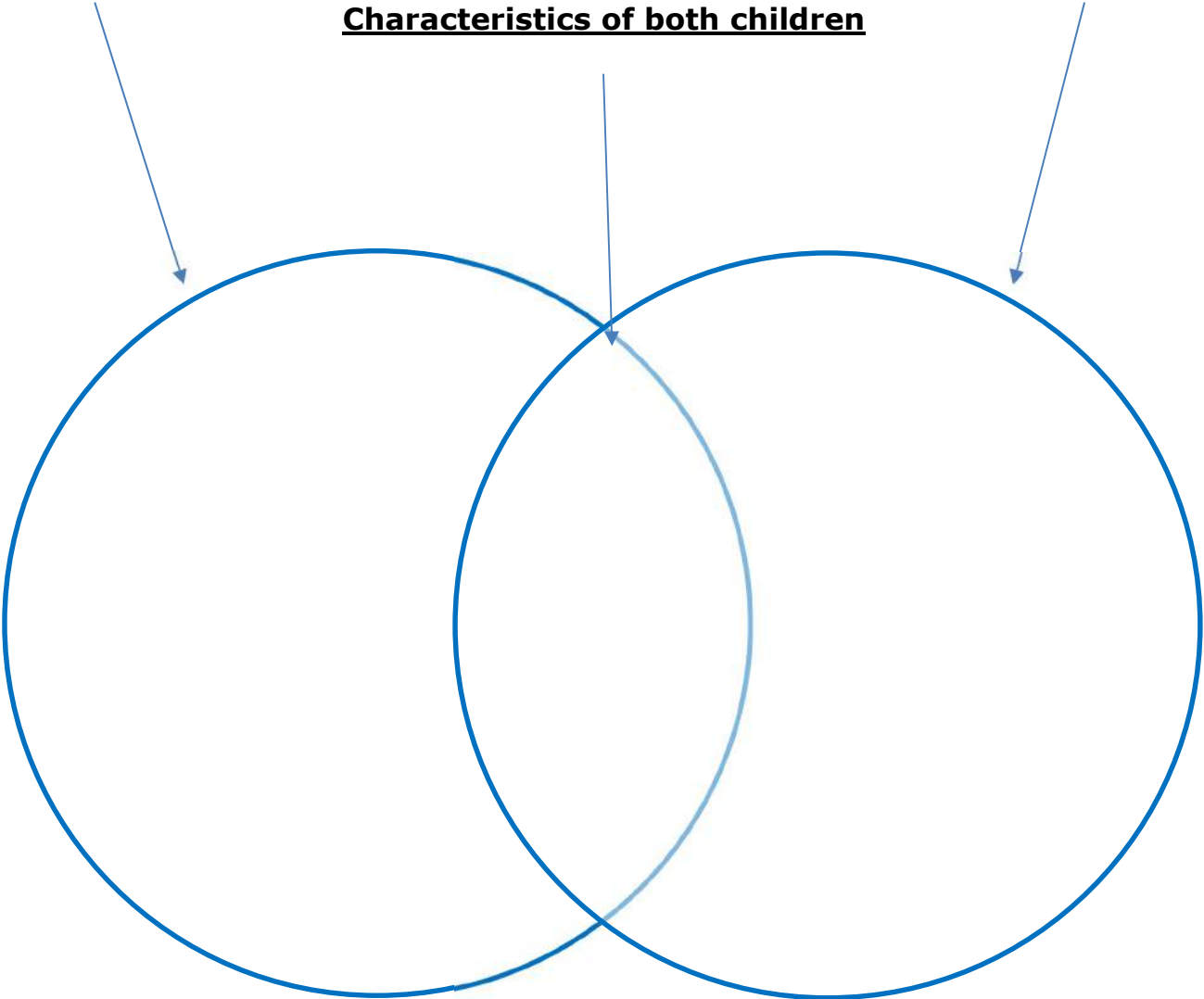
# Compare and Contrast

## Venn Diagram

Melanie's characteristics

Ben's characteristics

Characteristics of both children



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 9 – A Scary Night

### Aim/Objectives:

1. What happened to Grandma and Grandpa's cottage? What was Jack's involvement in what happened?
2. Was Grandpa correct when he said Jack did a good job because he was outside where he belonged? Explain.

*(Understanding)*

### Questions to Consider:

1. What did we say it's called when the author goes back in time to tell us something that happened before the story started? We saw this in an earlier chapter when the author went back in the past to tell us how Jack happened to join the family?
2. Why did Jack start to bark and scratch the front door of the house?
3. Who went to the cottage while Isabel called the fire department? Where did they find Grandpa? Where was Grandma?

4. What did Jack see on the stove while New Master was leading Grandma and Grandpa to the door?
5. Did Grandpa get hurt in the cottage? How?
6. Did Jack get hurt? How?
7. Does Grandma understand how the fire could have started while they were sleeping?
8. According to the firemen, how did the fire start?
9. What did Grandpa say he did because he couldn't sleep?
10. Why did Grandma and Grandpa move into the farmhouse?
11. What does Melanie tell Grandpa when he says he doesn't understand what could have happened?
12. Why wasn't New Master's friend surprised when he heard that Jack smelled the smoke coming from the cottage and started barking?
13. Grandpa says that Jack did a good job smelling the smoke because he was outside where he belongs. Was that true?
14. Was there any mention of a smoke detector in the cottage? Should a working smoke detector have been there? How could it have helped?



15. What else other than smoke detectors should be in place to protect against fires?

**Class Activity:**

How did the fire in the cottage start? Have you learned much about fire prevention/safety in school and/or at home? What have you learned? Use the writing template (see p. 12) to help you write a well-organized paragraph about fire safety. (*Applying*)

## Let's Write

The students in my school have learned a lot about fire prevention/safety over the years. First, we learned \_\_\_\_\_

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Also, we learned that \_\_\_\_\_

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Finally, we learned that \_\_\_\_\_

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I'm glad that we know so much about how to prevent fires and how to be safe in case there is ever a fire in our home or school.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 10 – Help For Grandpa

### Aim/Objectives:

Which of the children in the Fernandez family seems to be very concerned about Grandpa? Why? Has Grandpa changed? If so, how? What might he need someday? (*Analyzing*)

### Questions to Consider:

1. Does it seem like Ben has a good relationship with his nana and grandad? How do you know?
2. How does Ben react when New Master asks him if he would like to help out on the farm?
3. Why do farmers plow the fields?
4. What does Ben think of Grandpa's comments?
5. What did Melanie learn in school that could help Grandpa? Why does she think he might need help?
6. How does Grandpa react to Melanie's suggestion? What does he say he would prefer over having a guide dog himself?

7. What does Grandma tell Melanie about why the fire in the cottage occurred? Was it Grandpa's vision or something else?
8. Why did Melanie's teacher tell the students about the Guide Dog Foundation?
9. Does Grandpa like to joke around? How do you know?
10. Why does Grandpa say he can't have a guide dog next to him all day?
11. Does Grandpa think Jack would have made a good guide dog? Why?
12. Why does Jack start barking one night?
13. What does New Master see when he goes outside to investigate?
14. Did New Master figure out how coyotes got onto their property?
15. What do Melanie and Lily do every day after school? What do you think they saw in the henhouse that scared them?

## **Class Activity:**

Have you ever seen a seeing eye dog? What can they be trained to do for a person who is blind? Working in groups, students will research an organization that provides assistance to people who are blind, for instance *Guide Dogs of America* to see how they are helping people. Each group will report to the class about which organization they found and what the organization does for individuals who are blind. If students have iPads, they can do their research in the classroom. Otherwise, they can be taken to the school library one day to do research on the computers there. Finally, the research could be a homework assignment. **(Applying)**

## Amazing Adjectives

**WORDS** that **MODIFY** or **DESCRIBE NOUNS**

(people, places, animals, and things)

### Examples:

- Jack is a **big strong** dog.
- Lily thinks Angelica is **small** and **cute**.
- **Grumpy** Grandpa can be **difficult**.

Adjectives add detail to the story and make it more descriptive.

Find three adjectives used in this chapter. Then choose four more of your own. What nouns do they describe?

Adjectives	Nouns they modify

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 11 – A Thief in the Night

### Aim/Objectives:

What did Melanie and Lily discover when they went to check on the hens in the henhouse? Why does New Master think a skunk broke the eggs rather than a rat? What happened to Jack toward the end of this chapter? What did the skunk do to him? What does Grandpa give Jack that night during dinner? How did Jack react to what Grandpa did? (*Understanding*)

### Questions to Consider:

1. What does New Master think happened to the eggs in the henhouse?
2. What is the first thing New Master says they should do?
3. Why will they set up a light with a motion detector?
4. Did the light scare the animal away?
5. Why does Grandpa suggest spreading orange and lemon peels around the henhouse?
6. Why does the family need to replace the fence around the property? How will that stop the skunk from coming onto the property?

7. Is Grandpa good at building things? What did he make for the girls' room?
8. Why did Jack break out of the locked barn?
9. Did Jack listen when New Master called him away from the skunk? What did the skunk do to Jack?
10. Who gives Jack a bath? Does he like it?
11. Why is Lily angry? What does she say to Grandpa?
12. Where does Ben want Jack to sleep from now on? Do New Master and Grandpa agree?
13. Why didn't Grandpa's father have time to teach him everything?
14. What does Grandpa give Jack that night during dinner? Why do you think he does this?
15. Will New Master allow Melanie to help build the new fence? Why? What does he say?



### **Class Activity (Class discussion, then group work):**

Describe New Master's plan to get rid of the skunk. How many steps were in his plan? Working in groups, students should talk about a time they were part of a plan to accomplish something. For example, perhaps they were on a school or town team in which the coach talked to the players about steps they would take to win more games. Groups should be prepared to share their responses with the class. *(Applying)*

### **Note for teachers:**

The Literary Devices worksheet on p. 50 can be used with students in grades 3 and up. However, if students have not been exposed to this information yet, it would be better to teach one literary device at a time, and then use the worksheet to review the material or check students' understanding.

## Literary Devices

Literary devices are techniques authors use to make their writing more descriptive and interesting. These are a few of them: **simile**, **metaphor**, **onomatopoeia**, and **personification**. Identify the literary devices used in the following sentences and write them on the lines provided.

1. Grandma was patient even when Grandpa was difficult. She had a heart of gold. \_\_\_\_\_
2. The wind howled all night. \_\_\_\_\_
3. The animal noises in the book, such as Woof-Woof, are examples of this literary device: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Jack didn't like dog food and so many nights he was as hungry as a horse. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Grandpa seemed to be watching the dogs a lot. Even though his vision was slowly deteriorating, Jack thought he had eyes like a hawk. \_\_\_\_\_

Which of these literary devices would you like to use in your writing? Do you have a favorite one, or do you like them all? Why?

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 12 – A Change in Plans

### Aim/Objectives:

What happens to Grandpa in this chapter? What happens to Angelica? What do the children hear coming from the tool shed toward the end of the chapter? (*Understanding*)

### Questions to Consider:

1. Why does a tree need to be pruned at the farm? Who will do this work?
2. Who cuts down the tree branches? What do Rob, Melanie, and Grandpa do?
3. Does New Master want Grandpa to climb the ladder? What does he tell him to do? Does Grandpa listen to his son?
4. What do Melanie and Rob tell Grandpa? Does he listen to them?
5. What happens to Lily? What does Jack do?
6. Then what happens to Grandpa?
7. What happens to Angelica? Where do they take her?

8. What does the veterinarian say?

9. Can Angelica walk when she comes home from the hospital?

10. How is Grandpa different now? Where is he spending a lot of time?

**Class Activity:**

Would you say that Grandpa is stubborn? How do you know? What did he do in this chapter that showed he has a stubborn streak? Can you remember a time when a parent, grandparent, teacher, etc. gave you good advice but you were too stubborn to listen? Students can share stories within groups and share with the class if they would like to do so. (*Evaluating*)





Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 13 – Restoring the House

### Aim/Objectives:

What does Jack do just as the men are ready to start fixing up the cottage? What does New Master do with the skunk? Have you seen different types of animals being friends before – cats and dogs, for instance? (*Analyzing*)

### Questions to Consider:

1. What are Frank and his sons going to do on the farm?
2. Why does Jack start barking as the work on the cottage is about to begin?
3. What does New Master see when he looks under the deck? Which animal is with the cat and her kittens?
4. Why was the skunk trapped on the property after the new fence went up?
5. New Master has a surprise for his parents. What is the surprise? Do Grandma and Grandpa like the surprise?
6. We finally find out why Grandpa had been spending time in the tool shed. What was he making there?

7. Who is able to help Angelica move in her new wheelchair?  
How does he do that?
8. What does Grandpa say about the way Jack is helping Angelica?
9. What is Grandpa going to do to the wheelchair so that Angelica can move it herself more easily?
10. Why did Grandpa make the wheelchair for Angelica? Is she expected to be able to walk again?

**Class Activity:**

What did Grandpa build for Angelica in this chapter? Did she like using what he built? Have you ever known someone who was good at building things out of wood? Who was it and what did s/he like to build? (*Analyzing*)



## Cause and Effect

The cause is **WHY** something happened.

The effect is **WHAT** happened.

Fill in the chart with a cause or effect from this book. Then add three more causes and effects from any of the chapters we have read so far.

Cause	Effect
In a previous chapter, Jack watched New Master flip the food around in his bowl.	
	The skunk was trapped on the property.
	Grandma and Grandpa were surprised and happy.
Grandpa will put oil on the wheels of Angelica's wheelchair.	



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 14 – Rainy Day Blues

### Aim/Objectives:

Where did Melanie and Lily go in this chapter? Do the girls enjoy sports? What else do they like to do? (*Analyzing*)

### Questions to Consider:

1. Why is everyone a little gloomy?
2. Where did New Master and the girls go? Where are Nice Lady, Ben, and Jack?
3. What does Jack do to make Ben laugh?
4. Which sports do Melanie and Lily like to play?
5. What product does the family grow on the farm that Lily likes eating?
6. How do farmers make money from their crops? Do they keep everything they grow? Why or why not?
7. Did Nice Lady seem to like seeing Ben and Jack having fun together on that rainy day? How do you know?
8. What does Ben tell Nice Lady about Jack?

9. What does Melanie notice about Ben?

10. Does Jack like his new family? What does he miss about his old life?

**Class Activity:**

Do you know what activities your classmates enjoy? Working with a partner, students will interview each other about their favorite activities. Students can share information about school, community, or family activities. Afterwards, the students can share information they learned about their partners with the class. (*Applying*)

## The Joys of Farming

**Answer in complete sentences.**

What aspect(s) of farming do you like best? Explain.

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What aspects do you like least? Explain.

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Would you like to be involved in farming someday? Explain.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 15 – Now or Never

### Aim/Objectives:

What did Jack do in this chapter that surprised his family? How did Nice Lady react to what he did? Do you agree with what she said? Why? (*Evaluating*)

### Questions to Consider:

1. Jack realizes that he needs to communicate more effectively with his family. What does he do?
2. How does the family react to what Jack does? Is one person more understanding than the others?
3. What does Grandpa say about what Jack did? Is he understanding?
4. What do Melanie and Lily decide to do that day? Why?
5. Which of the children does Jack seem to try to keep track of? Why do you think a dog would do that?

### **Class Activity (Class Discussion, then group work):**

Do your pets have ways of communicating with you? For example, do you have a dog who goes to the door when he/she wants to go outside, or one that stands by his/her food or water bowl to send the message that he wants something? What forms of communication do you like best (texting, etc.)? Why? Does social media afford you the opportunity to communicate with your peers? What are the advantages and disadvantages of various modes of communication used by young people today?

***(Evaluating)***



## **Solving Problems (*not* math problems!)**

Melanie and Lily call the veterinarian to ask whether it's okay for the family to share food with Jack. Did this solve Jack's problem? Why?

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Can you think of a time when you asked someone for advice (a parent, teacher, counselor, physician, etc.) and that helped you solve a problem you had?

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Were you ever able to help someone else solve a problem? How?

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How else can students solve problems – in addition to asking others for help?

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Which problem-solving method has worked best for you? Why?

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 16 – Doctor... Please Help!

### Aim/Objectives:

What advice did Dr. Kincaid give the Fernandez Family? Do you agree with the veterinarian's advice? Why? (*Evaluating*)

### Questions to Consider:

1. Why is Lily concerned about Jack running away from home?
2. Melanie has a plan to solve the dog food problem. What is her plan? Do you think she had a good idea?
3. Why does Nice Lady say that the kids shouldn't be worried about Jack running away? Does she agree with Melanie's idea, though?
4. What does Melanie do after she talks to Dr. Kincaid?
5. Do Ben and Jack seem to be close? How do you know?
6. What did the veterinarian tell Melanie? Is it okay for Jack to eat anything other than dog food?
7. What did New Master give Jack to eat after Melanie's talk with the veterinarian? Did Jack like it?

8. Did Grandpa change his mind about Jack eating dog food rather than table food?
9. What does New Master say when Melanie asks him who is right, Grandpa or the veterinarian?
10. What is New Master's decision about what Jack will eat from now on?
11. How does Jack feel about New Master's promise to get rid of the dog food?
12. Is Ben an active child? What does he like to do?

### **Class Activity:**

There are several poems throughout this book. Do you prefer reading poems that rhyme, or those that do not rhyme (free verse poems)? Why? Do you like writing poems? Working in groups, write a poem about an experience you had with a pet or family member. It can be either a rhyming poem or a free verse poem. Write 8 - 12 lines. You can try to make the poem humorous, if you wish. The following is a funny poem about cats. (No, I've never actually been a cat owner. If you have, then write a poem about your feline friend.) **(Creating)**

## **Boss Cat**

My cat is a super nice pet  
so long as her needs are met.

She won't hesitate to hiss  
if she thinks that something's amiss.

Her MEOW makes her needs quite clear.

She really is quite a dear.

I know that she's small and I'm large.

Yet, she thinks that *she's* in charge.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 17 – Fresh-picked Breakfast

### Aim/Objectives:

Why was Ben put up for adoption? What happened to his parents? How did the Fernandez Family find out about Ben's situation? (*Understanding*)

### Questions to Consider:

1. What is Sunday morning like at the Fernandez family farm? What does Nice Lady make for breakfast?
2. The family sells some of their products at the farmers' market. Do they also buy some of the products that other farmers make? Why?
3. How does Grandpa react when Nice Lady gives Ben some scrambled eggs to put in Jack's bowl? Does he complain like he did before?
4. Melanie seems happier these days. Why?
5. What is Melanie hoping to do someday? Why?
6. Does Lily like to tease Melanie? What does she do?

7. What does Melanie notice about Grandpa? Is he forgetting everything, or does he still do some things well?
8. What does Melanie ask her dad about Ben? What does Nice Lady say?
9. Why was Ben put up for adoption? What happened to his parents?
10. Will Ben's grandparents be able to visit him? When? What type of adoption does the family have?

**Class Activity (Class Discussion):**

The family in the story has a fresh-picked breakfast in this chapter, meaning that at least some of the ingredients come right from their farm. What are some of your favorite foods to have for breakfast? Do you think it would be fun to be able to get some foods from your own farm and then use the items to make breakfast for your family? Why? (*Evaluating*)



## Words and names from other countries

### Match the Spanish and English words and names

_____	Hola	A) Poor thing!
_____	José	B) Outside!
_____	¡Fuera!	C) Michael
_____	leche	D) Hello
_____	Josefina	E) Joseph
_____	¡Pobrecito!	F) milk
_____	¡Qué bonito!	G) Elizabeth
_____	Miguel	H) Josephine
_____	Isabel	I) How pretty!

## Words that come from other countries

Grandma uses words Jack doesn't understand. Does anyone in your family speak a language that you don't understand? Explain.

### Match the Spanish and English words

_____	Sí	A) Fabulous
_____	gracias	B) Happy Birthday
_____	mi amigo	C) Delicious!
_____	mi amor	D) thank you
_____	mi familia	E) Fantastic
_____	Delicioso	F) my love
_____	Fabuloso	G) my family
_____	Fantástico	H) Yes
_____	¡Felíz Cumpleaños!	I) my friend

**Cognates** are words that are similar in different languages.

Which of the words are cognates in English and Spanish?

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 18 – A Windy Day

### Aim/Objectives:

What fell out of the tree during the rainstorm? What did the girls want to do? Why did their dad put the nest back in the tree? In addition to the birds, who was Lily concerned about after the cat seemed to want to get at the birds? Did she show concern for Ben's welfare before this? What does the change in her feelings toward Ben indicate? (*Understanding, Evaluating*)

### Questions to Consider:

1. Why does New Master tell the kids that they have to go inside the house?
2. What is Melanie doing more often now? With whom do you think she is communicating?
3. Does Ben behave differently on this rainy day than he did the other day it had rained a lot? How is he different? What does he ask Lily to do?
4. According to Melanie, how did Lily get better at drawing pictures?
5. What does New Master give Ben? Is Ben happy to have it?

6. What else does New Master suggest to Ben other than practicing his drawing? What else should he do?
7. Why does Jack like sitting close to the children?
8. What do the kids do as soon as the wind calms down after lunch?
9. What does Ben see on the ground after the storm?
10. What is perched on top of a fence post? What does it seem to want? What does Jack do?
11. What does New Master get? Why? What does he do with the nest?
12. What does Nice Lady say they will do if the mother bird doesn't return?
13. What does Grandpa say about Jack? In general, are dogs good watch dogs?
14. Why was Lily concerned about Ben? What does this indicate about her?
15. Does Jack like his new home? Do you think he will ever forget his old master? Why or why not?

## Class Activity:

Ben is discouraged because he can't draw pictures as well as Lily. What does Melanie tell Ben? Did you ever get better at an activity (riding a bike, playing a game or sport, drawing pictures, singing, writing, etc.) by practicing it? Write one well-organized paragraph about an activity that you got better at over time. Remember what we discussed about the parts of a hamburger when writing your paragraph. Use transition words to begin the middle part of your paragraph. This helps the reader move from one idea to the next (Examples: *First, Next, Also, Then, In addition, Finally*).

**Let's Write a Paragraph!**

Title \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Topic Sentence

 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Detail

 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Detail

 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Detail

 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Conclusion

 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 19 – A Family Trip

### Aim/Objectives:

According to the author, two of the most important sentences in the entire book are in this chapter. Can you find them? Do you agree that these sentences are important? Why? (*Evaluating*)

### Questions to Consider:

1. Where is the family going? Why is Melanie concerned?
2. Jack is going on the trip? Who will take care of Angelica while they're gone?
3. Why didn't Grandpa build a doghouse as he had planned? How does Lily react to this news?
4. Where does Ben go as soon as they get to the farm in Ohio? Where do the others go?
5. Who is Eddie? What is he doing at Ben's grandparents' farm?
6. According to Eddie, why is the farm for sale? What happened to Ben's grandparents?
7. Why didn't anyone answer the phone when Nice Lady tried to arrange a visit to the farm in Ohio?

8. What does Ben do as soon as he sees Eddie? Does Ben recognize him?
9. Did Ben's grandparents give their dogs table food like Jack's old master? Why do you think Ben likes to share his food with Jack?
10. What did Eddie say that his family learned about giving table food to dogs?
11. How do Melanie and Lily react when they realize that Grandpa was right when he said dogs should eat dog food?
12. Eddie goes back to his farm, then returns with two people. Who does he bring to Ben's grandparents' farm?
13. Does Ben recognize Eddie's nephew? What does he say?
14. Lily sees a silo for the first time. What is it used for?
15. Why does Jack bark when he sees the tractor? What happened to it?
16. What happened to Ben's father and mother?
17. What message will Eddie deliver to Ben's grandmother?
18. What does Jack do when he smells something strange? Where does he finally stop?



19. What is buried at the spot that Jack smelled? What does Eddie say about Jack's sense of smell?
20. Lily is very sad when she hears that Ben lost his parents and his granddad. Does Eddie make Lily and the rest of the family feel better? How?
21. How does Ben feel about his new family? How does Jack feel now?
22. Who's going to the farmhouse tomorrow afternoon? Can you guess why he's going there?
23. What was the most important part of this chapter? Why?
24. Did the children learn something important from Eddie? What?
25. Can you think of a time when you learned something important from someone outside of your family? When?

**Class Activity:** The children are very sad to hear about what happened in Ben's family. Then Eddie says, "Family's not where you're born, it's where you're loved. And it looks like little Ben here is loved a lot by all of you." Write one paragraph explaining whether you agree with this statement and why it meant so much to the Fernandez children. Remember to write a "hamburger paragraph," which includes a topic sentence, detail sentences (starting with transition words), and a concluding sentence.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 20 – Grandpa’s Story

### Aim/Objectives:

What does Melanie learn about Grandpa in this chapter? Is he starting to change? How do you know? (*Evaluating*)

### Questions to Consider:

1. What does Jack notice about the way Grandpa is walking? What does Jack do? How does Grandpa react to what Jack did?
2. What does Melanie have to do for her English class?
3. What does Melanie ask Grandpa first? What does he tell her?
4. Is Melanie surprised about Grandpa’s early life? What does she say?
5. Why was farming a good fit for Grandpa? What did he learn in trade school?
6. Why does Melanie ask Grandpa about the Vietnam War?
7. What happened to Grandpa’s friend in Vietnam?
8. Who gave Grandpa a pocket watch? Why?

9. How did Grandpa meet Grandma?
10. What type of foods does the family eat? Who cooks these foods?
11. What's wrong with Grandpa's eye?
12. What does Grandpa say about Jack? Is he okay with Jack being in the house now? Why?
13. What does Melanie think about the food they should give any future dogs they might have?
14. Melanie has something for Grandpa. What is it?
15. Does Grandpa like what Melanie gave him?
16. Is Grandpa more affectionate toward Jack than he was at the beginning of the story? How do you know? Find evidence on pp. 293 - 295 to support your answer.
17. Who does Jack consider to be his best buddy?
18. What does New Master say about Jack's relationship with Grandpa now?
19. Jack is happy that he's getting table food now. What did he discover about some foods made for dogs, such as a bone that New Master gave him?

20. What does Nice Lady say about people changing their minds about what they like? Do you think that's true? Is there a food you like now that you didn't like when you were younger? Which one?

**Class Activity:**

In what ways has Grandpa changed throughout the story?  
Working in groups, complete the graphic organizer comparing what Grandpa was like at the beginning of the story with what he is like at this point in the story. *(Analyzing)*

## Has Grandpa really changed? Let's see!

	Earlier chapters	Chapter 20
Where did Grandpa say dogs should stay? What should they eat?		
How did Grandpa treat Jack? What did he do?		
What did Grandpa say when Melanie suggested help for him in the future? (guide dog, cane)		
Can you think of any other ways in which Grandpa changed?		
What words would you use to describe Grandpa earlier in the book and then in chapter 20?		

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 21 – What’s Going on Here?

### Aim/Objectives:

We learned that we get to know characters by what they say, do, and think. What’s the difference between a dynamic character and a static character? Which characters in this novel are dynamic? Which ones are static? (*Evaluating*)

### Questions to Consider:

1. Melanie quietly asks Lily if she’s happy the family adopted Ben. How does Lily respond?
2. Does Melanie look out for Lily? How can you tell?
3. What advice does New Master share with Melanie? Who used to tell this to New Master?
4. What does Melanie realize? Which is the most important day of all?
5. What does New Master say about change?
6. What does Ben say to Jack?
7. Melanie wonders if Jack is a little jealous of the attention Ben gives the lamb. What does Lily tell Melanie?

8. Whose birthday is coming soon? New Master says they'll have one more guest at the table. Who do you think that will be?
9. Melanie and Lily are going to write songs on their own. Why does Melanie say Lily can use her new computer? How will Melanie write her song?
10. Who will be visiting the Fernandez Family Farm? When?
11. What does Melanie say about their grumpy old Grandpa?
12. Melanie has a math test tomorrow. When is she going to study for it? Why does she change her mind about when she is going to study for the test? What does this indicate about Melanie?
13. What does Melanie like doing the old-fashioned way? Is it understandable that people sometimes like to continue doing things the way they're used to doing them? Why?
14. What is Ben wondering about? What did he hear that caught his attention?
15. According to Jack, where did Ben probably go? Why does Jack want to follow Ben?



## **Class Activity:**

Working in groups, discuss the characters in the novel and see if you can agree on which characters are dynamic. Complete the graphic organizer to show which characters changed and how they changed. (*Analyzing*)

## Dynamic and Static Characters

What does the character say or do?	What do their words or actions indicate? Did the character change?
<b>Lily:</b> "Who's a baby? Not me. Ben's the baby now. I'm in the second grade!"	What Lily says shows that _____
<b>Grandma:</b> "Live one day at a time. Learn from yesterday, and plan for tomorrow, but live today. Live one day at a time."	
<b>Ben:</b> "I love you, Jack. You're my brother now and neither of us has to eat dog food."	
<b>Melanie:</b> "Sometimes I wonder if Jack isn't a little jealous of all the attention Ben gives the lamb." <b>Lily:</b> "Don't worry. If he is, he'll get over it."	
<b>Melanie:</b> "I'm going to start studying for my math test. I'll get to it right after I finish reading my book.... Then again, maybe I'll study for the math test first. After that, I'll finish my book."	
<b>Melanie:</b> "I like the computer. But sometimes I like writing with a pen."	
<b>Jack:</b> "And where's Ben? I'll bet he went to check on that little lamb again.... WOOF! WOOF! Wait for me!"	

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 22 – Let's Party!

### Aim/Objectives:

Why are Melanie and Lily excited at the beginning of this chapter?  
How does Jack react when he sees his old master? What does he say? (*Understanding*)

### Questions to Consider:

1. Whose birthday is the family celebrating?
2. Who called New Master? Where is he?
3. Where is New Master going? Why?
4. Why is Lily excited?
5. What does Melanie do when she gets nervous? Do you have a nervous habit, too?
6. Why is Ben puzzled?
7. What does Jack do when he sees his old master? What does Ben do?
8. Is Jack's old master glad that Jack has a new friend? Why?

9. What does Ben do when he sees Jack and his old master together? What does he say?
10. What does Jack think about his old master returning? Who does he want to have fun with now?

### **Class Activity (Class Discussion)**

Divide the class into five groups. If necessary, two groups can be given the same questions to consider. Ask students to discuss their questions within their groups. For their respective questions, students will do the following:

- make a claim
- support their claim with specific reasons
- summarize their group discussion for the class

### **Questions for groups:**

1. Who was your favorite character in the story? Why? Did you have a least favorite character? Why?
2. What was your favorite scene in the book? Why?
3. Which character changed the most by the end of the book? How do you know?
4. Did you like the ending of the novel? Why or why not?

5. For which grade(s) is this book most suitable? Do you recommend it for that grade? Why or why not?

### **KWL Chart**

Complete the last column of the chart you started before reading this book. Share your responses.

## Follow-up Activities

### Vocabulary review

#### Complete the sentences

**contraption**

**cringe**

**critter**

**debris**

**greenhouse**

**gruffly**

**nocturnal**

1. A creature that is asleep during the day and active at night is considered to be \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The plants in the \_\_\_\_\_ are doing well because they are protected from \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Poor Jack would squirm or \_\_\_\_\_ whenever Grandpa tried to send him out to the barn.
4. Nice Lady puts foods in a metal \_\_\_\_\_ and they come out tasting delicious.
5. Melanie, Lily, Ben, and Jack didn't like it when Grandpa spoke to Jack \_\_\_\_\_.
6. After the fire in the cottage, there was a great deal of \_\_\_\_\_ that had to be cleaned up.
7. By the end of the story, Grandpa realized that Jack was a member of the family, not a \_\_\_\_\_ that should be kept out in the barn.

## Follow-up Activities

### Vocabulary review

#### Complete the sentences

**pamphlet**      **perimeter**      **poultry**      **reprimand**

**sinkhole**      **wince**      **zigzag**

1. Ben's grandparents mostly raised chickens on their \_\_\_\_\_ farm.
2. Some areas are prone to \_\_\_\_\_ formation due to differences in the soil.
3. The Fernandez family put a fence around the \_\_\_\_\_ of their property to keep animals such as skunks and coyotes away.
4. When chased by a predator, an animal might \_\_\_\_\_, or run from right to left.
5. Melanie showed her family a \_\_\_\_\_ about guide dogs that she had received in school.
6. Melanie saw Lily \_\_\_\_\_ when she realized that Angelica was hurt.
7. Nice Lady didn't \_\_\_\_\_ Jack when he spilled his dog food out of his bowl.

## **Follow-up Activities**

### **You be the writer!**

Consider the things that Grandpa did in the story. (He insisted that dogs should live outside and eat dog food. He insisted on climbing the tree to cut down some branches, etc.) Was he right about anything at all?

Write a skit (one or two pages) between some of the family members, including Grandpa, in which the family reconsiders Grandpa's ideas. Was he right about anything, or was he just an old-fashioned person who didn't know anything? When writing your skit, indicate who is speaking by writing the names of the characters on the left-hand side of the page like this:

Lily:

Ben:

Grandpa:



## **Follow-up Activities**

### **Texting and social media**

- Melanie and a boy in her class have started to text each other. Do you frequently text your friends? Do you talk on the phone also? Which way of communicating do you prefer? Why?
- Do you use social media often? Does it have advantages and disadvantages? Explain.

### **Write a letter**

#### **Children's authors love to hear from students and teachers**

- Explain which character(s) you liked most.
- Tell the author which scene was the best or funniest of all.
- Would you recommend the book to other students? Why or why not?

### **From the author...**

Reading and writing books for children have been passions of mine for many years. Thank you for reading this book and sharing it with your students. I hope all of you enjoyed the story.