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Activity Guide

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Henry and Mudge in Puddle Trouble

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ABOUT THE STORY

Henry and his dog Mudge are ready for spring-and ready for trouble. They find a beautiful blue flower-but Mudge eats it. They see a huge, wonderful puddle-and have to jump in it. But when new kittens are threatened by another dog, Mudge finds out he can do more than just get into trouble.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cynthia Rylant began writing for children after working in the children's room at a library. She has written picture books, short stories, poems, novels, and nonfiction. Her son and his dog inspired the Henry and Mudge easy reader series, which includes more than a dozen books, many of which are available as Live Oak Media Readalongs.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Sucie Stevenson has two Labrador retrievers, so she knows a lot about big dogs like Mudge. Besides the Henry and Mudge series, she has illustrated books by other notable writers.

INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask the group if any of them have pets. If they do, share stories about adventures they've had with their pets. Explain that in this book, Henry and his dog Mudge have adventures, some good, some bad, some... messy.

READING ACTIVITIES

Vocabulary

Go over the definitions of these words from the story with the group. Encourage them to use the words in a short story of their own about a pet.

glory	litter
petal	tongue
ocean	neighbor

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- “What did Mudge want to do with the flower?”
- “What did Mudge do with the flower?”
- “How did Henry feel at first about Mudge's actions? How did his feelings change?” (*Compare and contrast*)
- “What did Henry and Mudge do when they saw the big puddle?”
- “What did Henry's father do when he found Henry and Mudge?”
- “What did Mudge do when the new dog got near the kittens?”
- “How did Mudge feel about the kittens? Explain.” (*Draw conclusions*)

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Science: Planet Map

In “The Kitten,” Henry names the kitten after planets. Have the children work in pairs to find out some facts about one of the planets in the solar system, including how large it is and what it looks like. Then pairs can draw their planet on a group map of the solar system.

Art: More Trouble

Have children work in small groups to create a comic strip showing a new adventure for Henry and Mudge. Children can work together to illustrate the comic and can write brief captions for the picture.

Science: April Showers Bring May Flowers

Ask the group to name early spring flowers that come from bulbs, such as daffodil, crocus, and tulip. Show the children examples of bulbs and explain that they are usually planted in fall and bloom in the spring. Help children plant some bulbs in a group flower box and track the bulbs' progress over time.

Health: Water Safety

Point out that though the puddle Henry and Mudge jumped into is shallow, if it had been deeper, jumping in could have been dangerous. Encourage children to name safety rules for playing around water, such as don't swim with out a buddy, don't run at a pool, no jumping or diving except where allowed, and so on. Children can make their rules into a poster for water safety.