

Marley

A DOG LIKE NO OTHER

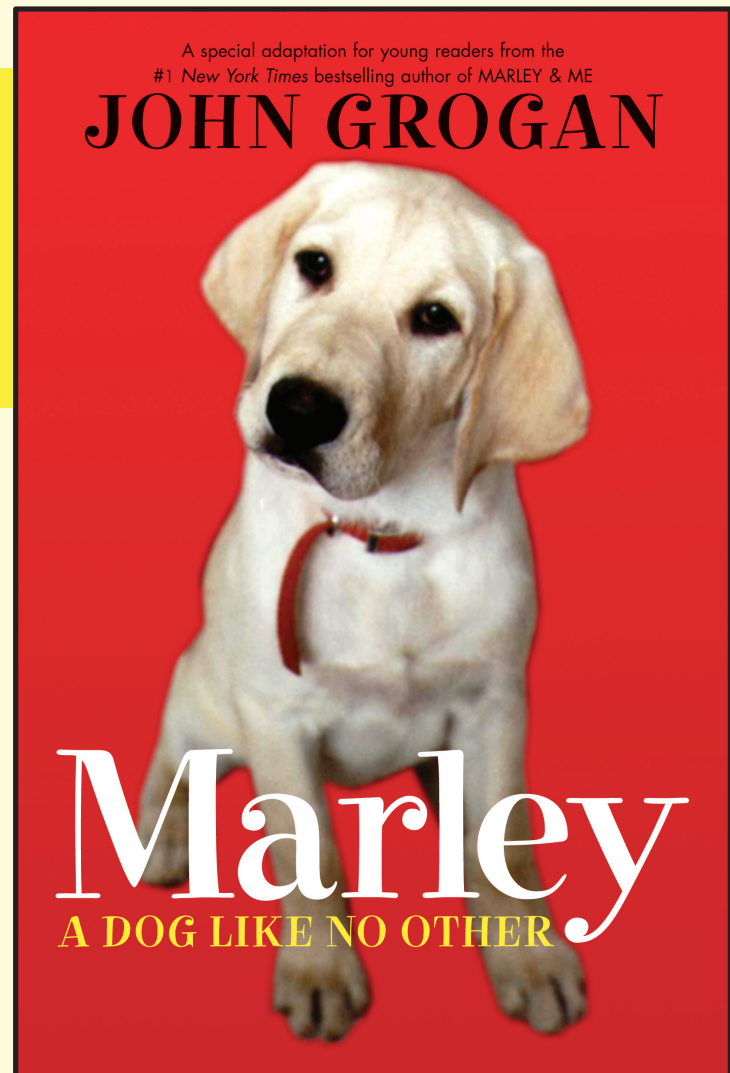
by John Grogan

About the Book

Marley is definitely a dog like no other! This huge Labrador retriever takes over the house, the neighborhood, and the hearts of the Grogan family members, who try (mostly in vain) to train and accommodate their overactive, disobedient, and utterly lovable dog. Over the course of thirteen years, Marley wreaks havoc, panics during storms, stars in a movie, swims in the ocean, eats in a restaurant, and even rides on a toboggan—all with disastrous results. Despite these constant upheavals, Marley teaches his family what is most important in life: loyalty and unconditional love.

Discussion Questions

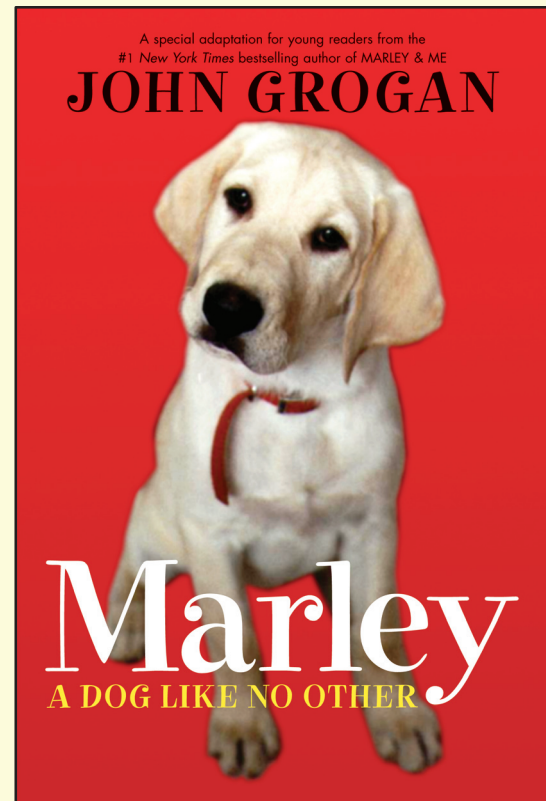
1. After reading *Marley: A Dog Like No Other*, how would you select a dog as a pet? What factors should you consider? What criteria does John Grogan's father suggest he use? Do you agree? Why was Shaun a perfect dog?
2. What words would you use to describe Marley? Make a list of ten adjectives and compare them with those of your classmates.
3. What are the greatest obstacles and challenges to owning a pet? Do you think John and Jenny should have been wary about buying Marley when they learned he was on "clearance"? Should they have considered returning Marley to the breeder or finding a new home for him? What would you have done?
4. How do you housebreak or potty train a dog? What techniques does John use? What do you have to do for a cat?
5. What is obedience training? Why does John take Marley to obedience training? What are the results? Do you know a dog that constantly misbehaves?
6. What is Marley afraid of? What does he do when he feels scared?
7. Which one of Marley's adventures do you find the most amusing? Why?
8. Which one of Marley's mishaps do you think is the worst or most embarrassing? Why? Have you ever had an embarrassing or destructive moment with your pet?



Marley: A Dog Like No Other Teaching Guide

Discussion Questions (continued)

9. As you read, make a note of the similes used by the author to describe Marley. Discuss these comparisons with your classmates. Which one is your favorite?
10. Which foods should not be given to dogs and why? If you have a dog, which foods do you feed him or her?
11. Do you think John and Jenny should have been worried that a dog like Marley might cause harm to their babies, perhaps out of jealousy, since Marley was their “baby” first? Can jealousy be a problem with pets? Does Marley ever cause a problem with the Grogan children?
12. Marley may be “unteachable,” but what lessons about life and values does he impart to his family? The Grogans thought Marley was worth all the years of chaos. Do you? Discuss with your class.
13. What is bloat? What other ailments are serious for dogs? How can you tell when a dog is growing old? What changes can be observed? How long do dogs live?
14. After everything John and Jenny went through with Marley, if you were them, would you bring Lucky home at the end of the book?



Extension Activities

1. **Discover the Breed for You.** Ask each student to choose a dog breed that interests him or her and prepare an illustrated report to share with the class. Students should include size and physical attributes, habits, personality traits, and requirements for owning the breed. Some breeds are used to help blind, deaf, and physically impaired individuals, while others comfort people in nursing homes or assist law enforcement. Ask your students to investigate the jobs dogs can have. Make a large photographic display of the different breeds and discuss the pros and cons of ownership. Find out which breeds of dogs your students have. Ask if any of your students have seen the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, whether in person or on television.
2. **Neutering and Spaying.** Ask students what it means to have a pet neutered or spayed. When should this action be done? Why is it a responsible action for a pet owner? Visit a local animal shelter and talk with the employees about the severity of the problem of unwanted pets. What are puppy mills?
3. **Pet Story.** Ask each student to write a story about his or her pet or the pet of a friend or relative. The story could be amusing, endearing, or informative. Encourage students to include a photograph or drawing of the animal with their stories. Then have students share their stories and pictures with the class. Why are pets important to their owners? What roles do they play in the lives of humans?
4. **Star Dogs.** Compile a class list of movies and novels featuring dogs that your students are familiar with. Ask students to select a dog movie to watch or a dog book to read on their own. Have them compare and contrast the dogs in these movies and stories with Marley.



Collins

An Imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers

For exclusive information on your favorite authors and artists, visit www.authortracker.com.

To order, please contact your HarperCollins sales representative, call 1-800-C-HARPER, or fax your order to 1-800-822-4090.

Teaching guide prepared by Linda Z. Hamilton, Ph.D., Leawood, Kansas. 01/10