



A guide to using *Stubby: A True Story of Friendship* by Michael Foreman in the classroom

Including lesson ideas for Key Stages 1 - 2

The astounding true story of Sergeant Stubby, the dog who served in the First World War, brought to life by award-winning master storyteller Michael Foreman

Stubby was a brave soldier, a loyal friend... and a dog. From an army training camp to the trenches in France, this is the incredible true story of Sergeant Stubby, the dog who served bravely in the First World War, sniffing out gas attacks, catching spies and winning the hearts of his fellow soldiers.

Introducing the story

- Teacher will introduce the book to the children and encourage discussion based on the front cover.

What do you think the story may be about?

Does the picture remind you of anything you have seen before?

Who is the author/illustrator of the book?

What is the title of the book?

Who do you think Stubby is?

- Teacher will read the blurb to the children and encourage discussion. Teacher will explain the vocabulary to the children (courage, bravery and loyalty) using some examples from their everyday life.
- Teacher will read the story to the children; drawing their attention to the pictures and asking questions based on these:

Where are the soldiers going?

Why do you think it is hard work being a soldier?

Why do the dogs visit the soldiers?

What does the dog Stubby look like?

What tricks did the soldier teach him to do? Have you ever seen a dog do tricks before? Why do you think the soldier brought Stubby with him on the train?

- Teacher explains some of the vocabulary in the story:

Mascot: a person, animal, or object that is believed to bring good luck.

Regiment: a large group of soldiers.

Salute: to make a formal sign of respect to someone (right hand up to the side of the head).

Trench: a deep hole dug by soldiers.

Years 1 - 2

Exploring the Story

- Teacher will continue to read the story; drawing the children's attention to the pictures and asking questions based on the story:

How do you think Stubby and the soldiers are feeling, as they get closer to the war?

What makes Stubby a good guard dog?

How does Stubby's amazing sense of smell help to protect the soldiers?

Why does the soldier feel bad that he brought Stubby to the war?

What do the army doctors do to Stubby, when he is injured?

What do the local ladies make for Stubby?

Why do you think all the soldiers are happy that the war is over?

Why do you think Stubby is given a special position in the Victory Parade?

Would you like Stubby to be your pet dog? Why/ Why not?

- Teacher will explain to the children that a special day: 'Armistice Day' is on the 11th of November. It marks the day World War One ended, at 11am on the 11th day of the 11th month, in 1918. Teacher will read the historical note at the back of the book and explain the text in relation to the story.

Applying the story

- The children will make artwork based on the story. They will create sponge paintings of 'Stubby' using brown and white paint. They will then create badges from crepe paper and stick them on to their Stubby pictures.
- The children will share their finished art piece with the rest of the class.



Years 3 - 4

Exploring the Story

- Teacher will continue to read the story; drawing the children's attention to the pictures and asking questions based on the story:

How do you think Stubby and the soldiers are feeling, as they get closer to the war?

What makes Stubby a good guard dog?

How does Stubby's amazing sense of smell help to protect the soldiers?

How does Stubby get injured?

Why does the soldier feel bad about bringing the dog to war?

What do the local ladies make for Stubby?

Why do you think Stubby is given a special position in the Victory Parade?

- Teacher will explain to the children that a special day: 'Armistice Day' is on the 11th of November. It marks the day World War One ended, at 11am on the 11th day of the 11th month, in 1918.
- Teacher will read the piece of historical information relating to the story, at the back of the book and ask questions based on this:

In 1917, which World War was happening?

Where did the stray dog wander into?

What was the name of the soldier who formed a bond with him?

What heroic deeds did Stubby perform on the front line?

Which presidents did Stubby meet?

What is a mascot? Who declared Stubby as their mascot?

Why do you think Stubby was famous?

Applying the Story

- The children will write a diary entry from Stubby's point of view, based on his experiences. The children will read their diary entries to the rest of the class group.



Years 5 - 6

Exploring the Story

- Teacher will continue to read the story; drawing the children's attention to the pictures and asking questions based on the story:

How do you think Stubby and the soldiers are feeling, as they get closer to the war?

How does Stubby's amazing sense of smell help to protect the soldiers?

Why does the soldier feel bad that he brought Stubby to the war?

What do the local ladies make for Stubby?

Why do you think Stubby is given a special position in the Victory Parade?

- Teacher will explain to the children that a special day: 'Armistice Day' is on the 11th of November. It marks the day World War One ended, at 11am on the 11th day of the 11th month, in 1918.
- Teacher will read the piece of historical information relating to the story at the back of the book. Teacher will ask questions based on this:

In 1917, which World War was happening?

Where did the stray dog wander in to?

What was the name of the soldier who formed a bond with him?

What heroic deeds did Stubby perform on the front line?

What is an 'armistice'?

When was the armistice declared during World War One?

Which presidents did Stubby meet?

What is a 'mascot'? Who declared Stubby as their mascot?

When and where did Stubby die?

What similarities and differences can you identify between the story and the piece of historical information?

Why do you think Stubby was so highly regarded?

Applying the Story

- The children will create a newspaper article based on the text. The theme will be based on Stubby and his experiences of the war.

