



TEACHERS' RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED FOR

Lower primary
(ages 5–9; years K to 3)

CONTENTS

1. Plot summary	1
2. About the author	2
3. Writing style	2
4. Key quotes	2-3
5. Themes	3
6. Further reading	4
7. Worksheets	5-7

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** English
- **General capabilities:** Literacy, Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability, Ethical Understanding
- **Cross-curriculum priorities:** N/A

REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- Learning about animals and pets
- Learning about responsibility
- Learning about vision impairment
- Learning about family life

THEMES

- Animals/pets
- Family
- Responsibility
- Disability
- Empathy

PREPARED BY

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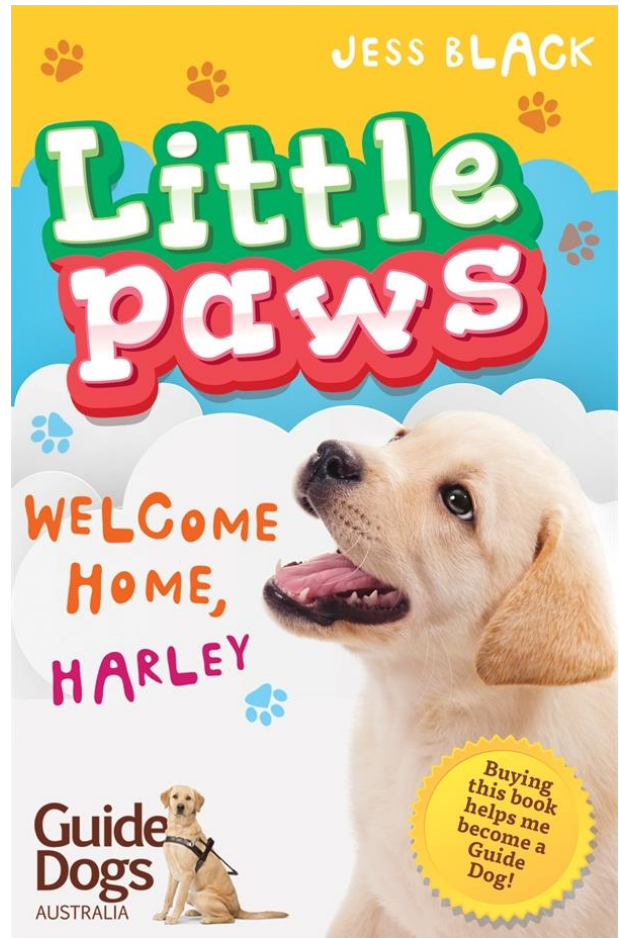
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Little Paws 1: Welcome Home, Harley

Jess Black

PLOT SUMMARY

A fun, heartwarming series about the puppies that train to become Guide Dogs and the families who help raise them. Written in partnership with Guide Dogs Australia.

Lexie and Tom Walker are super excited to meet their new eight-week-old puppy, Harley. Harley is extra special because she's a Guide Dog puppy in training!

While Harley is gorgeous, she's also cheeky and good at causing trouble. In particular, she loves to chew things! It's up to Lexie and Tom, with their Puppy Raising Officer's help, to teach Harley some basic obedience so she can prove to everyone she is Guide Dog material.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jess Black is an Australian author of children's books. She has written over twenty-five junior fiction books and has two picture books coming out in 2016. Jess is the co-author of the hugely successful Bindi Wildlife Adventure series, the RSPCA Animal Tales series and The Kaboom Kid series with David Warner.

ABOUT GUIDE DOGS AUSTRALIA

Guide Dogs Australia provide essential services to children, teenagers and adults who are blind or have low vision. With minimal government funding, Guide Dogs Australia rely on the generosity of individuals and the community.

Guide Dogs Australia utilise their experience with dogs to help improve the lives of people with depression and anxiety through their Pets as Therapy program. We also help the elderly who may be experiencing isolation or loneliness with our Companion Dog program. We are currently piloting an Autism Assistance Dog program for kids.

We are proud to be celebrating 60 years of service in 2017, and are humbled that we have been voted most trusted charity by the public for the last four consecutive years 2013–2016 (*Reader's Digest*).

WRITING STYLE

Little Paws 1: Welcome Home, Harley is written in third person. It features compact sentences and short chapters aimed at early primary school-aged readers. The language in the story includes a lot of simple adjectives, which are used to describe both the puppies' and the human characters' physical characteristics and personalities.

The golden pup waddled towards them. Just like her siblings, she was a fluffy, creamy yellow Labrador with stumpy legs. But what made her really stand out was her coat, which was a richer gold than the other pups. (p. 3)

To convey a sense of excitement and action in the story, the author has employed a heavy use of exclamation marks. This is also intended to help beginner readers to understand the tone and emphasis of certain sentences.

'Her nose is so wet!' Lexie exclaimed as Harley sniffed her.

'That's a sign of good health!' Brett commented. 'She likes you.'

'My turn!' Tom jumped up and down. (p. 17)

In addition, occasional words or phrases have been set in capital letters to add further emphasis.

Monday morning came around too soon.

'LEXIE, WAKE UP!' (p. 53)

Internal thoughts from the main character heighten the reader's connection to the character and also intensify emotions at particular points in the story.

I can't believe we leave today with our very own puppy! *thought Lexie.* (p. 6)

Little Paws 1: Welcome Home, Harley has a very conventional narrative structure, with a clear beginning, middle and ending. There is one overarching problem in the story that drives the action and is resolved by the end of the book. All the characters and their roles are introduced by the author at the start, and the illustrations serve to enhance these descriptions.

Questions

1. What kind of feelings did you have when reading this story? Did you feel happy, sad . . .
2. What was the main problem in the story? How did Lexie and her family fix it?
3. Have you ever had a pet that has misbehaved? How did you try to fix the problem?

Activities

1. Write a list of adjectives you could use to describe Harley.
2. Write a sentence with an exclamation mark at the end that describes how excited you would be to receive a Guide Dog puppy.
3. Partner up with a classmate and take turns playing the roles of a blind or vision impaired person and their 'Guide Dog' or carer. The person who has their eyes open will have to direct the other person around the room and ensure they don't bump into anything. Make sure to stay close by and give clear, easy-to-understand directions.

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

1. What is a Guide Dog?
2. Who do Guide Dogs help?
3. What does the word 'disability' mean?
4. Apart from Guide Dogs, what other things help people who are blind or can't see very well?

PRE-READING VIEWING

1. This video by Guide Dogs Australia helps explain the Puppy Raising stage of a Guide Dog's life. It is perfect viewing for young readers:

<https://youtu.be/GxvR20hHGB8>

KEY QUOTES

1. *'In order to grow into confident and calm dogs, puppies need a stable and loving home. They need to be socialised with people and other dogs. They*



also need to be exposed to as many new sights and sounds as possible.' (p. 10) Do you think this applies only to Guide Dog puppies, or all puppies?

2. *'How can one little puppy make so much mess?'* Lexie shrugged. *'I guess we didn't do a very good job of puppy-proofing the bathroom.'* What are some ways you could puppy-proof a house? Is it similar to the idea of baby-proofing a house?
3. *'Young animals are very cute, but they're also lots of work, aren't they?'* (p. 67) What kind of work is involved with having a pet?

THEMES

Animals and pets

Raising a Guide Dog puppy is very similar to raising any animal or family pet. There is a lot of responsibility and training involved. As Lexie and her family discover, a pet is really another member of the family and people may have to change their routines or roles to accommodate the new recruit!

Family

Harley's story allows an insight into the everyday life of the Walker family. It covers things like day-to-day routines, the parents' jobs, going to school and other normal family activities. We see the Walkers interact with each other in different ways and learn to make room in their family for Harley. At the end of the day, they solve the problem together, as a family. Young readers will no doubt be able to see many similarities in their family life to that of the Walkers.

Responsibility

In the story, the Walker family learn the importance of helping raise a Guide Dog by becoming more aware of their schedules and its impact on Harley. Because she is a new member of the family, they need to make time for Harley so that they can train her to be the best Guide Dog she could possibly be. Over time, the Walkers find ways to organise their lives around Harley, with the kids, Lexie and Tom, taking it in turns looking after their new puppy outside of school hours. Through their growing love and friendship with Harley, they discover that learning to be 'responsible' can be a very rewarding experience.

Disability

In the story, the role of a Guide Dog is discussed and readers will become aware that their purpose is to help people who are blind or vision impaired. The skills they learn as a puppy and young dog will enable them to help these people live as normal a life as possible – in Lexie's words:

This was so much more than having a puppy. They were going to be helping a puppy make a difference to someone else's life. (p. 11)

In learning about blind and vision impaired people, the story creates an opening to discuss other types of disabilities and the different ways in which disabilities can impact people's lives.

Empathy

Lexie's bond with her puppy allows her to recognise the significant effect Guide Dogs have on the lives of blind and vision impaired people. By exposing Harley to various environments and surfaces and giving her basic training, Lexie and her family gain insight into the difficulties blind and vision impaired people face in their day-to-day lives. As the reader's own relationship with Harley grows throughout the story, they too will be able to develop a similar awareness and understanding.



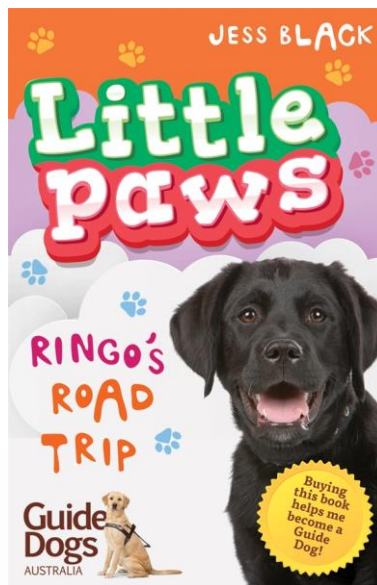
FURTHER READING FROM PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA



Little Paws 2: Meg's Big Mystery
by Jess Black

Lachie Byrnes is proud to be helping his parents raise Meg, a Guide Dog puppy. After living with the Byrnes family for a couple of months, Meg has just started puppy preschool!

Meg is very good at obeying commands – except sometimes sit and stay! But after a big day of training and activities, Meg becomes sick and the Byrnes are forced to make an emergency trip to the Guide Dogs vet surgery. When Meg has to stay overnight, Lachie is determined to use his detective skills to find out what's the matter with his beloved puppy.



Little Paws 3: Ringo's Road Trip
by Jess Black

Six-month-old Guide Dog puppy Ringo can already sit, stay and is full of smiles. His Puppy Raisers, the Hedges family, decide Ringo is ready to join them on a road trip up the coast.

The kids, April and Archie, begin counting down the days until they leave. Ringo's excited too! When they arrive, Ringo is fascinated with the new environment. It seems like dog heaven, until something frightens Ringo and he runs away. Where is Ringo and will the Hedges find him before nightfall?



Little Paws 4: Goldie Makes the Grade
by Jess Black

Guide Dog puppy Goldie has been with the Agresta family since she was eight weeks old. Now she's nearly fourteen months and it's almost time for her to leave and begin her final Guide Dog training.

Abby is so proud of Goldie and is determined to make the most of the time they have left together. But when some cupcakes that Abby's mum has made for the school charity day go missing, it looks like Goldie is the most likely culprit! Can Abby clear Goldie's good name?

WORKSHEET: PUPPY NAMES

Each batch of Guide Dog puppies is named after a letter in the alphabet, so one batch might have pups whose names start with 'J', like Jasper and Jelly, and the next batch will have names starting with 'K', like Kelly and Kai.

Using the letters below, think up some names for these batches of Guide Dog puppies!

LETTER	PUPPY NAMES
A	
C	
D	
F	
H	
K	
L	
M	
P	
R	
S	
W	
Z	



WORKSHEET: PUPPY TO-DO LIST

Congratulations! Your family has just been chosen to be Puppy Raisers. You will soon be receiving an eight-month-old Guide Dog puppy that you will need to look after until it reaches 14 months.

Before you get your puppy, there are lots of things you need to do and buy to make your home ready. As a class, make a list of all the things you need to do or check before your puppy arrives!

CHECK	TASK
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
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WORKSHEET: THE FIVE SENSES

Guide Dogs are trained to help people who are blind or vision impaired – these people have lost use of their sight, which is one of the five senses. Draw a picture of the body part that is used for each sense.

SENSE	DRAWING
Smell	
Sight	
Taste	
Touch	
Sound	



ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	SCHOOL YEAR	RRP	QUANTITY	TOTAL
<i>Little Paws 1: Welcome Home, Harley</i>	Jess Black	9780143781776		\$9.99		
<i>Little Paws 2: Meg's Big Mystery</i>	Jess Black	9780143781790		\$9.99		
<i>Little Paws 3: Ringo's Road Trip</i>	Jess Black	9780143781813		\$9.99		
<i>Little Paws 4: Goldie Makes the Grade</i>	Jess Black	9780143781837		\$9.99		
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