

A Dog's Journey: Crafting Your Own Canine Chronicle

Materials Needed:

- A copy of "A Dog's Purpose" (novel or access to specific movie clips focusing on narrative voice and key moments)
- Notebook or journal
- Pens, pencils, colored pencils, markers
- Optional: Computer with internet access for research (dog breeds, behaviors)
- Optional: Digital storytelling tools (e.g., Storybird, Google Docs)
- Optional: Craft supplies (construction paper, glue, scissors) for visual elements

Lesson Overview:

Have you ever wondered what your dog is thinking? Or what a dog's "purpose" truly is? In "A Dog's Purpose," we journey through many lives with Bailey. Today, you'll get to step into the paws of your very own canine creation and tell their unique story!

Part 1: Deconstructing the Dog's POV (Approx. 30 minutes)

1. Discuss "A Dog's Purpose":

- What did you like most about how the story was told from Bailey's (and his other reincarnations') point of view?
- How does the author show the dog's understanding (or misunderstanding) of the human world? Give an example.
- What are some of the "purposes" the dog discovers in the book/movie?

2. Sensory Exploration:

- Dogs experience the world differently than humans. How does "A Dog's Purpose" show this? (Focus on smell, hearing, simple understanding of complex human emotions).
- Imagine you are a dog. Close your eyes for a minute. What do you smell? Hear? What's most important to you *right now*? Write down a few words or phrases.

Part 2: Creating Your Canine Character (Approx. 45-60 minutes)

1. Brainstorm Your Dog:

- **Breed (or mix):** Does its breed influence its personality or abilities? (e.g., a playful Labrador, a watchful German Shepherd, a speedy Greyhound). You can invent a unique mix!
- **Name:** What will you call your dog? Does the name have a story?
- **Appearance:** Fur color, size, special markings? Draw a quick sketch if you like!
- **Personality:** Is your dog brave, shy, goofy, wise, mischievous, loyal? Pick 3-4 key traits.
- **What's its "Purpose" (or what is it searching for?):** This doesn't have to be grand. It could be "to make my human happy," "to find the best sticks," "to protect my family," or "to understand the noisy vacuum cleaner." The purpose can evolve!
- **Key Human(s):** Who are the important humans in your dog's life? What's their relationship like?

2. Character Profile Sheet: Create a page in your notebook for your dog. Include all the details from above. Add a drawing!

Part 3: Penning the Paws-pective (Approx. 60-90 minutes, can be extended)

Now it's time to write! Choose one of the following, or invent your own prompt:

- **Option A: The "First Day" Story.** Write about your dog's first day in a new home, meeting its human for the first time, or a memorable first adventure. Focus on what your dog sees, smells, hears, and feels.
- **Option B: A Day in the Life.** Write a journal entry from your dog's perspective describing a typical (or extraordinary!) day. What exciting things happen? What confuses them? What makes them happy?
- **Option C: The "Purposeful Moment."** Write a short story about a time your dog felt they fulfilled their purpose, or had a big realization about their human or the world.
- **Option D: A Dog's Diary (Series).** Plan out 3-5 short diary entries from different points in your dog's life. This could show how they grow and change.

Writing Tips:

- Use first-person ("I," "me," "my").
- Focus on sensory details, especially smell and sound.
- Show, don't just tell, emotions (e.g., "My tail thumped so hard against the floor, I thought it would break" instead of "I was happy").
- Keep the language and understanding appropriate for a dog (e.g., they might not understand complex human conversations but will pick up on tone and keywords).
- Have fun with it! Let your dog's personality shine through.

Part 4: Sharing and Showcasing (Approx. 15-30 minutes)

1. **Read Aloud:** Share your story (or a favorite part) with a family member or friend.
2. **Illustrate:** Create a drawing, a comic strip, or even a short animation (if using digital tools) to go with your story.
3. **"Author's" Note:** Write a brief note explaining why you chose your dog's particular traits or purpose.

Extension Activities (Optional):

- Research a specific dog breed and incorporate factual details into your story.
- Write a poem from your dog's perspective.
- If your dog "reincarnates" like Bailey, write a short scene from their next life. What lessons do they carry over?
- Create a "lost dog" poster for your character, but fill it with personality details, not just physical description.

Reflection:

- What was the most challenging part of writing from a dog's perspective?
- What did you learn about storytelling by doing this activity?
- How did thinking about a dog's "purpose" make you think about your own goals or purpose? (Gentle reflection, no pressure).