

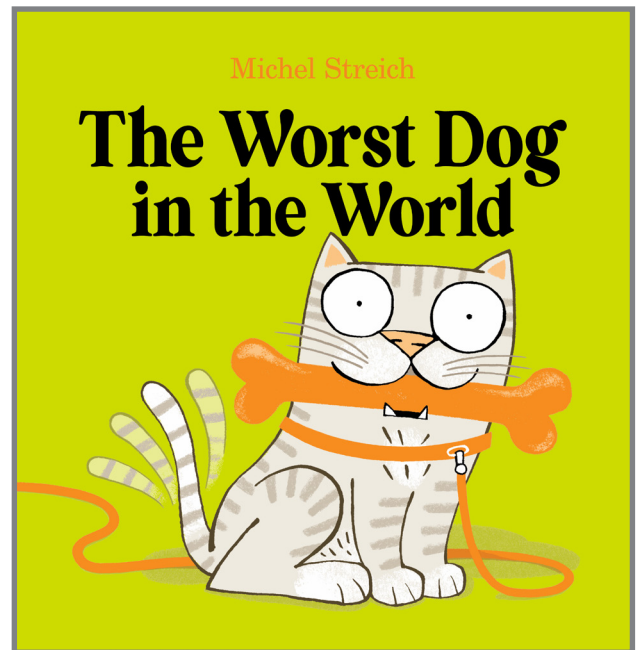
The Worst Dog in the World

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower Primary



SYNOPSIS

I really, really, really, really wanted a dog. But I got Piper...the worst dog in the world. Piper doesn't know how to play fetch, she doesn't want to learn any tricks, she hates being in the car and frolicking at the beach with the other dogs. She loathes baths and really doesn't want a tummy tickle! Luckily though, as soon as Piper feels ignored she starts returning a little love...and that's when we realise what she really likes to do...

ABOUT THE CREATOR

Michel Streich started his artistic career in his native Germany. He worked as a freelance illustrator in London for several years, finally basing himself in Australia in 2000. Michel works mainly as an editorial and book illustrator. His drawings have featured in publications such as the *Times*, the *Financial Times*, the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Australian Financial Review*.

Michel lives in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney.

STUDY NOTES

- Before reading the story, as a class discuss the book cover and title. Some things to include in your discussion could be:
 - What can you see happening on the cover of the book?
 - Who do you think is the main character?
 - Can you see the dog mentioned in the title?
 - What does the picture of the dog make you think of?
 - Why do you think the dog might end up being the worst dog in the world?
 - What do you predict might happen in the story?
- What are all the ways that the pet in the book behaves, that aren't very doglike?
- Before reading the last pages, as a class, discuss what animal the little girl in the book actually got, and how can we tell.
- How many different behaviours can you think of, that dogs and cats have? Make a two column list with 'dogs' on the left and 'cats' on the right and write down all the behaviours you can think of.
- How many students in your class have dogs, how many have cats, how many have both and how many have neither? As a class, create a survey form to collect this information, and survey your own class. Separate into pairs or small groups, and have each group survey one other class in the school to create a set of data for your whole school. As

a class, discuss the different ways of displaying all the data you have collected, and decide on the best format for a graph or chart.

- Create a graph or chart for your own class's data set, and then in your groups create another graph for the other class you surveyed. Collate all the data for the whole school and create a master graph or chart to display the entire data-set at once.
- As a class, look at all the different graphs and charts you have created, and discuss what they can tell you about pet ownership at your school. In your discussion you should also consider what they don't tell you about pet ownership, and talk about how you would have to modify your survey if you wanted to collect a more comprehensive set of data about pet ownership as a school.
- Design the ultimate toy for either a cat or a dog. Think about all the things dogs and cats like, and discuss all the ways that they behave in the story before you start your design, as well as the ways you have seen them behave in your home or those of friends or family. Consider the materials you would use to create your toy, and how durable they would need to be when being played with. Carefully draw your design on A4 paper and label all the different parts of it, including notes on materials and construction techniques as well as which features would appeal to your chosen animal and why.
- In small groups brainstorm the plot line for a companion book to this one, explaining several different ways that a dog might manage to be a very bad cat.
- What is the funniest part of the book? Why do you find it funny? Draw a picture of what you found to be the funniest scene in the story, and caption your picture with a description of what is happening.
- In your own words, retell the key points of the story, and illustrate your retelling with artwork inspired by the illustrations in the book.
- The story is all about how a cat makes a very bad dog, because they behave so differently. But compared to some other animals like snakes or fish, cats and dogs are actually fairly similar. In small groups or as a class think of as many different ways in which cats and dogs are a lot like each other. Think about what they look like, how they behave and their roles in peoples lives.
- Can you turn the word 'DOG' into the word 'CAT' by changing one letter at a time in four steps or less? (Example Answers: DOG -> DOT -> COT -> CAT or DOG -> COG -> COT -> CAT)
- Can you tell what the little girl is feeling at the different points in the book? Look carefully at the pictures of her as you read the book again, and as a class, talk about how you think she feels during each scene and why. How do you act when you are feeling the way she does? Draw a picture of yourself acting out one of the feelings that the little girl experiences in the story, and caption your picture with the name of the emotion.