The Early Years Count
Literacy Connection

My Dog Laughs

Written and Illustrated by
Rachel Isadora

Preschool edition

Overview of Book

Kids and dogs make good buddies! The children in this book introduce their best friends by showing us how alike they are, pointing out their differences, sharing how they take care of them, and explaining how they play together and take care of each other. The simple illustrations capture well the everyday life of dogs.

Genre: Picture book

Vocabulary

Books are a rich source of words new to children. Here are some words from *My Dog Laughs* to introduce in your classroom:

graceful	mistake
snuggle	collar
leash	harness

Each time you read the book, choose 2 or 3 words to highlight. Use age-appropriate definitions and/or the illustrations to help children gain an understanding of each word's meaning.

Use these new words throughout the day, reminding the children, "That's a word from our story!"

Connecting with the HighScope Curriculum

COR Advantage 1.5

Social and Emotional Development
Item D *(Emotions)*

Language, Literacy and Communication
Item Q *(Book enjoyment and knowledge)*

Science & Technology
Item DD
(Natural and physical world)

Social Studies
Item FF
(Knowledge of self and others)

Reading Tips

Ask the group, "Who has a dog or knows a dog?" Provide ample time for the comments and sharing. The book goes in a sequence: a child meets, then names, then gets to know, trains, then becomes friends with a dog. In each part, ask questions: What things should people teach a dog? What do dogs need from us? Plan to linger on each section so the children can have plenty of opportunities to talk and share.

Three readings are recommended to familiarize children with the story. Each reading provides an opportunity to introduce new vocabulary words, pose open-ended questions, and engage children in activities that make the story "come alive."

At the end of each reading, display the book in the book area so children can read it on their own.

Throughout the Routine

Refer to the book throughout the day and use new vocabulary words in meaningful ways. Active engagement with the story helps the content come alive.

Paint with mittens on at **Small Group Time**. Pretend they are paws, not hands.

At **Large Group Time**, encourage the children to show each other how to move like the dogs in the book—dance, roll, run, dig, wag their tail…

Play and dance to "Who let the dogs out" at **Greeting Time**. Encourage the children to add 'woofs' and 'barks'.

Around the Room

Highlight the book's content and build on the children's excitement in a variety of locations.

Add stuffed animals, dogs especially, along with other dog props (food and water bowls, sweaters, dog brush) to the **House Area**.

Create a photo wall of the children with their family (or a friend's) pet. Ask the children about them and add dictation.

Add other dog stories to the **Book Area**. Examples include *A Ball For Daisy* by Chris Raschka and *Officer Buckle and Gloria* by Peggy Rathmann.

Open-ended Questions

Enhance active engagement and early critical thinking skills by asking open-ended questions. These questions encourage children to explain why or how things happen, make predictions, or brainstorm possibilities rather than give one "right" answer.

Here are some questions you might ask for *My Dog Laughs*:

What types of dog in the book do you like best? Why?

What is your idea for the best pet? Why?

If you got a new puppy, what would be the first thing you'd teach it?

What do you think some problems might be if you had a dog?

For more information on how to use books and stories with children to enhance your curriculum, contact **The Family Connection:**

website—
www.famconn.org

Facebook—
@famconnsjc

phone—
574-237-9740

@ Home

Since many of the children in our county will have this book at home, use it as a way to further the home-school connection. In your daily contact—in person or by text, email or other notes home—encourage families to share *My Dog Laughs* with their child. Here's a sample message you can send:

While reading *My Dog Laughs* with your child, share any stories or memories you have about dogs in your life. If you currently have a dog in the family, refer to it as you read. Encourage your child to notice similarities between the dogs in the story and your dog. Ask open-ended questions, for example, in the section on training, ask, "How do you think _____ learned how to sit?" or, "I wonder how _____ learned how to be so good on walks?" If there isn't a dog in your family, you might explore with your child, "If you could have a dog some day, what would it be like?" "What do you think some problems would be if you had a dog?"