



The Facts Behind the Book

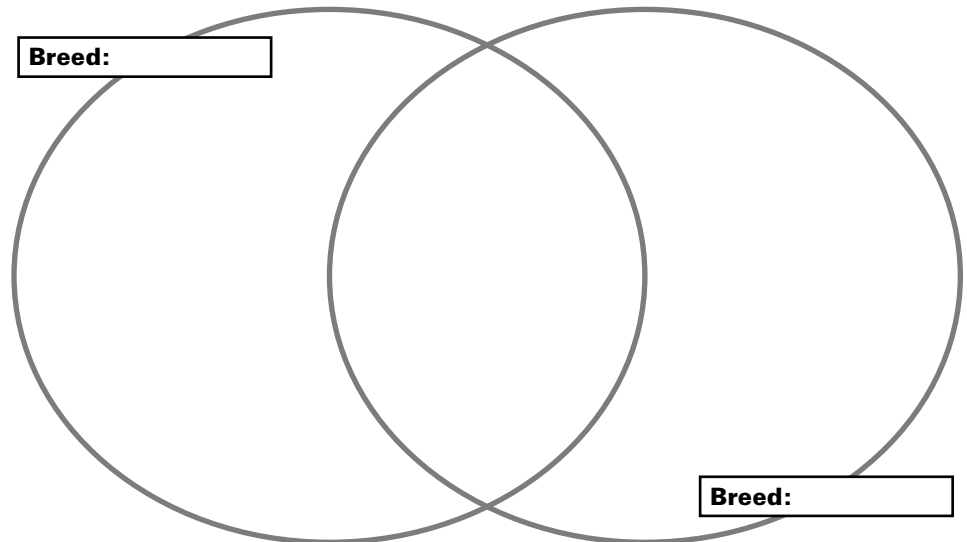
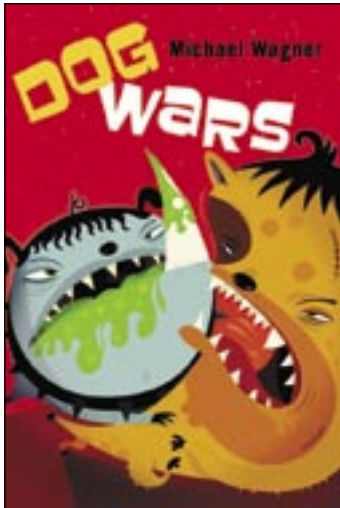
Dog breeds

The characters in this book are dogs of all different shapes and sizes. Just as their appearances vary greatly, so do their habits and their temperaments. Find out what you can about some of the different dog breeds in this book. They include:

| Character | Breed | Character | Breed |
|------------|----------------------------|-----------|------------------------------|
| Springroll | Shih tzu | Fiddler | Pharaoh hound |
| Gambler | Bichon frise | Scumbag | Hungarian puli |
| Rock | Staffordshire bull terrier | Crackers | Poodle |
| Airhead | Airedale terrier | Dork | Hairless Chinese crested dog |
| Beefcake | Bulldog | Spook | Ibizan hound |

Choose two of the breeds listed above to find out about. Visit a few of the websites listed below or read books from your library and gather some facts about the two dog breeds. Use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the different breeds. To do this, list any differences in the outer parts of the circles and similarities in the shared central space.

Use the information from your Venn diagram to draft a brief comparison of the two breeds. You may wish to state which breed you believe would make a better pet, which would be most active, which would be most aggressive, etc., and explain your reasons for these opinions.



Terrific Pets

www.terrificpets.com/dog_breeds/

Dog Breed Information

<http://www.dogbreedinfo.com/abc.htm>

Dog Breed Directory

http://www.dog-breeds.net/Dog_Breeds_Directory.htm

Pet Net

<http://www.petnet.com.au/dogs/dogbreedindex.html>

American Kennel Club

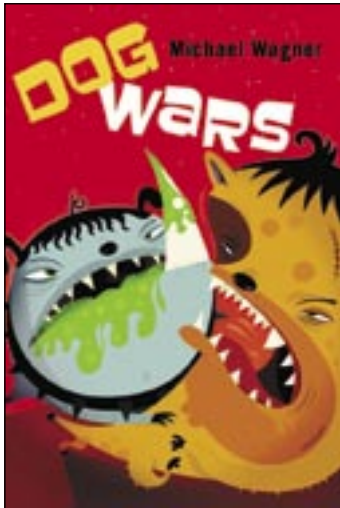
http://www.akc.org/breeds/recbreeds/breeds_a.cfm

Flea Facts

The narrator, and incidentally, the cause of all the trouble, in this book is Faydo T. Flea. Fleas are very tiny insects, yet they can be the cause of great discomfort for even the biggest and strongest of dogs. Perhaps you might like to find out more about fleas, why they like to live on dogs and what they get up to while they are there. A good place to begin your research might be the following website.

Bayer: Flea Facts

<http://www.nofleas.com/Flea-Facts.asp>



The Values Behind the Book

What Values Did the Characters Learn?

The dog characters in this book like to fight. At first this may seem to be a very bad thing for them to do, yet as the story unfolds you will discover that through fighting, they all learn valuable lessons about how they should treat each other. In fact, most of the dogs develop very strong values as a direct result of the Dog Wars.

Here are some behaviours demonstrated by one or more of the dogs. For each of these behaviours, briefly explain how it played a role in the story and what values were eventually identified by the characters involved.

| Behaviour | Story scenario | Values learned |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Bullying | | |
| Fighting as a means of solving problems | | |
| Telling lies | | |
| Exploiting the weaknesses of others | | |
| Following rules | | |
| Forgiving | | |



Parallels with our own relationships

Consider each of these situations from the book. Can you recall similar incidents from your own life?

It seems as if a voice in your head is telling you to do bad things

After a dispute with someone is over you share a drink or a snack with each other

You feel like taking sides against others who are normally your friends

One of the kids you play games with is ignoring the rules

Someone else seems to be causing trouble between you and your closest friend

You realise you have treated someone unfairly in the past

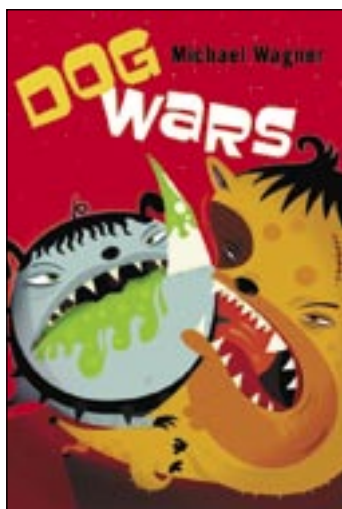
A game which starts off as fun gets out of hand and someone gets hurt

When one person continually dominates a game, others no longer want to play

Select one of these scenarios which you have personally experienced. Discuss it with your friends. Explain how you and the other people involved felt at the time. Tell your friends how you reacted to the situation at the time and seek their ideas on how they might have tried to resolve the situation.

Following some discussion and brainstorming, develop a role play based on such a scenario with your friends. Be sure to include the causes of the situation and the way you have decided to resolve it in your role play.

Perform this role play for the other members of your class. Ask them if they are able to identify the part of the story which has influenced your role play. Seek their feedback on the way you chose to resolve the situation and compare this to the way the characters in the story chose to resolve their problem.



Rules

In Chapter 10, Faydo tells Strongdog a set of rules for fighting in Dogland. The most important rule is the one which states that after each fight, regardless of the result, the combatants must share a drink of water together.

In your own words, explain why this is such an important rule. Can you suggest any instances where you and your friends apply a similar rule in your own games? What other satisfying rules do you know of in games?

Prepare a two minute speech in which you can express your opinions on the implications of this rule. Stand straight and deliver your speech to your classmates in a loud, clear voice. Be prepared to answer questions from the audience afterwards.

Perspectives in the Book

What if the Flea Was No Longer the Narrator?

Faydo the Flea narrates the story of Dog Wars. For much of the story he is the only character who understands exactly what is happening and why. Did you ever wonder what might be going on inside the heads of the other characters in the story?

Choose one of the following characters from the book and retell a part of the story from their perspective.

Strongdog

Rock

Crackers

Remember that for much of the story, your character will be unaware of the role played by Faydo in controlling the actions of themselves or the other dogs. Try to express the emotions of your character as the story unfolds. Share your writing with your friends.



What do the Other Dogs Feel About Dog Wars?

As is often the case in real life, soldiers go to war to serve their leaders or their countries without ever really understanding why they are fighting. This is often because they only have one point of view expressed to them. Is it possible that some of them don't even believe in the cause they are fighting for? Do they have a right to refuse to fight? How do you think they feel about the people they are fighting against?

Consider some of the questions posed above. Now think how you might feel if you were one of the dogs who had to go into battle for either Rock or Crackers in the Dog Wars. Write a paragraph explaining why you thought you were going to war, how you felt about that and what your thoughts were about your enemy. Share your writing with your friends.

Going Beyond the Book

A New Arrival in Dogland

Imagine there is a new dog on the scene in Dogland. What would its name be? What breed of dog would it be? How would it behave? What would its distinctive features be?

Write a paragraph, as told by Faydo T. Flea (in a style similar to that of author Michael Wagner), which describes the entrance of the new arrival to Dogland. Describe how the new dog looks and behaves. Give it a name similar to those used in the book.

Look closely at the wonderful dog illustrations by Nathan Jurevicius. Now illustrate your new dog in a similar style.

Publish your illustrations and written descriptions and display them in a Dogland gallery on your classroom wall. Share your ideas about your new arrival in Dogland with your classmates.