



SUMMARY

Celebrated animal activist and biologist Rob Laidlaw details both the joys and responsibilities of dog guardianship, from choosing where to get a new puppy to making sure your dog's social and physical needs are being met. Along the way, tens of thousands of years of history between humans and dogs come to life. Highlighted throughout

the text are profiles of kids who have gone above and beyond to help canines in need. With informational sidebars, full-color photographs, a glossary and index, and a list of further resources, *The Dog Patrol* is the quintessential handbook for young readers inspired to improve dog welfare at home and beyond.

Rob Laidlaw has devoted his life to protecting animals and empowering others to do the same. He is the founder of several animal protection organizations, including Zoocheck, and an author of many children's books about animal welfare and activism. *No Shelter Here: Making the World a Kinder Place for Dogs* won the OLA Silver Birch Non-Fiction Award and the Hackmatack Children's Choice Award; its companion book, *Cat Champions: Caring for our Feline Friends*, was nominated for the same awards. *Bat Citizens: Defending the Ninjas of the Night* was an Honor Book for the Green Earth Book Award. Rob lives in Toronto, Ontario.

PAIR THIS BOOK WITH:

Books

No Shelter Here: Making the World a Kinder Place for Dogs by Rob Laidlaw

Cat Champions: Caring for our Feline Friends by Rob Laidlaw

Bat Citizens: Defending the Ninjas of the Night by Rob Laidlaw

Online Videos

American Veterinary Medical Association's "Check the Chip Day" video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6K9JLfBQxAg>

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THEMES

Animal Characteristics, Citizenship, Taking Responsibility

BISAC CODES

JNF003060 Juvenile Nonfiction / Animals / Dogs

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JNF071000 Juvenile Nonfiction / Social Activism & Volunteering

JNF007110 Juvenile Nonfiction / Biography & Autobiography / Social Activists

READING LEVEL

Lexile Measure: 1170L | Fountas & Pinnell: W

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Science, Language, Social Studies, Art

THIS GUIDE CONTAINS:

ACTIVITY	MAIN SUBJECT AREA	SPECIFIC SKILLS AND TOPICS
Read-Aloud (including “after-reading” activities)	Reading/Listening Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizing Features of Informational Text
Research Project	Science: Life Systems (or Social Studies: Global Citizenship)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Needs and Characteristics of Living Things Growth and Change in Animals (or Global Citizenship)
Poster Making	Writing Media Literacy Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Text forms Create a media work Community as the subject
Join the Dog Patrol	Social Studies: People and Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Citizenship

THE READ-ALOUD

The initial read will pique students’ interest in advocacy for dogs, paving the way for more in-depth study in the follow-up activities. They will also learn about the features of informational text as a text form. This guide contains prompts that will be appropriate for a range of grade levels. Teachers can skip any that are too simple or too complex for their group.

Learning expectations:

Students will:

- Identify purpose and set goals for specific listening tasks
- Demonstrate an understanding of the ideas and information in oral texts
- Extend understanding by connecting to previous knowledge
- Identify a variety of text features and explain how they help readers understand texts

You Will Need

- The Dog Patrol: Our Canine Companions and the Kids Who Protect Them*
- Chart paper and markers
- Optional: sticky flags
- Blackline master: “Informational Text Features”

How To:

BEFORE READING

Prepare a chart like the one below. You will add to it as you read *The Dog Patrol*.

Features of Informational Text



Decide in advance how much of the book you will read each day. There is a lot of information and students will absorb more of it if it’s presented in manageable chunks. For young children, one spread each day might be enough. Older students may be able to handle a quarter of the book at one sitting. Show the cover and read the title and author. Invite students to recall other books they have read by Rob Laidlaw or other books about dogs. Ask: Do you think this book is fiction (a story) or nonfiction (information)? What clues are there on the cover?

DURING READING

- p. 2 – Read the dedication. Invite a show of hands from anyone who has ever had or helped a dog. Tell them this book is dedicated to them and repeat the sentence “You have truly made a difference in their lives.” Assure all the other students that the book is also dedicated to them if they help a dog in any way.
- p. 3 – Read the “Contents” heading. Discuss its purpose and read a few of the topics in it. Point out that a table of contents is an important feature of informational texts (though some chapter books also have one). Write “Table of Contents” on the “Features of Informational Text” chart.
- p. 4–5 – Give students a purpose for listening. Ask them to listen for how “Keeper” got her name, and why Rob Laidlaw wrote this book.
- p. 6 – Tell students that an introduction usually gives us a general idea of what the book will be about. After reading it, ask students what they expect to read/hear about in this book.
- p. 7 – While reading, point out the sidebar, headings, and photo with caption, and add these features to the “Features of Informational Text” chart. Optional: Use sticky flags to label the features in the book as you go along. After reading the page, see if any students can recall how many domesticated dogs there are, and ask what else students found interesting. Add “Facts” to the “Features of Informational Text” chart.
- p. 8–9 – Tell students that, when reading informational text, it is not

necessary to read the page in left-to-right, top-to-bottom order. Have them practise using the terms “sidebar,” “heading,” and “caption” as they suggest which section they’d like you to read first. You can model this, if necessary, by asking, “Shall I read the ‘Domesticating Russian Foxes’ sidebar first, or the caption on the bottom photo? Shall I read the section about early dogs, or find out what the author means by ‘Too short, too long?’” Point out in passing that the headings are important because they tell us what a section will be about.

- p. 10–11 – Tell students that this spread contains the first of many sections about Dog Patrol activists: kids like them who are making a difference in the lives of dogs. You may wish to mark these sections with bookmarks or sticky flags for easy reference later. Read the headings aloud. On this and future pages, invite students to choose a section, sidebar, or caption that interests them for you to read first. After reading, invite brief discussion. You may wish to start an ongoing list of issues addressed by Dog Patrol kids. p. 16–23 – Ask students to share interesting facts they learned.
- p. 12–13 – Listen for: Why do dogs love to sniff so much? After reading, allow students to explain what they learned about that. Also discuss Willow’s story. Make sure students understand what hospice care is as it relates to humans, and then how it might relate to dogs. Add Willow’s work to your Dog Patrol list.
- p. 14–15 – After reading, invite students to comment on what interested them most.
- p. 16–17 – After reading, ask students why the author might have chosen to present the list on p. 16 the way he did, and how this presentation helps the reader. Add “lists” to your “Features of Informational Text” chart.
- p. 18–20 – After reading, add Analeigh’s and Sam’s work to your Dog Patrol list. Return to the Table of Contents and show students the sections that you have read so far. You are about to begin a new section: “So You

Want a Dog?” Explain that this section will contain things they should consider if they think they might want to get a dog.

- p. 21 – Begin a List of Considerations for people who are thinking about getting a dog.
- p. 22–23 – As you read, discuss each page and invite students to identify any informational text features they notice, then add to your List of Considerations and “Features of Informational Text” chart.
- p. 26 – Fold-out diagram: Invite students to identify similarities and differences between a dog’s body and a human’s. Add “Labelled Diagram” to the “Features of Informational Text” chart.
- p. 34–47 – Before reading, invite students who already have a dog to consider whether they or members of their family do any of the things that the author tells us are good for dogs, or if they do things that are not good for dogs. Ask students to think about how they might have a conversation with their family about changes they can make at home to make life better for their dog. Encourage them to focus most on what they themselves could do differently (such as walking their dog more or playing with their dog in the yard) rather than what other family members should do.
- p. 48 – Read the “Dog Lover’s Pledge” a line at a time and invite students to repeat after you.
- p. 49 – Visit the websites of organizations that help dogs in your area.
- p. 50–51 – Examine the glossary and index, discuss how they help the reader, read a few examples from them, and add Glossary and Index to the “Features of Informational Text” chart.

AFTER READING

- After p. 7 make a timeline of “The Long History of Dogs and Humans,” placing “40,000 Years Ago” on the far left and “Today” on the far right. Ideally, this would be a long, thin strip of paper stretching across one

whole wall of the classroom to give a sense of scale. Before mounting the paper on the wall, fold it in half and then in half again (then unfold) so you have a crease at every 10,000 years mark, making the plotting of events easier. Add the events noted in the second paragraph of p. 7. Add a few accurately spaced historical events for context (e.g. the Great Lakes were formed about 14,000 years ago, woolly mammoths became extinct about 4000 years ago, the Middle Ages ended about 1450 years ago). Search the internet or books for articles about dogs in ancient history, and in more recent history, then add those specific events to the timeline. Finally, ask students about when their dogs joined their families and add these events to the timeline (these will inevitably be crowded tightly together and as close to “Today” as possible).

- As a math activity, have older students compare the world population of dogs to that of cats or other domesticated animals (research will be required) on a bar graph or pictograph. Part of the challenge for them will be to figure out what scale they would need to use to represent a number like 500 million. Working in pairs might be helpful.
- After p. 13–14 compare the five senses of humans to those of dogs.
- After p. 42–43, compare the needs of dogs to another type of animal.
- After p. 48, have students make posters of one sentence of the “Dog Lover’s Pledge” so that the entire pledge is represented at least once.
- After finishing the book: In guided reading lessons, give each student small cards, each bearing the name of a feature of informational text (e.g. glossary, sidebar, labelled diagram, etc.). You may use the “Informational Text Features” blackline master for this. While reading an informational book together (one copy per student), invite students to place the cards on any features they encounter. See who can be the first to place the “Title” card on the cover, the “Table of Contents” card on the appropriate page, and any other text features that occur. Discuss how these features help the reader understand the text.

ACTIVITY 1: RESEARCH PROJECT

Using a gradual release of responsibility model, teacher and students will collaborate to write and present a research project about dogs. Subsequently, students will independently write their own research project on a different topic. By guiding and scaffolding students, it is possible to avoid the heavily plagiarized projects that students so often create. These instructions are for a project focusing on animal needs, characteristics, and behavior, but it can be easily modified to focus on global citizenship.

Learning Expectations

Students will:

- Investigate the needs, physical characteristics, behavior, life cycle, and instincts of different animals
- Gather, sort, and classify information for writing
- Identify and order main ideas and supporting details
- Use a variety of forms (oral, written, graphic) to communicate the results of an investigation

You Will Need

- At least three sources of information about dogs, including *The Dog Patrol*. The other two should include at least one digital source. Here are some examples:
<https://www.aspca.org/pet-care/dog-care/general-dog-care>
<https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/pet-owners/petcare> which includes this child-level video about microchipping and others:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6K9JLFBQxAg>
- Blackline master “Keyword Sheet – Animals in Human Care”

How To:

1. Modeled/Shared Information Gathering: Make a large copy of the “Keyword Sheet” on a chart. Tell students, “I want to share what I have learned about dogs. I would like to write down some information and include some pictures. There is a lot of good information in *The Dog*

Patrol. Should I copy that onto my paper? Why not? I need to write what I have learned in my own way, but I also need a way to collect the information before I start to write. I’m going to use this ‘Keyword Sheet.’” Thinking aloud, model writing something you already know about dogs as a keyword or very short point-form phrase. “I remember that dogs can hear really well so beside ‘ears,’ I am going to write ‘Excellent hearing.’ I know what dogs eat. What word should I write about that? Where should I write it?” Continue to fill in the “Keyword Sheet” with students’ ideas. They probably know that dogs are mammals and are therefore warm-blooded. Optional: invite students up to do some of the recording. Even if students have not shared all they know about dogs yet, proceed to modelling how to record information from a source. Remind students that the project is about dogs’ appearance, behavior, and needs. Use the Table of Contents to find a page that is likely to have that type of information on it, like p. 15. Read “Dogs are omnivorous.” Have a student write “omnivorous” (make sure they know what this means) beside “food” on the “Keyword Sheet.” Later, you might add “nutritious food” (from p. 42) to the same line. Continue reading pertinent sections, listing things like instinctive behaviors and learned behaviors in the appropriate spaces. Not every space needs to be filled in. Even if all spaces are filled in, model consulting at least two more sources to verify the information. Each source that is consulted needs to be recorded in the bibliography. Even young children can learn to make a simple bibliography by writing the book title and author’s name or, in the case of a website, by copying the URL.



- Guided/Independent Information Gathering: In small groups of students of similar reading skill, provide a selection of non-fiction books about animals at students' reading level. Have each student choose a book. They should each have a different book to include a variety of animals (birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and others that are cared for by humans). Distribute "Keyword Sheets." Guide them through the same process you followed in the large group, writing keywords for things they already know, reading small portions of the book (e.g. one sentence), and recording a keyword for each. You could have students take turns reading a sentence aloud and have their peers suggest a keyword and where to record it. Ensure that they do not write an entire phrase from the book. If you see this happen, ask the student to read the book's sentence aloud. Ask, "What is the sentence about?" "What one word (or two to three) will best help you remember that information?" If necessary, suggest a keyword for them. Some students will need more help than others, but most will eventually catch on. Once guided in this way, most students should be able to continue the task independently. Other students in the class can be reading quietly, drawing pictures of their animal (if already chosen), or be otherwise engaged in quiet, independent activities. Once students are well underway in this task, help them access websites as additional sources.
- Modeled/Shared Writing: With the whole class, return to your completed "Keyword Sheet" on dogs. Stress that you will not have your sources open as you do this task, ensuring that you are not tempted to plagiarize. Model, and then invite students to help with transforming keywords into sentences and paragraphs. The sophistication of these will vary with your grade level and particular students. As an introduction, suggest they begin with a general statement about the animal and then give its classification. A simple example: "I like dogs. Dogs are warm-blooded. Dogs are mammals." A more sophisticated example: "Dogs are amazing animals. These warm-blooded mammals are descended from wolves and are very intelligent." Next, choose which section of the "Keyword Sheet" to

write about first. Use the label from the "Keyword Sheet" as a heading (e.g. "Physical Characteristics"). Using a think-aloud strategy, find a key word and develop a sentence about it. For example: "Like other mammals, dogs' bodies are covered in hair." Ask students to suggest which keyword from the "Physical Characteristics" section should be addressed next, and see if any can compose the next sentence. Continue until that section is exhausted and have a student choose which section to write about next. The "Learned Behaviors" section is a great place to include the fact that dogs are helpful, by performing jobs like guiding people with disabilities, or detecting drugs and diseases. Write the next heading to show how to leave a blank line between sections, but leave the task unfinished.



- Guided/Independent Writing: Invite small groups to bring their completed "Keyword Sheets" to a table and assist them in beginning to write their draft, just as you did in the large group. If a group of weaker students does not seem ready for this task, take them to your unfinished dog project and model more of it, eventually inviting them to share in the composition. Because you are doing the shared writing with just the small group, they are more likely to be engaged. Then try the guided lesson again. Continue guiding groups until they can proceed independently. On your own time, rewrite and finish the dog project on paper that is the same as what your students are using. You will use this to model the visual presentation.

- Editing: Use a familiar format to have students edit their drafts (e.g. individual conference, peer editing, self-editing with a familiar checklist) and rewrite or type if appropriate. For very young students, the teacher can type the projects.
- Modeled/Shared Graphic Presentation: With the whole class, demonstrate how to cut the project into sections, including the bibliography, and mount each one on construction paper, trimming the edges so that a frame of colour is showing. Do the same with any drawings. Demonstrate how to make a title block and the student's name using bubble letters, stencils, or computer-made letters. Demonstrate how to make decorative embellishments such as paw silhouettes. Finally, demonstrate laying everything out on mounting paper, such as Bristol board, and moving them around until a visually pleasing arrangement is achieved before committing to gluing them in place. If the technology is available, you may prefer to model creating a slide show or other digital presentation form.
- Independent/Guided Graphic Presentation: Most students will be able to do the graphic presentation without small group guidance, but if you notice any students struggling with the task, pull a small group aside and guide them through it.
- Modeled/Shared Oral Presentation: With students, develop a checklist of criteria for a successful oral presentation. Model presenting small bits of the dog project in both successful and unsuccessful ways (e.g. making eye contact vs. reading the project with nose buried in the paper; talking knowledgeably vs. reading haltingly). Have students evaluate your success. Have volunteers come forward and do the same.
- Independent Oral Presentation: Have students present their projects to the class. Evaluate using the checklist of criteria you developed. You may also wish to evaluate their graphic presentation and actual writing for assessment in a variety of subjects.



ACTIVITY 2: POSTER MAKING

Students will research and advertise local events that help dogs.

Learning Expectations

Students will:

- write a variety of texts using a variety of forms (poster)
- identify conventions and techniques appropriate to the form chosen (poster) for a media text they plan to create; produce media texts for specific purposes and audiences using a few simple media forms and appropriate conventions and techniques
- create two-dimensional works of art that express personal feelings and ideas that have the community as their subject

You Will Need

- *The Dog Patrol: Our Canine Companions and the Kids Who Protect Them*
- A well-made poster advertising an event, not necessarily involving dogs
- Internet access
- Poster paper; drawing and coloring materials (or digital equivalents)

How To:

1. Show a poster and ask students to enumerate its features. Examples: topic, details, time, date, place, pictures, color, a variety of font styles and sizes, use of all-capitals
2. On arrow-shaped cards, write each of these features and attach the arrows to the poster with masking tape, pointing each one to the corresponding feature on the poster.
3. Together with your class, research dog welfare events coming up in your area. An example might be a free spay/neuter clinic given by a local shelter or animal hospital. Find out as much information as possible about the event and list the facts on a large chart.
4. Tell students that they will make a poster for the local dog event. Remind them to include all the features seen on the sample poster. Emphasize that they

should aim to make the most important information in the largest font and make the whole poster eye-catching. Share some tricks to help them get their text uniform, such as drawing lightly on both sides of a ruler and making capital letters reach both lines, and printing the middle letter of a word in the middle of a space and filling in the rest of the word from there to center it. Pictures can be made on separate paper, cut out and glued onto the poster if desired.

5. Hang the posters around the school and community (ask the event organizer's permission). Choose (or have students vote on) one excellent poster to scan and post on the school website.
6. If possible, attend the event you have advertised. Afterwards, students could write an article about the event for the school or local newspaper.
7. Hold a fundraiser to support the event.



ACTIVITY 3: JOIN THE DOG PATROL

An abundance of inspiration is sure to get your class thinking of ways they too can join the Dog Patrol.

Learning Expectations

Students will:

- investigate some issues of political, social, economic, and environmental importance, their impact on the community, and responses to the issues
- create a plan of action to address a social issue of local, provincial/territorial, and/or national significance

You Will Need

- *The Dog Patrol: Our Canine Companions and the Kids Who Protect Them*
- *Cat Champions: Caring for our Feline Friends* by Rob Laidlaw
- *No Shelter Here: Making the World a Kinder Place for Dogs* by Rob Laidlaw
- *Bat Citizens: Defending the Ninjas of the Night* by Rob Laidlaw
- Stories of other young activists such as Greta Thunberg, Ryan Hreljac and Craig Kielburger

How To:

1. In *The Dog Patrol*, re-read all the sections that highlight members of the Dog Patrol (p. 11, 12, 19, 20, 22, 25, 28, 32, 33, 40, 41, 44, and 47). Discuss the ways in which these young people took action, even though some were quite young.
2. Read about other animal helpers in three other books by Rob Laidlaw: *Bat Citizens*, *Cat Champions*, and *No Shelter Here*.
3. Search current events and social media for inspiration on ways to help dogs or other animals. Some examples:
<https://www.hsno.org/deck-the-howls-2019/>
<https://www.torontohumanesociety.com/education-and-advocacy/humane-education>
<https://humanebroward.com/programs/kids-teens/ways-kids-can-help/>

Also call your local humane society or shelter to see what they need (for example, they might collect used towels or blankets) and if there is a way your class might help.

4. Read stories of other young people who became activists at a young age, some of whom founded international aid organizations. Some examples:
<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/giving-life/youth-activists-changing-the-world/>
<https://time.com/person-of-the-year-2019-greta-thunberg/>
Ryan Hreljac in *Ryan and Jimmy: And the Well in Africa that Brought Them Together* by Herb Shoveller
Craig Kielburger at <https://www.we.org/we-movement/our-founders/craig/>
5. Visit some of the websites listed under “Further Resources” on page 49 of *The Dog Patrol* for more ideas.
6. Invite your class to recall all the research you have done and brainstorm a list of possible projects. Do not begin to assess the viability of each until the brainstorming is completed. Together with your class, decide which project(s) your class will undertake and make a plan to do so.

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- <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/arts18b09curr.pdf>

Table of Contents	Heading	Sidebar
Photo with Caption	List	Glossary
Index	Fact	Map
Chart	Labelled Diagram	Sub-heading
Timeline	Bold Print	Title

Keyword Sheet - Animals in Human Care

Animal: _____ Name: _____

Classification Warm-blooded cold-blooded mammal fish reptile bird amphibian invertebrate	
Physical Characteristics Size _____ Color _____ Body Covering _____ Eyes _____ Ears _____ Nose _____ Mouth _____ Tongue _____ Teeth _____ Legs _____ Tail _____ Other _____	
Life Cycle Babies _____ _____ _____ _____ Later Changes _____ _____ _____ _____	
Instincts _____ _____ _____ _____	Learned Behaviors _____ _____ _____ _____
Needs Food _____ Water _____ Exercise _____ Social _____ Shelter _____ Health Care _____	
Bibliography 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____	