

Inspired by David Shannon's Good Boy, Fergus!, these sixth graders focused on the trait of voice as they wrote original adventures about pets. Read each story, and be prepared to discuss its author's use of voice. The lesson that inspired this writing was found on-line at the WritingFix website. (<http://writingfix.com>)

Trouble

by Heather, sixth grade writer

"Buddy," I said, "I think you have marked just about every tree in this campground. I mean, look around. Everything is yellow. Come on, we should get back to the beach. Don't look at me with those puppy dog eyes, saying 'look at me, love me.' Walk, Buddy, we're almost there. Ten more feet."

"Hey, kiddo," my dad bellowed. "I see you brought Buddy along. Come here, boy," he said in a tone more exhausted than happy. "I think me and Buddy are going to take a dip."

"Okay, have fun! Wait, where's Buddy?" I croaked. "Hey, there he is way out in the water. What's he doing? He's going to drown." I felt a sudden wave of fear wash over me and without thinking I dove in. "Buddy, come now. Please come." He finally turned and swam back to me.

When he got back to shore, he was struggling with something in his mouth. It looked like he was chewing it. I yelled, "Open your mouth. Spit that out." When my command finally worked, slowly a green blob emerged. I was relieved that, whatever it was, it was still alive. It took me a while to figure out it was a frog.

As soon as I did, I burst out laughing. Then my family joined in until it was a chorus of laughter. I laughed so much that I started to suffocate and salty liquid poured out of my eyes. When I looked at Buddy, I could bet he was smiling because he had done such a good job not harming the frog.

All he did for the remainder of the day was eat, sleep, and mark trees. What a life!



The Worst Trip

by Tyler, sixth grade writer

"Whoooo!" I yelled with excitement. It was my first trip with Rocky. Rocky is my dog, and he is the nicest dog I know. He has a cool color of fur. It's tan all over, well almost. On the belly, it is as white as snow. Next comes his tail, which is tan until the tip, which is charcoal black.

I was five when we went on this trip. We were ready to go. We all laughed and had fun, but mostly me, because I was with Rocky. I had fallen asleep when his sixty pounds rolled right on me. I screamed at the top of my lungs, "Rocky, get off of me! You weigh a ton." He didn't seem to respond. So I moved him over and said, "Rocky, lay down and stay there."

Geez, what 's my owner's problem? thought Rocky.

We had finally arrived at my uncle's house.

I should get out of this car and run away, thought Rocky.

As I got out my dog did too, but he ran away. I said, "Rocky, come back here. That's an order." I said worried, "Can someone go get him?"

We sat by the fire worried and disappointed that Rocky was gone. My dad came back but hadn't found Rocky. I went to sleep sad, like my family. I asked my mom if Rocky would ever come back. She said, "Only time will tell us."

Two mornings later, I saw a FOUND sign. It was my favorite dog, Rocky. We zoomed there like lightning. We had Rocky at last. I picked him up. "I have my friend again," I said.



Terror at the Vets

by Adrianna, sixth grade writer

Our car came into the parking lot of a veterinarian's building. My mom parked the car smoothly between two other cars. I slowly pulled my cat, O'Malley, out from his little cage. His eyes were wide and very terrified.

"Aw, it'll be alright, my sweet little kitty." I pushed my fingers through the tiny bars of the cage. O'Malley pushed against them and purred.

"He'll be alright," my mom promised me as she got out of the car. *I still feel bad for*



him, I thought but didn't say it out loud. We headed closer to the two huge doors. As soon as we swung them open, O'Malley wasn't purring anymore. Instead, he was hissing and growling.

It was scary and crazy. He made the other animals scared out of their fur in their little cages. "Hush, O'Malley!" I set the cage on a counter and pointed my finger at him. He looked a little guilty. It looked as if he were saying, *Geez, okay, okay!* Then I felt worse for my kitten. Well, he was pretty big, but he was still a kitten.

He was getting declawed and fixed. The vet soon came out and talked to my mom. A little after their boring *blah blah* chat, the vet took O'Malley into a room. She opened his cage. I yelled, "NO!" because O'Malley had jumped out of the cage and hissed at the vet, then took a leap off the small table.

He sprang into another room. We all dashed after him. I ran past a whole bunch of cages and almost ran past a ball of gray and white fluffy fur lying on top of a cage. "O'Malley!" I scolded him. He just sat up there, staring down at me. I was getting angrier every second.

"O'Malley, you little ball of fur, get down, right now!" I was guessing he could see the anger in me, but I was wrong. He jumped down onto a small silver table. As soon as I reached my hand out to grab him, he leaped down and sped into another room like a wild cheetah.

"O'Malley, we have no time for games." I raced after him and soon caught him and held him in my arms.

"Aw, looks like you got tired from all that running." I coaxed him and petted his fluffy, gray fur. "Good boy, don't worry. We'll be back for you tomorrow." I held him out for the vet. The cat looked at the vet and back at me like, *You wouldn't?*

But I did. The vet took him away and we left.

The next day we came to pick up O'Malley. We saw the vet. She had peach colored band-aids wrapped around her fingers and some on her palms. "Your little cat had very sharp nails," she chuckled.

We apologized a lot. The vet just said she was kind of used to it and that it was okay. She went into a room and soon came back out, holding a cage with O'Malley in it. He was curled up sleeping. She gave us his medication, which was white liquid in a tube.

When we got home we had to mix his medicine with milk so he would take it. I stroked him. "See, that wasn't so bad." He replied with a purr.

Kingston

by Sage, sixth grade writer

I wake up to two large, anxious, brown eyes waiting impatiently for a morning walk. "Do you wanna go for a walk, Kingston?"

"Kingston, stop pulling so hard on the leash." Kingston was so excited to go to the park. Immediately when we got there, he jumped into the small duck lake, whining with excitement.

"King, get out of there right now! Kingston, come on, get out! You know you're going to have to get a bath. Would you listen to me?!" We usually call Kingston *King Kong* because he is so big.

When I finally encouraged Kingston to come out, he was yanking on the leash so hard I had to let go. The second he saw all of the ducks waddling around, he bolted towards them with great speed. "No! You get back here right now!" I yelled in disgust. As soon as I jumped out to catch Kingston, he saw a group of geese and took off towards them, leaving me to splatter on the ground.

"I'm never going to take you to the park again," I said, trying hard to be calm. He stopped dead in his tracks, realizing what I'd said. Even though I would still take him to the park, he didn't know that. "Okay, c'mon boy, let's go home." He did not like the sound of that. He tried pulling free towards the lake where he knew I couldn't get him. "No, you're not going anywhere, King."

Once we got home, I immediately gave Kingston a bath that he didn't like. Kingston shook, splattering me with dirty pond water. "You dumb dog," I said through my gritted teeth.

The best thing about giving him a bath is that after you're done, he gets really tired and falls asleep for hours. Once he's not satisfied with the ground for a bed, he comes in my room and sleeps on my bed. "Good boy, Kingston," I said soothingly.

