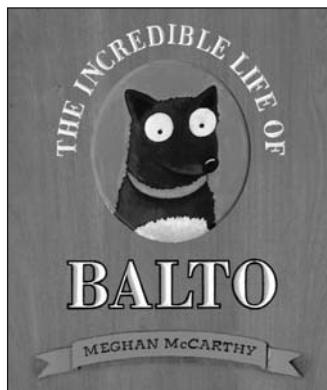


DARING DOGS

Educators Guide

It can be inspirational for children to learn about the heroic deeds of others—even dogs! These four books feature canines from both past and present that have braved treacherous terrain, endured extreme journeys, and faced death for the people they love. Choose the book or books that meet your students' reading abilities and engage them in the enriching activities that follow. Let these courageous and determined dogs show your students the meaning of heroism.



THE INCREDIBLE LIFE OF BALTO

Grades K–3

HC: 978-0-375-84460-7

GLB: 978-0-375-94460-4

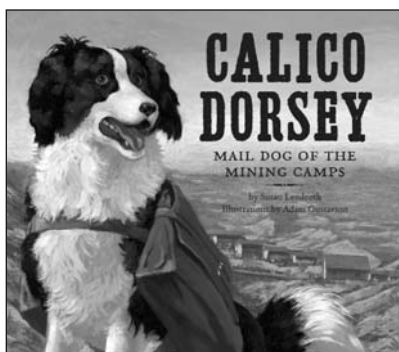


BALTO AND THE GREAT RACE

Grades K–3

PB: 978-0-679-89198-7

EL: 978-0-307-55450-5

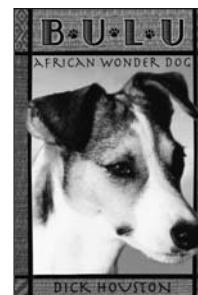


CALICO DORSEY: MAIL DOG OF THE MINING CAMPS

Grades PreK–3

HC: 978-1-58246-318-6

GLB: 978-1-58246-367-4



BULU: AFRICAN WONDER DOG

Grades 4–7

PB: 978-0-375-84724-0

HC: 978-0-375-84723-3

GLB: 978-0-375-94720-9

THE INCREDIBLE LIFE OF BALTO

ABOUT THE BOOK

Yes, Balto did have an incredible life. But most people only know about half of it. What happened to Balto after he completed his famous sled relay? He saw fame and traveled the world, but he came upon hardships as well. Luckily, a brave man and his city stepped forward to change Balto's life forever.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

- Balto became famous because of his feats as the lead dog on his sled team. What is dog sledding? What kind of gear is required? How does a sled work? Use classroom materials to build your own dog sled, and then students can take turns being the musher!
- For a short time, Balto toured in a vaudeville act. What is vaudeville? Have your class perform a vaudeville style show for your school that tells the story of Balto.
- Through the generous donations from the people of Cleveland, Balto was saved and brought to live in the Brookside Zoo. Find a local charity that works to improve the lives of animals. Start a penny drive to collect money for that charity and your class can make a difference, too!



Illustration © 2011 by Meghan McCarthy

BALTO AND THE GREAT RACE

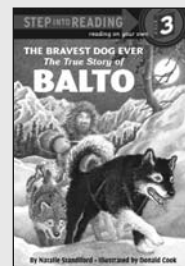
ABOUT THE BOOK

Tragedy has struck the town of Nome, Alaska, and many of the townspeople have become sick with diphtheria. The only cure is an antitoxin located hundreds of miles away in Anchorage. With the help of dog sled teams and mushers, the antitoxin is relayed across the state of Alaska. But will they get there in time to save the people of Nome? Balto and his fellow dogs journey through severe weather and dangerous terrain on a mission to save lives.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

- The lead dog on a dog sled team is essential to the effectiveness of the team. What characteristics must a lead dog like Balto possess? What can we learn from lead dogs? Ask one student to lay down on a large piece of butcher paper, and trace the outline of his/her body. Write "Leader" at the top and have students write different characteristics of leaders inside the body. Post the finished product in your classroom as a reminder of what makes a good leader!
- The relationship between Balto and Kaasen is unique, and largely based on trust. They rely on each other to stay safe on their dangerous journey. Make a maze in your classroom using desks, tables, and chairs. Then pair your students up and blindfold one partner. Ask the other partner to lead the "blind" student through the maze without bumping into any objects. Then partners can switch roles and try the maze again. This activity requires the same kind of trust that Kaasen had in Balto!
- Balto and the other sled dogs face numerous hazards along the trail from Nenana to Nome. Create a wall map of the trail and identify the hazards that the dogs encounter at various points. Then have students make danger signs to post on the map at the site of those hazards. They can even research road signs that alert motorists to dangers and use similar graphics for their map.

Also available:



**THE BRAVEST DOG EVER:
THE TRUE STORY OF BALTO**

Grades 1-3

PB: 978-0-394-89695-3



CALICO DORSEY: MAIL DOG OF THE MINING CAMPS



ABOUT THE BOOK

Dorsey was just a stray dog that wandered onto Al Stacey's porch one day. Or so everyone thought. Dorsey quickly made friends with all of the townspeople, especially Al's daughter, Nellie. The two were inseparable. When Al moves to the new Bismarck Mine to open a general store, he takes Dorsey with him. But the dog cannot bear to be away from Nellie. The journey that he makes between Calico and Bismarck to see his friend is one that will go down in history.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

- Both Calico and Bismarck were known as silver mining towns, and most of the residents worked as miners. What is a mine? How does mining work? Collect small stones from outside and paint them silver. Hide them throughout the classroom or playground and have students mine for silver!
- The general store and post office were essential businesses in the towns of the 1800s. What is a general store? How does a post office run? Use this information to open up your own classroom general store and/or post office. Let the students make items to sell at the store and invite other classes to come shop. Or set up mailboxes in each classroom and allow students to transport mail throughout the school.
- Dorsey was responsible for carrying letters to and from the people of Calico and Bismarck. What do you think all of those letters said? Ask each student to write a letter similar to the ones that were delivered by Dorsey. What was going on in Calico at the time? What was happening at the mine in Bismarck? When the letters are complete, have students place them in a bag labeled "Dorsey" and pretend they are heading off to their destination!

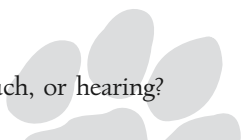
BULU: AFRICAN WONDER DOG



ABOUT THE BOOK

When Anna and Steve moved to a rural area of Zambia, they were warned about getting a dog. There are many dangers for a dog in the African bush, and it would inevitably end in heartbreak. But Anna and Steve didn't listen to this warning, and adopted a dog they named Bulu. They knew there was something different about him. And there was. *Bulu* is a suspenseful and emotional story of a truly unique dog with the heart of a warrior.

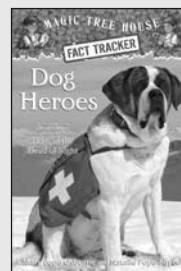
CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

- Before starting the book, ask your students to research the following topics to gather background information for the story.
 - Zambia—climate, geography
 - Chipembele Wildlife Education Center
 - Luangwa Valley
 - Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA)
 - South Luangwa Conservation Society (SLCS)
 - Nyanja language
 - Elefence International
 - Bulu gets himself into lots of trouble while saving Anna, Steve, and the other animals from trouble, too. The book is chock full of exciting events! Use index cards to write down major events in the story—one event on each card. Then challenge your students to put the events in chronological order using the book as reference. Students can even create their own sequencing challenge to give their peers!
 - There are many questions that arise in this book that don't provide answers. Instead they make the reader really think. Divide your class into groups and assign one of these questions to each group. Ask the groups to develop an argument that answers each question. Their response should be supported with evidence from the book. Then set up a debate and allow each group to present their argument, while other classmates pose alternate opinions.
 - Do you think Bulu is related to wild dogs?
 - Can Bulu "think" like humans can?
 - What is Bulu's strongest and most effective sense—sight, smell, taste, touch, or hearing?
 - Does Bulu have a reverence for life? Does he understand death?
- 

USING ALL THE BOOKS TOGETHER

- Many people believe that dogs like Balto, Dorsey, and Bulu are heroes. What is a hero? Host a Hero Day in your classroom and ask students to invite their hero to school to share their story. Or, have students make a presentation about a historic hero. Either way, students can make their heroes feel special and honored for all that they have done!
- Balto, Dorsey, and Bulu are considered heroes because of what they did for the people around them. But why were they so good at their “jobs”? Have students research the breeds of each dog—Siberian husky, border collie, and Jack Russell terrier. What are typical characteristics of each breed and what are they known to be good at? Students can then create a guidebook for prospective dog owners that features everything they have learned.
- These hero dogs were big news in their time! Students can become newspaper journalists and write an article about one of the hero dogs or create a news video. Pretend it is 1925 and they are reporting on the lifesaving efforts of Balto, or it is 1885 and Dorsey is making mail-carrying history, or they are visitors to the African bush to witness the amazing adventures of Bulu. Be sure they include interviews with witnesses in their article or video.
- Each of these hero dogs underwent a journey that made them famous. As a class, create a wall map that traces the path of one of these dogs—Balto’s sled race in Alaska, Dorsey’s route between Calico and Bismarck, and Bulu’s adventures in the bush. You can add geographical landmarks, a compass, and any obstacles that the dog faces along the way.
- There are many characteristics that can be used to describe these hero dogs—determined, intelligent, courageous, brave, loyal, and intuitive. Ask your students to select one of these characteristics and create an acrostic poem for one of the dogs—each letter of the word should start a sentence that describes the accomplishments of the dog. Colorful decorations will make these poems a beautiful display for your classroom!

Look out for:



MAGIC TREE HOUSE FACT TRACKER #24: DOG HEROES

Grades 2–6

PB: 978-0-375-86012-6

GLB: 978-0-375-96012-3

Prepared by Jamie Simon, who has been involved in education for 10 years as both a teacher and an administrator.

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