

# Teacher Guide and Resource Material

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## Mountain Mutts - Joy's Tale

Story and Photographs  
by  
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# Introduction

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Dear friend, teacher or parent:

All readers can enjoy a picture book on their own. Engaging pictures help the reader find something new each time they look at the book and become more interested in books. Picture books can enrich your curriculum by serving as an introduction for broader and deeper discussions on a wider range of topics.

This corresponding guide to the picture book *Mountain Mutts—Joy’s Tale* caters to different learning styles, can help start conversations and explore ideas like diversity, kindness, death and fear among many other topics.

Many resources were used to compile this guide. Thank you “momjunction.com” for the dog drawing tutorials and “kolchakpuggle.com” for the dog treat recipes.

Kind comments, suggestions, and questions are always welcome.

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## Conversation

The very nature of *reading a picture book* invites conversation ...

For encouraging children to better engage in oral reading and interpreting illustrations, consider asking age-appropriate questions such as:

- Why is Spring so sad?
- Why doesn’t Spring want to play with Joy?
- Who is Spring remembering?
- Do you think Spring and Winter were good friends? Why?
- How do you think Joy feels when Spring ignores her?
- Do you think Spring is trying to hurt Joy’s feelings?
- Have you ever felt sad?
- What could you do to feel better?
- Have you had a friend who was sad?
- What could you do to help a sad friend feel better?

How can you tell when Spring is feeling better?  
Does Spring need Joy? How does Joy need Spring?  
Are Spring and Joy happy to have each other as friends? How can you tell?

## Joy's Tail

Joy has a broken tail. Does Spring care that Joy's tail is broken? Does Spring even take notice of Joy's different tail? Does Joy's broken tail keep her from being happy or having fun? Some people wear glasses, hearing aids, use crutches or have a service dog and like everyone they want friends and to have fun. Thoughtfulness and kindness always correct. Were Joy and Spring kind and thoughtful to each other – show examples.

## Death

Death is not a subject that we usually discuss. Here are a few open-ended questions that may be useful in conversation with your students. Is it only sad that Winter died? Are there any thoughts on what might have happened? Have you ever had a pet die? How did you feel about your pet being gone forever? Death is hard to understand, isn't it? Have you ever had someone you love die? What do you want to talk about concerning death?

## Vocabulary and Spelling Words

Try a word-matching game where the students match the word to its definition:

**Beloved** – much-loved, adored, favorite

**Frequently** – repeatedly, regularly, often

**Miserable** – unhappy, sad, despondent

**Despondent** –: hopeless, downhearted, downcast

**Appetite** – hunger, desire for food, need to eat

**Contemplates** – considers, thinks about, ponders

**Marvelous** – wonderful, amazing, splendid

**Possibilities** – promise, potential

**Exploring** – searching out, examine, learn

**Companion** – friend, pal, buddy

**Prances** – move with high springy steps, exaggerated or enlarged movements

## Maps

Maps are an educational tool to help develop motor skills: Drawing supports a child practice holding a writing tool, using hand-eye coordination and developing the muscles in their hands and fingers - Map reading and drawing are important skills to learn in geography - Maps also help us understand distances so that we know how far away one thing is from another

Have students draw a map from the stairs on the mountain cabin's deck (where Spring and Joy are pictured in the book) down to the river

## Comprehension Questions

### Cause and Effect

What is *Mountain Mutts* about...

### Compare and Contrast

Explain some **differences** and some of the **similarities** between where you live and where the dogs in *Mountain Mutts* live.

### Making Inferences

Even when it has been quite awhile since Joy's arrival, Spring still ignores the puppy. What keeps Spring from accepting Joy's offer of friendship? What keeps Joy from just giving up on Spring?

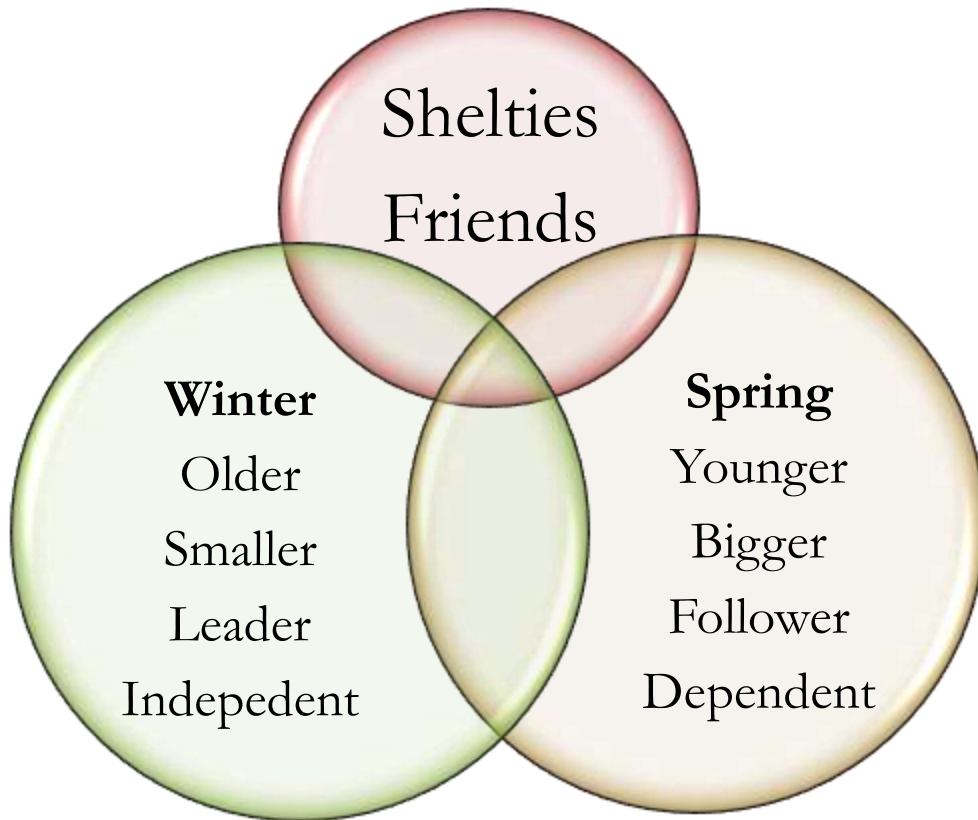
Explain the relationship - **the main idea** - between Winter and Spring and between Spring and Joy

What do you think... **predicting**: Do you think that Spring and Joy will have other adventures? What might they do together? Might another dog enter their lives? How might that happen?

## Timeline

Timelines to help students organize information in a chronological sequence so that they can better understand growth, change, recurring events, cause and effect, and key events of significance, have students draw a timeline of *Mountain Mutts*—whatever works better: in groups or solo.

## Venn diagram



## Writing

Facts vs. Opinions

A fact is a statement that can be proven true or false. An opinion is an expression of a person's feelings that cannot be proven. Opinions can be based on facts or emotions, and sometimes they are meant to mislead others.

An adult can read aloud asking children if the statement is a fact or opinion and why.

# Information about shelties

Shelties are good dogs. Does this mean they are a good dog for everyone? NO, it depends on what you want and the kind of lifestyle you have:

Shelties are herding dog. Developed in the rugged Shetland Islands, off the coast of Scotland, near the Arctic Circle, the Shetland Sheepdog was bred to be an agile, alert, and intelligent herder. Shelties love having a job to do and learn easily. They need more exercise than many other smallish dogs. They may nip at their owner's feet when walking, which can be annoying.

Because shelties are so smart and trainable, they succeed in almost everything they try. Shelties are used as medical alert dogs, as well as service and therapy dogs. They also excel in dog sports, including rally, agility, herding, and obedience. Shelties rank among the top canine competitors in the world. Shelties would not be a good match for a couch potato or a city dweller.

They are playful, affectionate, and devoted. It's not unusual for a sheltie to follow family members around everywhere they go, just to be close - some people might find that annoying.

Shelties become unhappy when left for long periods of time without companionship, and unhappiness can translate to neurotic behaviors, destructive chewing, or chronic barking. Shelties can be reserved with strangers, although not aggressive. Shelties bark a lot - some see it as a problem, others may consider the barking a positive when working and herding and as a watch dog.

Shetland Sheepdogs are usually seen as beautiful. The flowing coat comes in several colors, including various shades of sable, black, and blue merle. The long fur needs regular brushing and does shed a lot. The long, refined head and expressive eyes combine to create a gentle, intelligent expression that can melt hearts.

## Reading comprehension

Who said what - the character is talking and the students have to remember which character:

“Here, take my chew bone. Don't you like it? It's great for chewing.”

“Come on! You can do it! There's a lot of exploring for us to do.”

“I did it! I did it by myself!”

“Oh my, what a mess I've gotten myself into!”

“It's treat time. Let's go home and tell our people.”

# Math and Technology

## CONSULT YOUR VETERINARIAN BEFORE CHANGING YOUR PETS DIET

Cooking / contact your vet to verify: look on the internet for simple, homemade, healthy dog treat recipes - this activity requires parent / teacher supervision – here are two options:

### Chicken Dog Treats (Heart shapes are optional)



#### **INGREDIENTS**

Silicone Heart Mold (some are good in the oven or the freezer)

1 cup cooked, finely diced chicken

1/2 cup rice, cooked & mashed

3 tablespoons rice flour

1 tablespoon parsley

1 egg

#### **INSTRUCTIONS**

Preheat oven to 350F

Mix together all ingredients and stir well.

Spoon into silicone molds – or spoon onto cookie sheet

Bake for 20 - 30 minutes, until tops are golden brown.

Allow to cool and remove from molds.

#### **NOTES**

Store in the fridge for up to 5 days or in the freezer for up to 3 months



## No Cook Frozen Apple Dog Treat Recipe

### Ingredients

2 Apples

1 Cup Greek Nonfat Plain Yogurt

Water

### Supplies

Measuring Cups

Knife

Cutting Board

Ice cube tray

Blender

This recipe makes 16 treats if using a standard ice cube tray.

### Instructions

1. Slice 2 apples into small pieces but remove the seeds and the core.
2. Mix the apple slices, yogurt, and a splash of water in your blender and blend until you get a liquid consistency.
3. Pour the mixture into an ice cube tray and freeze for a few hours or until hard.

Recommended feeding is only one “cube” at a time. You can put the left over treats into a Tupperware container and store them in the freezer.

## Draw a dog

Drawing plays a big role in our cognitive development. It can help us learn to write and think creatively, develop hand-eye co-ordination, hone analytic skills, and conceptualize ideas.

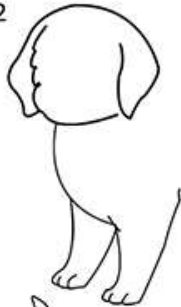
Drawing means they are constantly thinking or feeling something, so what they choose to draw, the patterns they use, and the story they try to portray helps them build in their knowledge and visual skills. Their fine motor and coordination skills increase as well.

### Tutorial 6: How To Draw A Cute Puppy

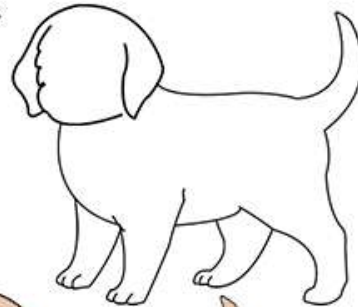
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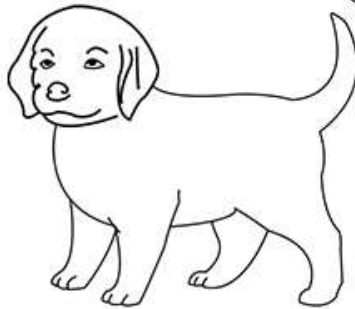
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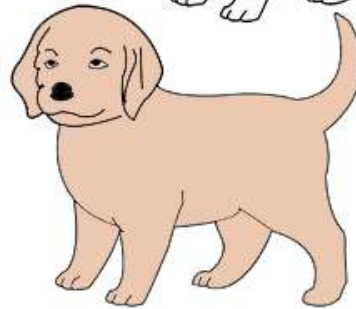
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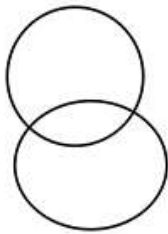


Color it :)

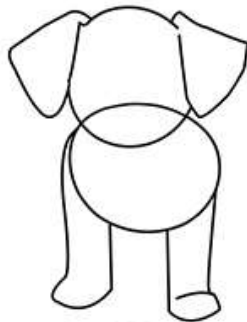


### Tutorial 3: How To Draw A Dog Sitting Down

3.1



3.2



3.3



3.4



3.5



Color it :)



# Student Play

Acting is beneficial to child development on many levels. The simple roleplay allows the students to explore feeling and express emotion. The play needs three students and a narrator, usually the teacher. For props, you will need a ball and a stick.

The opening scene is playtime with two friends: Winter and Spring, playing with a ball.

**Winter:** Lets play ball.

**Spring:** That is lots of fun. You always have great ideas!

[ play together]

**Winter:** I'm hungry, time for a snack.

**Spring:** Me too.

**Winter:** Let's rest. [rest together – Spring with a 'paw' ontop Winter]

**Narrator:** Winter dies. [Wintern turns and moves off stage]

**Spring:** [looking very sad] Where is Winter? I'm so sad. My friend is gone. [big sad sigh]

[Joy jumps on stage, very happy]

**Joy:** Will you play with me?

[Spring turns away from Joy, shaking head, no]

**Joy:** I have a stick, we can play fetch.

[Spring continues to be sad, shaking head, no]

**Joy:** OK, I'll just wait till you feel better.

[Joy starts playing alone with a stick and Spring watches for awhile, then moves away from Joy.]

**Joy:** [playing with a ball]

**Spring:** Can I play with you Joy?

**Joy:** Yes, let's play together.

**Spring:** Can we be friends?

**Joy:** I will be your friend.

**Narrator:** The story is just the beginning.

**The story is just the beginning.**

