

Lesson Plan Title: Life Lessons from Dogs

**Developed by:** Heidi Sloan, 2018 Teacher on the Trail™

**Discipline / Subject:** Language Arts

**Topic:** Reading or listening comprehension, vocabulary, writing, character education

**Grade Level:** 2nd – 8th

**Resources / References / Materials Teacher Needs:**

Copies of *Alaska's Dog Heroes* by Shelley Gill

[Alaska's Dog Heroes](#)

**Lesson Summary:** Students will listen to and/or read *Alaska's Dog Heroes* by Shelley Gill. They will then have a list of life lessons and match one or more life lessons to the story of the dog hero or think of life lessons learned from their own dog.

**Standards Addressed: (Local, State, or National)**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.2, 3.3

Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.2

Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

CCSS.ELA.Literacy.W.7.1.8

Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.3

Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).

**Learning objectives:**

1. The student will be able to analyze the story and match it to one or more life lessons, comprehending the main idea of the story, and being able to justify his/her thinking.

**Assessment:**

**Teacher will determine whether the student can justify the life lesson chosen with details from the story.**

Student discussion  
Student journaling  
Student Google Slides

**Procedural Activities**

1. Read aloud one of the *Alaska's Dog Heroes* stories during read aloud time.
2. Students have a list of life lessons.
3. Discuss from the story which life lessons were taught by that dog. This is a good avenue for discussing new vocabulary.
4. This can be a daily activity for Morning Meeting or language arts/read aloud time. It can also be a writing prompt.
5. For older students, this could be a group activity where students read one story daily and come up with a summary and life lessons list by searching "Life Lessons" for lists online.

**Materials Students Need:**

List of life lessons  
Notebook or composition book in which to write

**Technology Utilized to Enhance Learning:**

- Students create a Google Slides presentation with one life lesson per slide, adding in images of dogs or Iditarod teams

**Other Information:** With older students researching life lesson lists online, there would be opportunities for debate on which life lessons are worthy to adopt.

**Modifications for special learners/ Enrichment Opportunities:**

As an enrichment opportunity, ask students to do the same with a book or article they have recently read; "What life lessons did you glean from the characters or events in the book?"

A modification for special learners might be to act out one of the stories and then role-play a similar situation that could happen in school. For example, "How can lead others to safe places?"