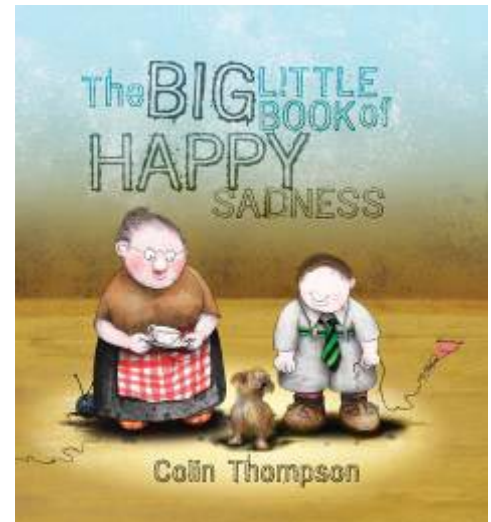
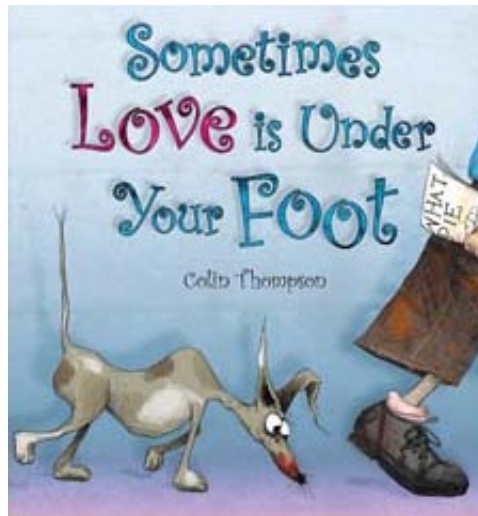


# Humane Beings Picture Book Pack



Developing values and skills in  
connection and compassion.



## Character is Destiny

- George Eliot

If we accept that education is as much about building character as it is about equipping students with specific skills, then values based education becomes a high priority.

Values based education can strengthen students' self-esteem, resilience and optimism and assist them to become responsible, tolerant and caring adults.

The Humane Beings Picture Book Pack builds on the natural affinity many young children have with animals, to develop values and skills in the areas of caring, compassion, connection and responsibility.

Values content in three books written by Colin Thompson is presented under three simple headings.

1. Reading and Thinking
2. Talking and Doing
3. Thinking Again

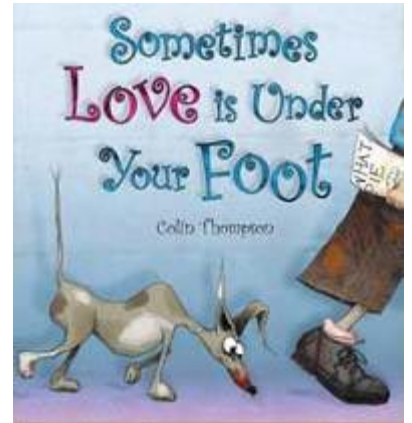


# Sometimes Love is Under Your Foot

## By Colin Thompson

Published by Scholastic Press 2008

*Brian is a man who goes through life in big shoes. Kevin the dog loves Brian so much he thinks he is God. However Brian ignores Kevin except when his big shoes accidentally tread on him. In this story, we follow Brian's journey to his new found appreciation of Kevin, life and love.*



### 1. Reading and Thinking

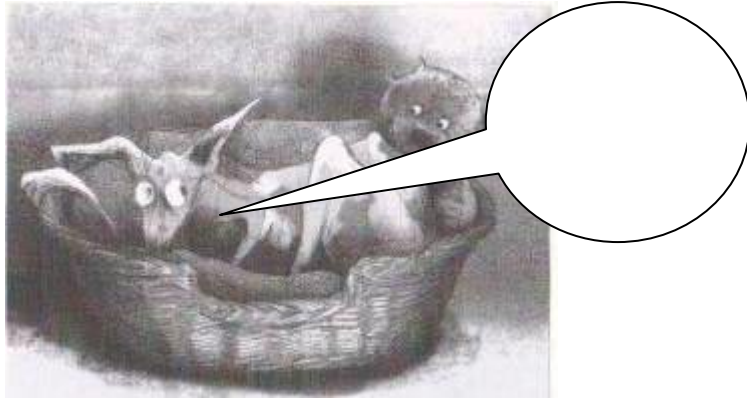
Prior to the first reading, invite students to think about how they feel as they listen to the story. Let them know that there will be an opportunity at the end of the story to share their thoughts about the story. Accept student's comments as given - you may wish to record students' comments for later comparison.

A day or two later during the second reading, the teacher models the process of questioning and pondering.

Some examples:

- On the second page, we see pictures of Brian's family but only half of Kevin's body is shown. I wonder why that is?
- *Brian's family never said they loved each other.... they all knew they loved each other so they thought they didn't need to say it.*  
I wonder how they knew they loved each other even though they hadn't said those words ?

- *Brian usually ignored Kevin.... Kevin would put his tail between his legs and curl up in his basket. I wonder what Kevin would write here?*



- *Brian went over to Kevin's basket and picked him up....*  
I wonder what made Brian change his mind about Kevin?
- *Kevin curled up in Brian's big hands and tried to be as warm as he could to make Brian feel better....*  
I wonder if pets really do help us to feel better when we are sick or sad? Has this ever happened to you?
- *After a while Brian sighed. It was a sigh Kevin knew all about, a weary, lonely sigh and Kevin could feel it go right through him....* I wonder what is actually happening here?
- The last page says that Kevin knows Brian loves him. I wonder how he knows?

Encourage students to share questions that arise for them.  
Did anything puzzle you about this story?  
What questions came into your mind?  
Record the questions posed by the students.

## 2. Talking and Doing

This story may stimulate discussion on topics such as:

- being taken for granted
- our own need for care and attention
- the reciprocal nature of love
- the love of pets
- pets as family
- pets' need for care and attention

### **Questions to explore:**

(refer to Thinking Circle page 10)

- Can you remember a time when you felt that you were taken for granted? What was happening then? How did you feel?
- Can you remember a time when you really felt appreciated? What was happening then? How did you feel?
- Should we tell the people we love that we love them? Why?
- Is love is just for people or is it for pets too?
- Are pets part of the family?

- Is it easier to love pets or people?
- How can people show each other that they care?
- How might people show their pets that they care about them?
- What might we miss if we didn't have a pet?

### **Organising Discussion**

There are a lot of 'big' questions here. Choose one or two to explore as a whole class. Students could vote on this or the teacher may wish to guide the choice. Some questions may be suitable for students to discuss in pairs or small groups followed by reporting back sessions. A question such as '*are pets part of the family*' may be suitable as a take-home task.

Tried and tested techniques such as Think-Pair Share, The Hot Seat, Mapping and Circle Sessions are excellent strategies for promoting discussion.

Some examples:

#### 1. Think - Pair – Share

*Think-Pair-Share is a cooperative learning strategy, which allows students to think about a question/ idea/ issue. Students share their thoughts with a partner before discussion in a small group or reporting back to the class.*

Goal: To make two lists about caring

In pairs, invite students to talk together about -

- How we show people that we care about them
- How we show pets that we care about them

Students share their ideas with another pair before reporting their ideas back to the class. The teacher records ideas on caring for people and pets as two lists.

List One - We show our family and friends that we care when we....

List Two - We show our pets that we care when we....

Are there similarities / differences in how we care for people and pets?

The discussion could be extended by challenging older students to arrive at a consensus (firstly in pairs and then as a group of four) on the order of importance for the items on each list.

## 2. The Hot Seat

*Sitting in the 'hot seat' is optional. A student volunteers to sit on a seat in the middle of a class circle. Those seated in the circle have the opportunity to ask questions of the person in the 'hot seat'. He or she answers questions from the point of view of the specific role or character they are acting out.*

Goal: to develop empathy skills, to see things from another's point of view

Role – Brian

The student who volunteers to play the part of Brian is given 5 minutes to think about Brian's character – his job in the Pie King Corporation, his family, his attitude towards Kevin, his illness and how it changed his thinking. The student is asked to put himself or herself in Brian's shoes.

Students use the 5 minutes to write down questions they'd like to ask Brian. Students can ask their questions in turn or questions can be placed in a box and drawn out at random by the teacher.

Students may like to put themselves 'in Kevin's shoes' and ask questions on his behalf.

Sample questions:

- Do you like your job? Why / why not?
- How do you feel about dog hairs on the bed?
- What made you so ill? What was wrong with you?
- Does your wife mind Kevin being on the bed?
- Why don't you tell your children/ wife/ Kevin that you love them?
- How come you started to notice Kevin?
- Do you know what it feels like to be taken for granted or ignored?
- What would you miss about Kevin if he wasn't around?

### 3. Fishbone Mapping

*A visual representation of cause and effect for ideas or events. Begin by writing the end result of the idea or event. Then work backwards to identify and record the causes of the event or idea.*

Goal: to develop understanding of cause and effect in relation to feeling connected in relationships

Example

Result: Kevin knows that Brian loves him.

Cause 1 – Brian pats Kevin and says hello.

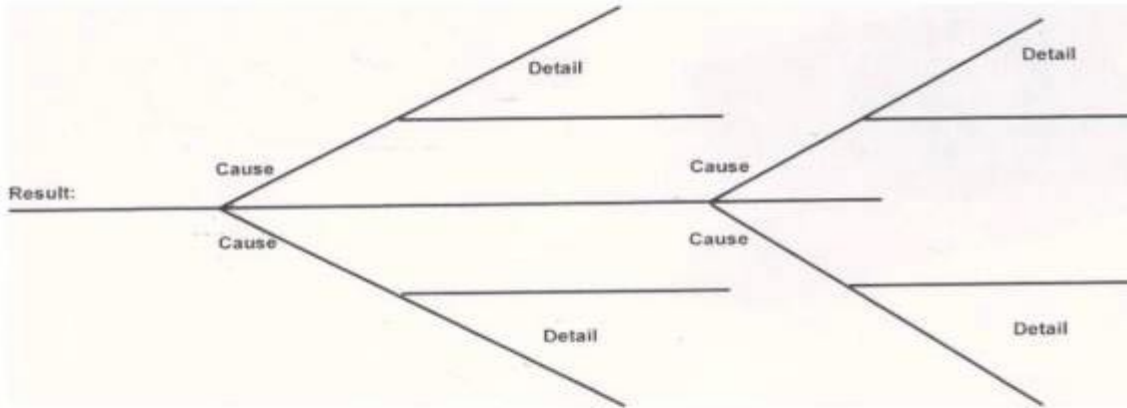
Cause 2 - Brian doesn't stand on Kevin's tail

Cause 3 - Brian sits down with Kevin on his lap

Cause 4 - Brian likes to have Kevin nearby – they snooze together

*Older students can fill in details about each of the causes they have identified.*

# Fishbone Mapping



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#### 4. Thinking Circle

*Thinking circles give each student an opportunity to speak on a subject of the group's choice. Thinking circles involve following lines of thought, backing up opinions with reasons, assessing the arguments given by others, being reflective and using examples from one's own experience. It is about challenging and changing viewpoints.....it's okay to change your mind. The teacher's role is to encourage clarification and reasoning and highlight certain points so that others can respond to them.*

#### Goals:

- to identify and discuss a question arising from the story
- to summarise arguments
- to reflect and vote on outcomes
- to develop understandings of compassion and responsibility through this process

#### The Process:

- In pairs, children talk about what interested them, what puzzled them, what questions came into their minds about the story.
- Questions are shared and recorded as given.
- Students names are written next to the question they contributed.
- Students are given time to talk about their question or ask for clarification on another question.
- Students vote on the question for discussion.
- The question with the most votes is written up and the originator has time to talk about their question and express their thoughts.
- The teacher's role is to facilitate discussion through questions such as :

- Can anyone explain that to us? (clarification)
- Why do you say that? (giving reasons)
- How do you know? (giving examples)
- Who agrees / disagrees with .....?
- Has anyone got another example?
- Who else can say something about that?
- 

The teacher encourages students to use words like “I agree with Sarah because.....” or “ I don’t agree with Sarah about that because.....”

To summarise, the teacher asks –

Who can remember some of the ideas we have talked about?

Has anyone’s thinking changed during the discussion?

Students vote yes/no/not sure as to whether their thinking has changed as a result of the discussion in the thinking circle.

### 3. Thinking Again

The first page shows Brian’s Tshirt with a message – I Love Pies

Can you design a new Tshirt for Kevin that shows how his thinking has changed?

From the dog’s point of view - if there was one more page in this book, what do you think Kevin would have written?

Think about the person in your life who cares about you the most. How you know that person really cares about you? If you feel comfortable, share how you know (optional).

Draw a portrait of yourself and someone in your family.

Include a caption about how you show that person that you care about them.

Draw a portrait of you and your pet.

Include a caption about how you show your pet that you care.

Re-visit the student's comments recorded after the first reading of the story.

As a class, reflect on the comments. Compare those comments with how you feel about the story now.

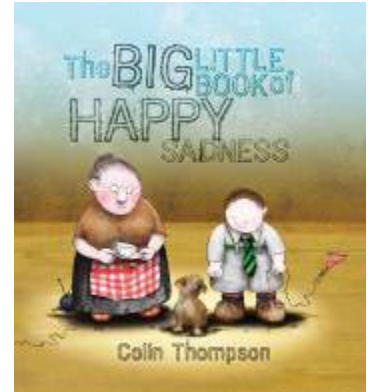


# The Big Little Book of Happy Sadness

## By Colin Thompson

Published by Random House 2008

*The Big Little Book of Happy Sadness explores ideas about the nature of family, accepting difference and the power of connection and attachment. As it says in the blurb, through this story we learn that “when it comes to love, it’s quality not quantity that counts”. George is a lonely boy who sees a kindred spirit in Jeremy, an unwanted three-legged homeless dog. When Jeremy comes to live with them, George gives and receives love in a way that brightens his whole world.*



### 1. Reading and Thinking

Prior to the first reading, invite students to think about how they feel as they listen to the story. Let them know that there will be an opportunity at the end of the story to share their thoughts about the story. Accept all comments as given—you may wish to record students’ comments for later comparison.

A day or two later during the second reading, the teacher models the process of questioning and pondering.

Some examples:

- *...the cages sat beneath a coat of verdigris.....* Does anyone know what verdigris is? We may have to look in the dictionary.
- *George stared at the dog and the dog stared at George and they both knew they were seeing a reflection of themselves.* I wonder what is really happening here?

- *...the three-legged one in the last cage....* I wonder why George wanted the three-legged dog when he could have had one with four legs?
- *"A dog isn't just for Christmas, it's for life".* I wonder what this means?
- *His grandmother saw the big empty place inside George....* I'm not sure what this means? Does anyone have any thoughts on this?
- *After it had taken five minutes just to reach the shelter's gate, George picked Jeremy up and carried him home.*  
I wonder what Jeremy was thinking?



- *And the three of them lived happily ever after for a very long time.*  
I wonder who is happiest....Jeremy, George or his grandmother?

Encourage students to share questions that arise for them.

Did anything puzzle you about this story?

What questions came into your mind?

Record the questions posed by the students.

## 2. Talking and Doing

This story may stimulate discussion on topics such as:

- the nature of loneliness
- our need for companionship
- the reciprocal nature of love
- overcoming disability
- accepting difference
- resilience, hope and innovation
- the love of pets
- pets as family
- pets' need for companionship, care and attention

### **Questions to explore:**

(refer Thinking Circle – pages 19 & 20)

- Can you remember a time when you felt really lonely?  
What was happening then? How did you feel?
- Can you remember a time when you felt really loved and needed?  
What was happening then? How did you feel?
- Do you think that animals can feel loneliness too?

- Do you think that having pets makes us feel happier? Has this feeling happened to you?
- Do you think that you can make your pet feel happier in return? What do you do to make your pet happy?
- Why do you think that dogs are called man's best friend?
- Are pets part of the family?
- Why do you think it is that some dogs and cats end up in animal shelters?
- Just as George and his grandmother tried several times to make a new leg for Jeremy, have you ever had to keep trying at something that just wasn't working out? What happened?
- Do you think there is such a thing as 'happy sadness'? If so, can you give an example?

### **Organising Discussion**

There are a lot of 'big' questions. Choose one or two to explore as a whole class. Students could vote on this or the teacher may wish to guide the choice.

Some questions may be suitable for students to discuss in pairs or small groups followed by reporting back sessions. A question such as *Are pets part of the family?* might be suitable as a take-home task.

Tried and tested techniques such as Venn Diagrams, Opinionaire, Three Step Interviews and Thinking Circles are excellent strategies for promoting discussion.

Some examples:

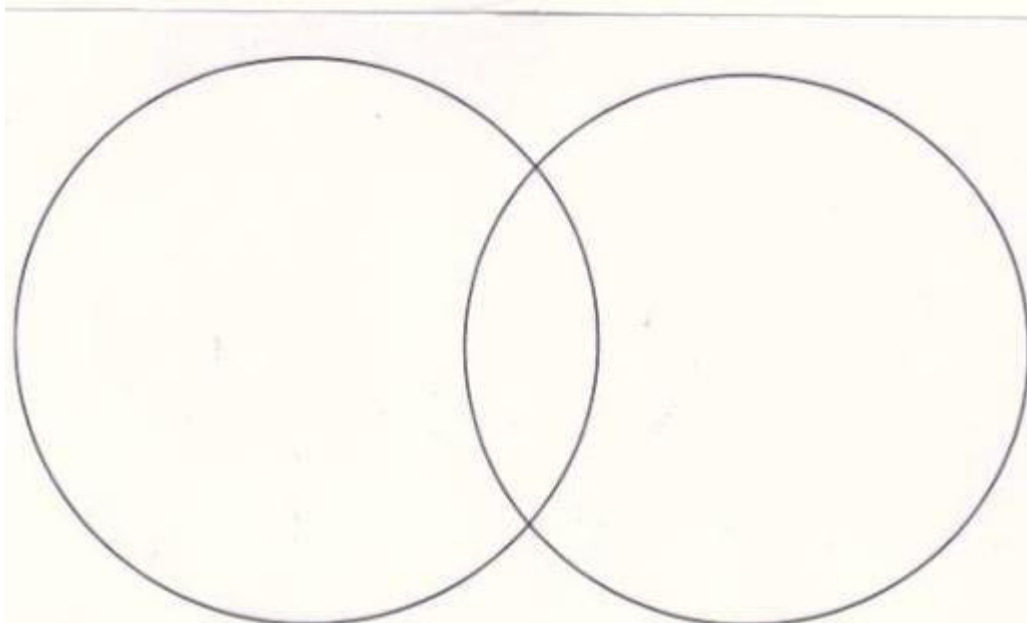
### 1. Venn Diagram

Venn diagrams help students make comparisons. Similarities are shown in the overlapping area and differences are shown in the areas that do not overlap.

Example

Caring about people

Caring about animals



## 2. Opinionaire

The opinionaire is a form of survey that asks students and others to agree or disagree with particular statements based on the focus book. An opinionaire helps students to see that various viewpoints exist on most issues.

In the first column, students indicate their own opinion with A (agree) or D (disagree). In the following columns they record the answers of a parent, friend and what they think the author and main character George would think about these statements. Students can tally the answers.

	Self	Home	Friend	Author	George
Pets can help make us happier and healthier.					
Pets are fun to have around					
People shouldn't have pets unless they can look after them properly and keep them safe, happy and healthy.					
It's important to be kind to animals because they are living, breathing creatures just like we are.					
There are too many homeless animals waiting in shelters.					
Animals have feelings like we do.					
Looking after pets takes a lot of time and effort.					

### 3. Three Step Interview

Students are invited to interview class members, share their thinking and ask questions on an interview topic. Students are divided into teams of three and are given a role as either the interviewer, a reporter or the person who is being interviewed. The roles rotate after each interview. For example, students may interview each other about their thoughts on the book.

Sample interview questions:

- Did you think there was more happiness or sadness in this book?
- Did you like this book? Why? Why not?
- Do you have pets? Why? Why not?
- If yes, what do you like most about your pet?
- What do you think your pet would like most about you?
- Do you think that dogs really are man's best friend?
- Do you think that most people are a best friend to dogs?
- If so, why do you think so many dogs end up in animal shelters?
- By the end the story, who do you think is the happiest – Jeremy, George or his grandmother? Why?

### 4. Thinking Circle

*Thinking circles give each student an opportunity to speak on a subject of the group's choice. Thinking circles involve following lines of thought, backing up opinions with reasons, assessing the arguments given by others, being reflective and using examples from one's own experience. It is about challenging and changing viewpoints.....it's okay to change your mind. The teacher's role is to encourage clarification and reasoning and highlight certain points so that others can respond to them.*

## Goals:

- to identify and discuss a question arising from the story
- to summarise arguments
- to reflect and vote on outcomes
- to develop understandings of compassion and responsibility through this process

## The Process:

- In pairs, children talk about what interested them, what puzzled them, what questions came into their minds about the story.
- Questions are shared and recorded as given.
- Students names are written next to the question they contributed.
- Students are given time to talk about their question or ask for clarification on another question.
- Students vote on the question for discussion.
- The question with the most votes is written up and the originator has time to talk about their question and express their thoughts.
- The teacher's role is to facilitate discussion through questions such as :
  - Can anyone explain that to us? (clarification)
  - Why do you say that? (giving reasons)
  - How do you know? (giving examples)
  - Who agrees / disagrees with .....?
  - Has anyone got another example?
  - Who else can say something about that?

The teacher encourages students to use words like "I agree with Sarah because....." or " I don't agree with Tom about that because....."

- To summarise, the teacher asks –

Who can remember some of the ideas we have talked about?

Has anyone's thinking changed during the discussion?

Students vote yes/no/not sure as to whether their thinking has changed as a result of the discussion in the thinking circle.



### 3. Thinking Again

From the dog's point of view - if there was one more page in this book, what do you think Jeremy would have written?

George and his grandmother designed several new legs for Jeremy. Can you design a new piece of equipment for dogs which would make them safer, healthier or happier?

If you were asked to write ONE thing that you really enjoyed about this book, what would you write?

Re-visit the student's comments recorded after the first reading of the story. As a class, reflect on the comments. Compare those comments with how you feel about the story now.

When George took Jeremy home, their lives start to brighten. Each of them started to feel loved and needed. They were good for each other and neither felt so lonely anymore.

Draw or write to show how animals can be good for us and we can be good for them.....the two-way relationship.



# Unknown

By Colin Thompson and Anna Pignataro

Published by Hodder 2000

In this story we meet a variety of homeless dogs who are waiting for new families to come and take care of them. One small shy dog whose past is unknown, becomes an unlikely hero during a lightning storm. The uncertainty of life for many dogs and their dependence upon us is reflected in their names; "Grown-Too-Large," "Owner-Died," "Unwanted-Christmas-Gift," and little "Unknown." This is a story about resilience, caring and commitment.



## 1. Reading and Thinking

Prior to the first reading, invite students to think about how they feel as they listen to the story. Let them know that there will be an opportunity at the end of the story to share their thoughts about the story. Accept all comments as given - you may wish to record students' comments for later comparison.

A day or two later during the second reading, the teacher models the process of questioning and pondering.

- Page 2...*twenty dogs shouting at the top of their voices...* I wonder why all these dogs came to be at the animal shelter?

- Page 3 ....this dog has an interesting look on her face....I wonder what she is thinking?
- Pages 6 and 7.....I wonder why some people give up on their dog and other people look after their dog for its whole life no matter what?
- Page 11....I wonder if people realise that dogs can live to be 15 years old and will need looking after for all that time?
- Pages 12 and 13.....I wonder what would be the right type of dog for me?
- Page 17....*But the smells, the warm earth, the clean leaves, made her lonely....*I wonder why?
- Page 21....*Unknown knew that no one was going to come.* I wonder how it would feel to always have to rely on someone else to keep you safe, when you can't protect yourself.
- Page 26...I wonder why Grown-Too-Large has stopped being fierce and scary?
- Page 28....*it would be good if we could put all the humans in cages and walk along with our noses in the air and choose the one WE wanted.....*I wonder if this would work out better?
- Page 30 and 31.....I wonder who is the happiest here?

*Encourage students to share questions that arise for them.*

*Did anything puzzle you about this story?*

*What questions came into your mind?*

*Record the questions posed by the students.*



## **2. Talking and Doing**

This story may stimulate discussion on topics such as:

- The need to belong
- Accepting difference
- Animals dependence on people
- Our responsibility towards animals
- Needs and feelings
- Pet's need for care and attention
- Personalities – real versus projected image
- The nature of commitment
- Hope and resilience
- The nature of sentience

## Questions to explore:

(refer Thinking Circles – page 29)

- Have you ever felt like you were being left out, ignored or overlooked? What was happening then? How did you feel?
- Do you think animals might have these feelings too?
- Dogs used to live in the wild but now they depend on us. We have made them that way. Do you think this is a good or bad thing?
- Some animals and people pretend to be something they are not. (ie brave, strong, mean...) Why do you think they do this?
- If dogs are known to be man's best friend, why do you think so many end up in animal shelters waiting for new homes?
- There is a special rule called the Golden Rule.... *Treat others as you would like to be treated.* Could this work with people and dogs?
- Can you think of some good reasons NOT to get a dog? ie some instances when getting a dog may not be the right decision? (lifestyle, financial & housing considerations)

- If you choose the right dog, then it's easier to look after that dog for its whole life. Do you think this is true?
- If your family was thinking about getting a dog, how would you know which dog is the right dog?
- Can you tell how a dog is feeling?
- To share the world successfully, we need to be able to consider others' feelings and needs. Caring for animals can help us learn how to do this. Do you agree or disagree with this?
- What do you think 'being responsible' means?
- What can we find out about 'sentience'?
- Being responsible means providing care to those who need it and this includes animals. Do you agree or disagree with this?
- Sometimes people take animals for granted. Why do you think this happens?

## Organising Discussion

There are a lot of 'big' questions. Choose one or two to explore as a whole class. Students could vote on this or the teacher may wish to guide the choice. Some questions may be suitable for students to discuss in pairs or small groups followed by reporting back sessions. Some questions might be suitable as take-home tasks.

Tried and tested techniques such as Four Corners, Role Play, Mind Mapping and Thinking Circles are excellent strategies for promoting discussion.

Some examples:

### 1. Four Corners

*Four corners is a way of developing empathy with other people's points of view. The corners of the classroom represent strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. Students think about a statement or question and which of the corners best reflects their opinion. Students move to the relevant corner and pair up with another student in that corner to discuss their views. Students can also be paired with a student from the opposite corner to discuss their opposing views.*

Sample statements:

- People take animals for granted because animals can't speak.
- By caring for animals, we can better at caring for each other.
- People should take care of animals.
- Not everyone has to have a pet.
- Dogs have feelings.
- Dogs rely on us to keep them safe.
- Animals have different personalities just like we do.

## 2. Role Play

Role-play can help students stand in another's shoes in order to see things from a perspective other than their own. Role play can be oral or written.

Examples:

- Conducting an interview at an animal shelter.

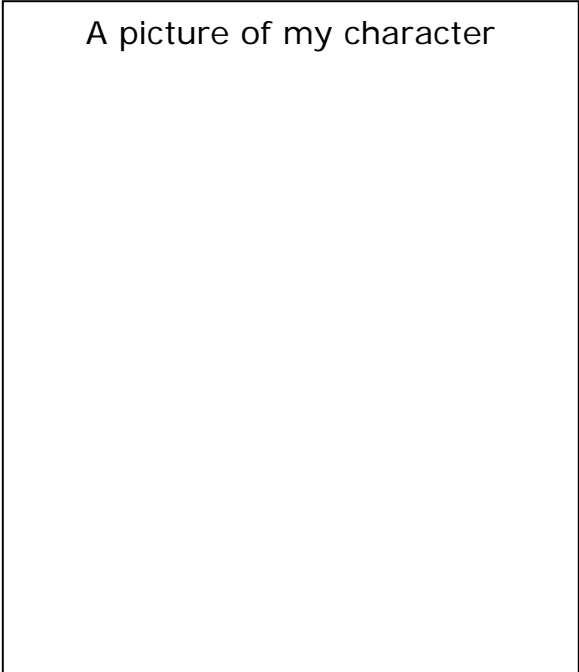
In pairs, students plan, practice and perform (optional) their interview. One child is the interviewer and the other adopts the viewpoint of the dog. The following lines of questioning can be encouraged to promote empathy and the idea of dogs as living beings who have 'feelings' similar to our own.

- How did you end up here at the shelter?
- What's it like?
- Who used to look after you?
- Do you think they'll come to get you back?
- Were they good at looking after you?
- How are you feeling right now?
- What's the scariest thing about being here?
- What's the best thing about being here?
- If you had three wishes, what would they be?

- Character Profiles (written)

Students profile one of the dogs from the story, including information on their personality, likes and dislikes.

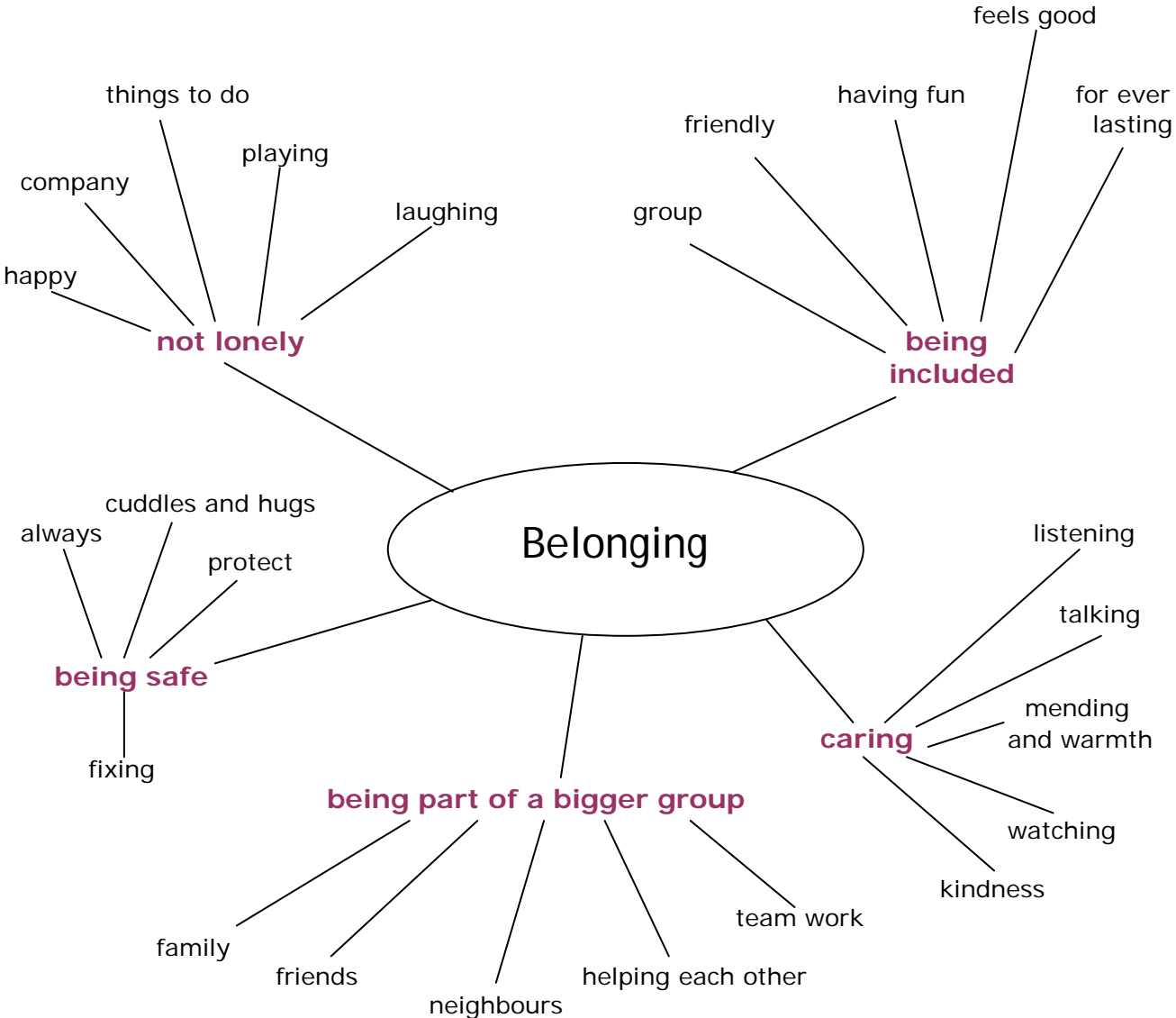
Example:

<p>My character is 'Unwanted Christmas Gift'</p> <p>I used to live .....</p> <p>I like to eat.....</p> <p>I have.....</p> <p>I like.....</p> <p>I don't like.....</p> <p>I wish.....</p> <p>I am.....</p> <p>I think that.....</p>	<p>A picture of my character</p> 
--	--

### 3. Mind Mapping

*A mind map starts with a central word or concept. Around this word, the students record their 5 main ideas that relate to that word. For each of those words, students then record 5 main ideas that relate to that word. As a whole class, ideas can be shared and a master mind map be drawn up. No one feels ignored as all ideas are placed on the master mind map in the most appropriate place. Mind maps are a useful for accessing and recording students' current understandings.*

Example: This map looks at *Belonging* from a person's point of view. Students could be asked to comment on what differences there might be if this was from a dog's point of view.



#### 4. Thinking Circle

*Thinking circles give each student an opportunity to speak on a subject of the group's choice. Thinking circles involve following one's own lines of thought, backing up one's opinions with reasons, assessing the arguments given by others, being reflective and using examples from one's own experience. It is about challenging and changing viewpoints.....it's okay to change your mind. The teacher's role is to encourage clarification and reasoning and highlight certain points so that others can respond to them.*

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The teacher encourages students to use words like "I agree with Sarah because....." or " I don't agree with Tom about that because....."

To summarise, the teacher asks –

Who can remember some of the ideas we have talked about?

Has anyone's thinking changed during the discussion?

Students vote yes/no/not sure as to whether their thinking has changed as a result of the discussion in the thinking circle.

### **3. Thinking Again**

The Golden Rule means putting yourself in someone else's shoes. If you would be unhappy in a certain situation, then other people would probably be unhappy too in that same situation. This works with animals, just as it works with people.

Imagine you have been given three wishes to make the world a better place for dogs. What would those three wishes be?

What can you find out about dog body language?

What body signals tell us a dog is frightened?

What body signals tell us a dog is happy?

What body signals tell us a dog is angry?

List your own needs and a dog's needs.

Do you notice any similarities between the two lists?

\*\*\*\*\*

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