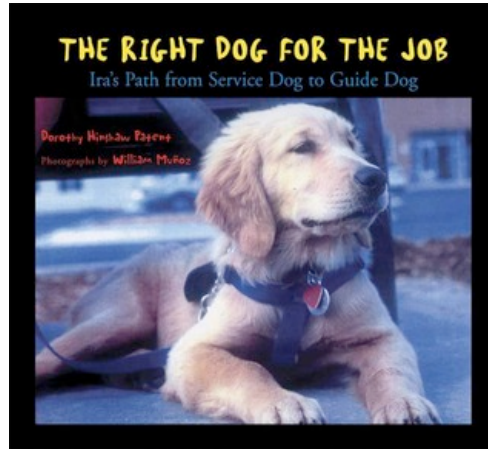


LESSON PLAN: THE RIGHT DOG FOR THE JOB

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Objectives:

- Students will be able to understand how service dogs are trained.
- Students will be able to understand the importance of both service dogs and guide dogs for people with disabilities.

New York State Learning Standards:

Pre-Kindergarten: 1-7, 10, 11

Kindergarten: 1-7, 9-11

First Grade: 1-7, 9, 11

Second Grade: 1-3, 5, 7, 11

Materials:

The Right Dog for the Job: Ira's Path from Service Dog to Guide Dog, journals, pencils, crayons, chart paper, compare and contrast graphic organizer.

Vocabulary:

access	golden retriever	guide dog	retrieve
wheelchair	canine	intelligent disobedience	library
service dog	foster puppy raiser	people with disabilities	university
paws	abilities	Canine Partners for People with Disabilities	

Before Reading:

- Read *The Right Dog for the Job* and review the “Therapeutic Animals PowerPoint” located on the Museum of disABILITY History website: <http://museumofdisability.org/>.
- Guide students through a picture walk of the book. Tell them that this book is about how puppies are raised to become service dogs.
- Talk about some of the skills that service dogs are taught as students look at the pictures, such as: retrieving various objects, pressing a wheelchair access sign with their paw, and getting on and off a bus.

Reading:

Read the book aloud to the class. Make a list of the various things that Ira needed to learn before he could be partnered with someone who needs assistance. The list can include ideas such as:

- Retrieve various objects
- Learn commands such as: *come, sit, lie down, or stay*
- Press the wheelchair access sign
- Get on and off and ride the bus
- Pull open a door
- Use an elevator
- Sit for a long time without being distracted
- Use a light switch
- Get used to noise
- Wear a harness
- Cross the street
- Display intelligent disobedience

Discuss the importance of these tasks in partnering a service dog with a person with a disability. What needs may a person with a disability have that would require a service dog to perform some/all of these tasks?

Discussion Questions:

Ask students the following questions so that they can reflect and think critically about the story:

Pages 1-3:

Where was Ira born? What are service dogs trained for? Who do service dogs assist? How long does it take puppies to be trained to become service dogs? How are the puppies taken care of by their mother Brea, and their foster puppy coordinator? What is PawsAbilities? What is

Canine Partners for People with Disabilities? How old are the puppies when they are sent to a foster puppy raiser?

Pages 4-5:

What is a foster puppy trainer? What are some of the things service dogs need to learn before they are given to a person with disabilities?

Pages 6-7:

What skill does Kathleen teach Ira? Why might this be helpful for a person with a disability?

Pages 8-9:

What are some of the skills that the puppies work on in preparation to become service dogs? How does Kathleen teach the puppies to press a wheelchair access sign button with their paw?

Pages 10-13:

Why do the puppies have to learn to get on and off a bus? How would this help a person who needs a service dog? Why are service dogs in training taken to places like the farmer's market, the mall, or the library? Why do they need to learn to ride on elevators?

Pages 14-15:

Why does Ira have to be taught to sit, stay, or lie down? Should you pet a service dog in training? Why or why not? How will this be important when Ira works as a service dog?

Pages 16-17:

What does Ira learn when Sandy brings him to her classroom? How does this help him get accustomed to noisy places? What special skill does Sandy teach Ira to do that he'll need to know as a service dog?

Pages 18-19:

What activities do Sandy's students participate in at the end of the school year to say good-bye to Ira? What do the students do on the field trip to Shy Bear Farm?

Pages 20-21:

Where does Ira go during the summer? What sort of things do you think he will learn how to do? What is the new career for Ira? What are puppy socializers?

Pages 22-23:

What does Ira learn how to do when he is trained as a guide dog? How is this different from the skills he learned as a service dog? How long does the training take?

Pages 24-25:

Who is Ira paired with after the training? Who is there for his graduation? Why do they have to learn to work together as a team?

Pages 26-27:

Where does Ira move with Don? Who is Grayson? How does Ira help/guide Don? Do you think this relationship works well? Why or Why not?

Pages 28-29:

Why does Sandy invite Ira and Don to the eighth-grade graduation of her students who worked to train Ira? Why do you think that the students are proud and excited to see Ira working as a guide dog? What is one of the most important tasks that a service animal can perform?

Guided Practice:

Write the following question on the chalkboard and ask students to draw a picture and/or write a response in their journals using information from the book and their own ideas:

- If you worked for a service dog training school, what would you like to do the most? Explain why. Ask students to share these with the class.

Closure:

- Using the information from *Looking Out for Sarah* and *The Right Dog for the Job*, have students compare and contrast the similarities and differences between the training and skills needed for a guide dog versus a service dog
 - (see: attached Compare and Contrast graphic organizer).
- For younger students, make a chart similar to the graphic organizer using a picture of a guide dog and a service dog and ask students to brainstorm ways that they are the same and ways that they are different and write it under the appropriate places on the chart. For grades 2 and 3, have students fill out the graphic organizer in small groups.

Bonus Activity:

- Ask students to find out if there is a training center for service dogs nearby your school. If there is, ask them if they are interested in volunteering.
- Help them determine how to find out the requirements for volunteering. Guide students with using the computer to write letters inquiring about volunteer opportunities to help socialize potential dogs being trained as service dogs.

Bibliography:

Hinshaw Patent, Dorothy. *The Right Dog for the Job: Ira's Path from Service Dog to Guide Dog*. New York: Walker & Company, 2004.