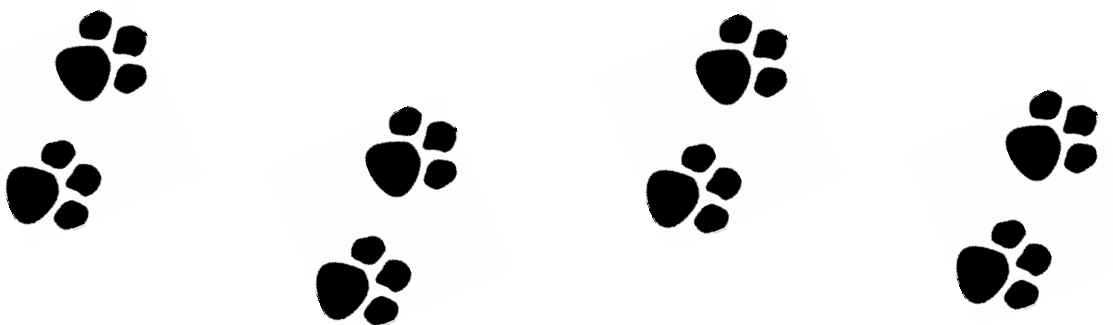




# **Murphy's Miracle**

## **One Dog's Wild Journey**

### **Teacher Guide**



Dear Teacher,

Thank you so much for teaching *Murphy's Miracle – One Dog's Wild Journey* to your class. We hope you all enjoy the book.

Feel free to make as many copies of this guide as you like. Make sure you also download the accompanying answer key from the publisher's or author's website.

Author – [www.JulieSamrick.com](http://www.JulieSamrick.com)

Publisher – [www.MotinaBooks.com](http://www.MotinaBooks.com)

Murphy's Miracle was inspired by the true story of a golden retriever who was lost in the Eldorado National Forest in the fall of 2012. Her family spent many months searching for her, without any luck. Miraculously, she was found and reunited with her family in June, 2014.

The book is a combination of fact and fiction. The author, Julie Samrick, created the story of how Murphy may have survived two winters in the wilderness. The author and Murphy's family speculated that there must have been some human intervention at some point, in order for her to have survived. Also, Murphy had been wearing a collar when she was lost, which she no longer had. This is how the stories of Paj and Drake came to be.

In the story of Murphy's Miracle, she runs off because she is scared by gunfire when the camping party is skeet shooting. She begins her journey by eating a Bachman Sparrow that has fallen from its nest.

She encounters a black bear, and then a family of Hmong people. Paj is a young girl who falls in love with Murphy, and would love to keep her as a pet. But her parents, Anh and Riam, see animals as workers and not family members. When the family leaves the campsite, Murphy is alone once more.

She is accepted by a family of coyotes, and survives the winter with them. Murphy meets many other animals during her time in the wilderness including wolverines, pikas, and a mountain lion.

Throughout this time, her family is searching for her, driving all through the Eldorado National Forest and beyond.

Murphy was found by a park ranger in June, 2014, and reunited with her family. She was thin, her coat was faded, and she had developed a new fear of water. But she was home with her family where she belonged and her camping days were over.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions or suggestions.

Thank you!

Diane Windsor, Publisher  
Motina Books, LLC

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## The Theme of Murphy's Miracle

A book's theme is the main idea or feeling that runs throughout the story. There can be one or more themes.

Circle the theme or themes that you notice in Murphy's Miracle.

Hope

Appearance

Courage

Kindness

Perseverance

Survival

Cooperation

Honesty

Compassion


Love

Loyalty

## Characters in Murphy's Miracle

Draw a picture of the character in the box. List some of the character's personality traits.

**Murphy Braun**



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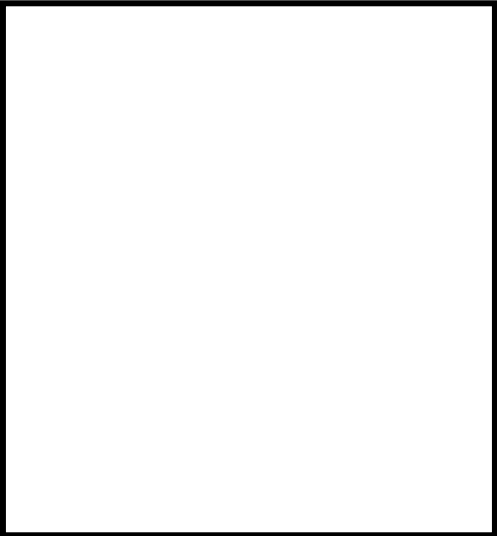
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**Erin Braun**



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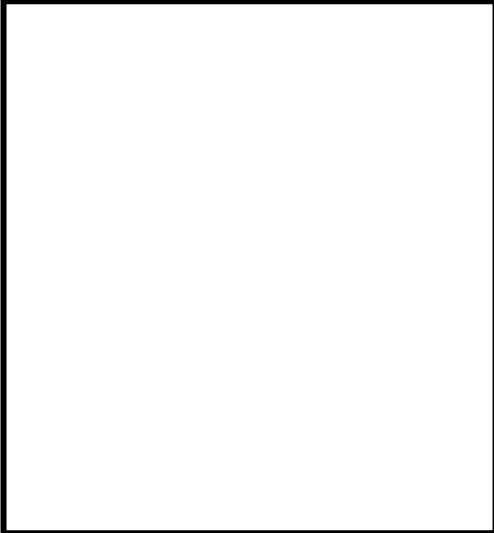
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**Nathan Braun**



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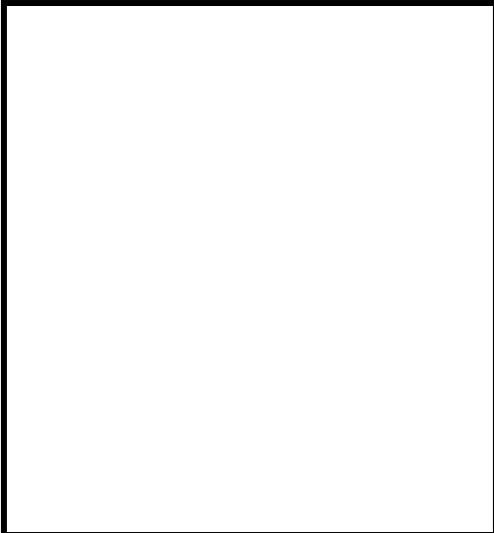
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**Paj**



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**Riam**



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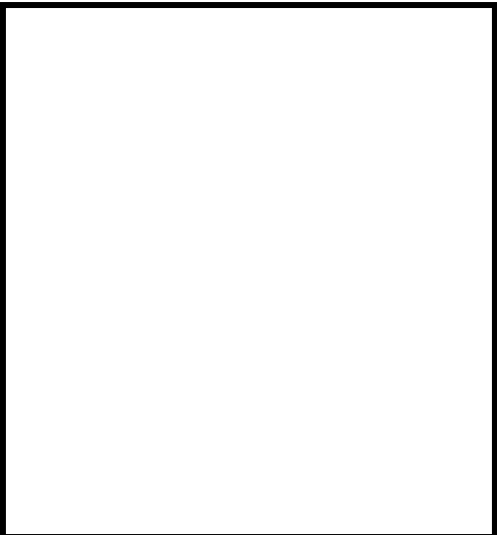
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**Anh**



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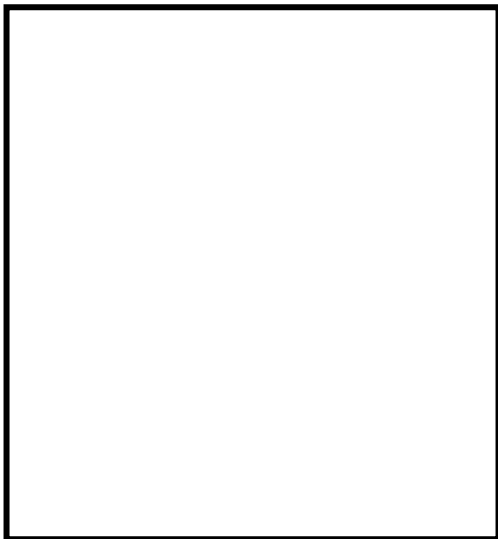
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**Drake**



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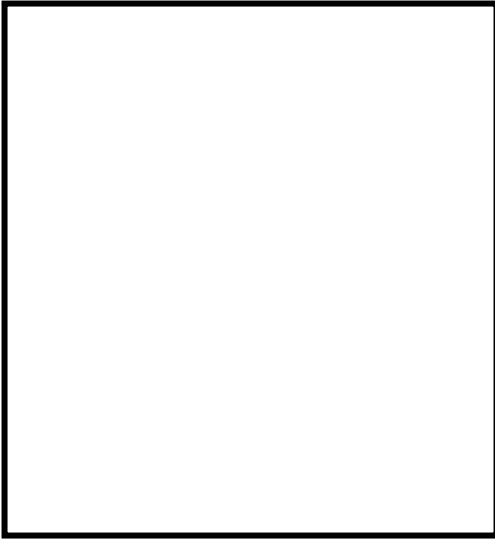
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## Animals in the ElDorado Forest

Draw a picture of the character in the box, and write some of the animals' personality traits.

### Black Bear



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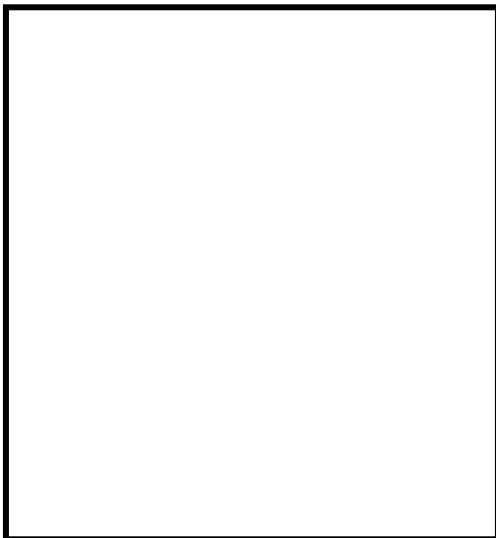
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### Pika



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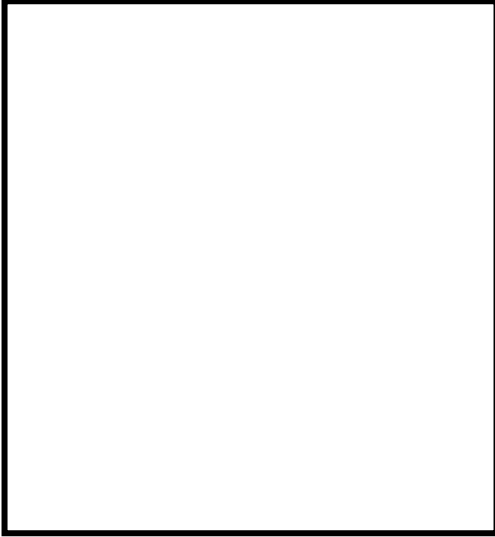
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**Porcupine**



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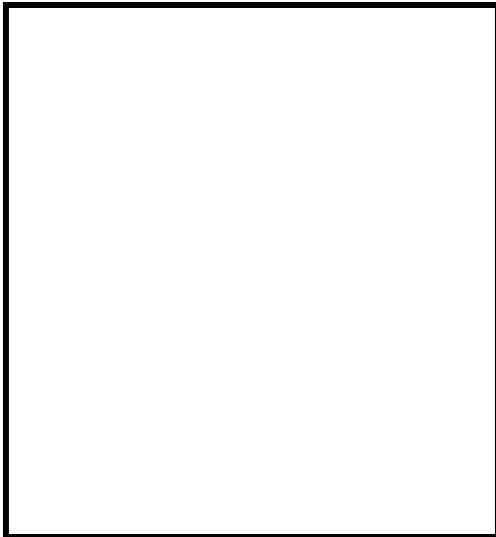
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**Coyote**



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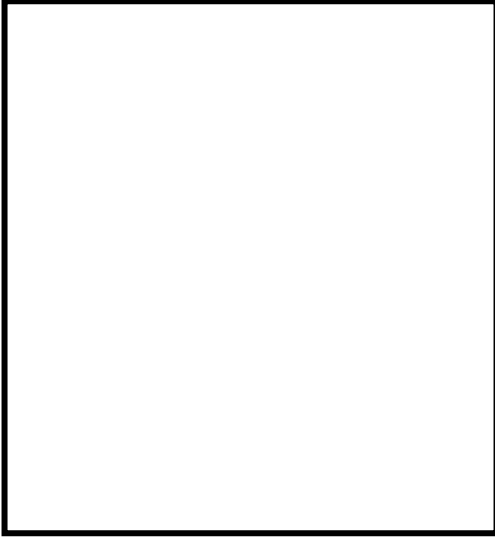
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**Wolverine**



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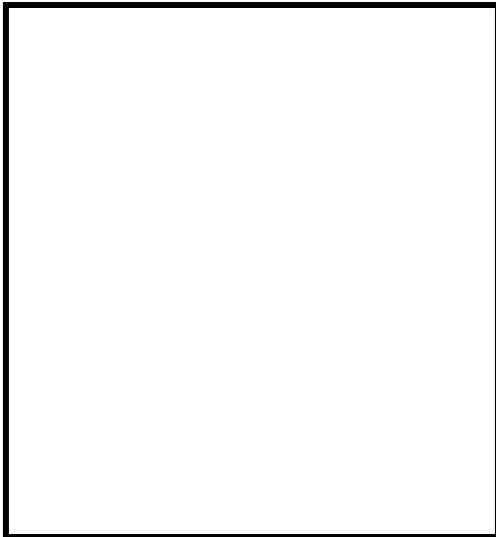
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**Mountain Lion**



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## Who Said What?

"I wish I could keep Murphy as my own pet. I love her so much. I need to find a way to convince my family to let me keep her."

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"It's hard for me to concentrate on my job since Murphy was lost. I feel like I should be out there searching for her all the time."

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"Dogs are not meant to live inside with people. They are supposed to work and hunt, but that's all."

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"America has infinite opportunity. When you have a good education, you can do and become anything. I am so proud to live here, and I want the best for my children."

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"The only thing I want for Christmas is for Murphy to come home."

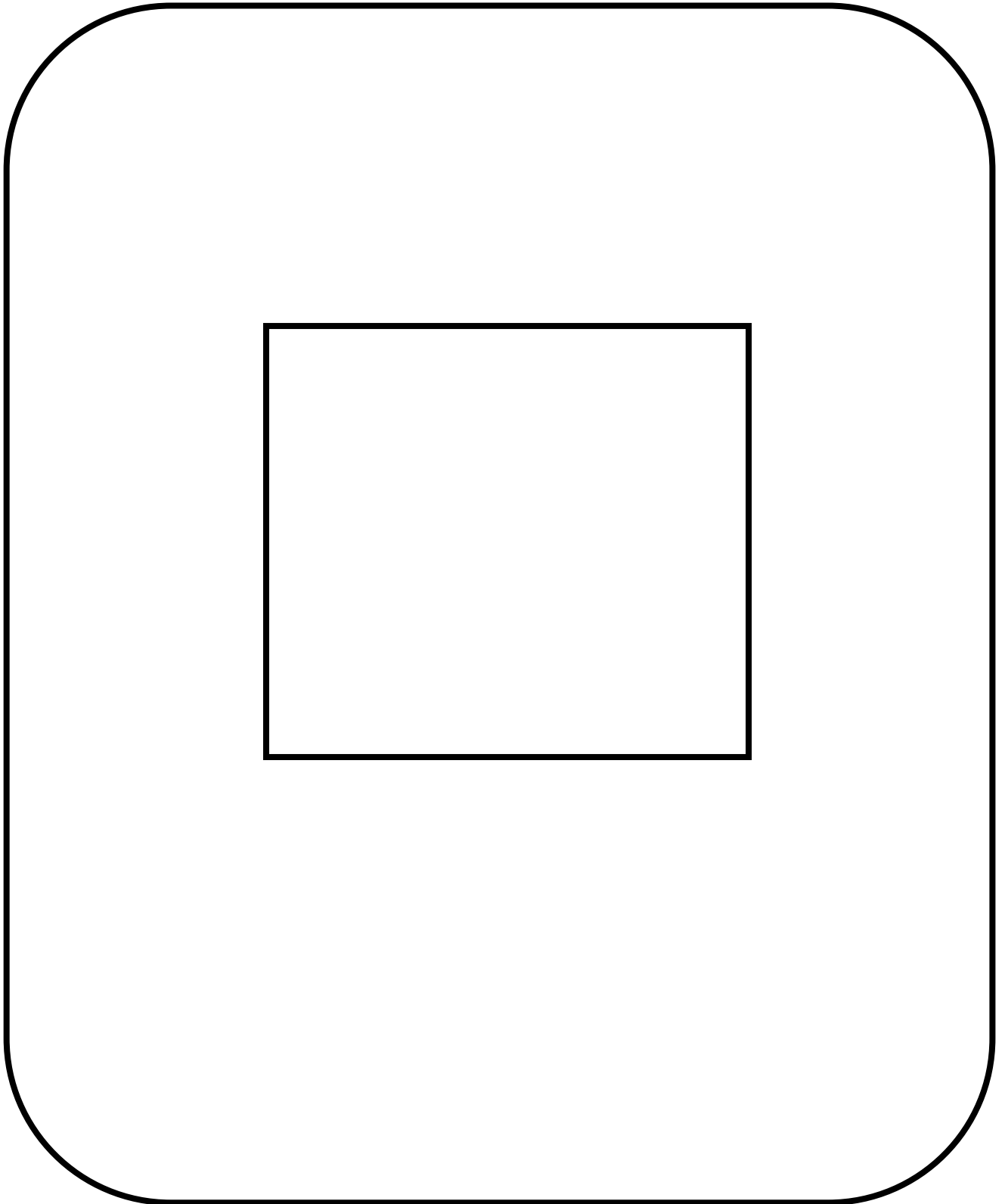
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"People ask me all the time if I think Murphy is still alive. I say yes, of course. I have to be positive, and keep hope alive."

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## **Create a Lost Dog Poster**

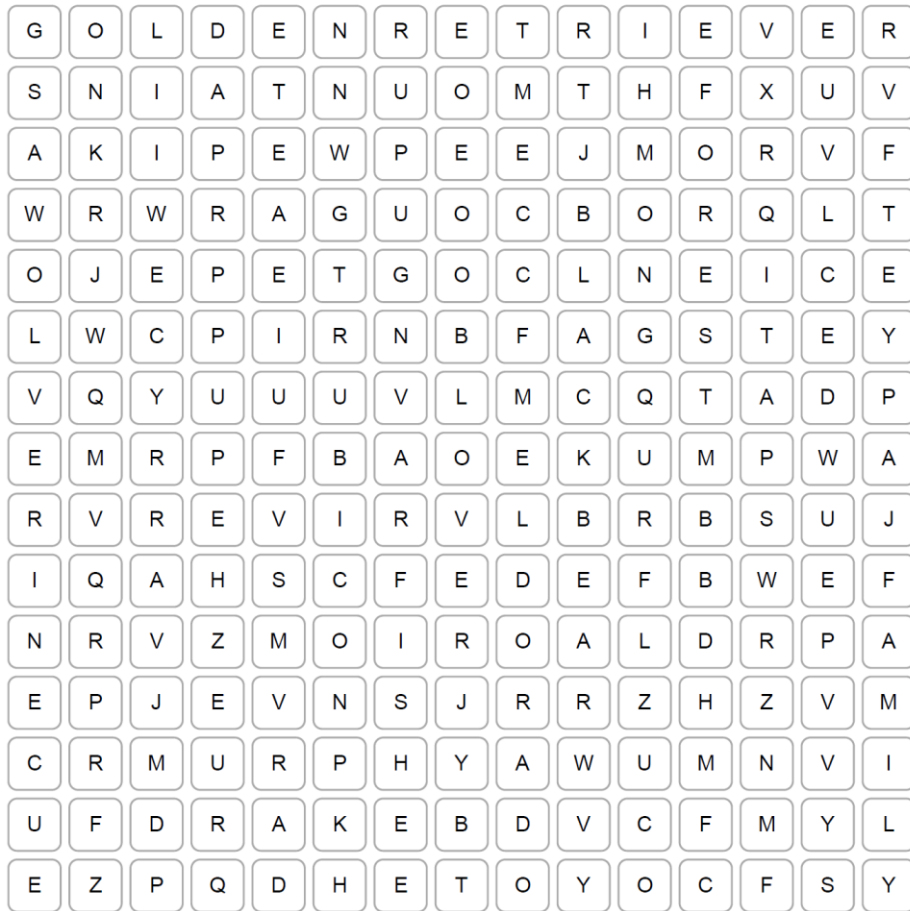
One of the most important things to do when you're looking for a lost pet is to create a poster! Create a lost dog poster for Murphy, or for your own pet. Make sure you include the vital information about your pet, and also how people can contact you.



# Murphy's Miracle Word Search

Can you find all the hidden words in this word search?

Words can go in the following directions: → ↓ ←



**GOLDENRETRIEVER**

**RIVER**

**PET**

**JEEP**

**FAMILY**

**LOVE**

**FISH**

**PAJ**

**HMONG**

**BLACKBEAR**

**MOUNTAINS**

**PIKA**

**FOREST**

**WOLVERINE**

**MURPHY**

**COUGAR**

**ELDORADO**

**DRAKE**

**COYOTE**

**RUBICON**

## When Did It Happen?

Draw a line from the number to the event, so the events are in order.

<p>Paj finds Murphy and wants to take her home.</p> 	<p><b>1</b></p>
 <p>Murphy runs from a forest fire.</p>	<p><b>2</b></p>
<p>Murphy befriends Drake and sleeps in his pickup truck.</p> 	<p><b>3</b></p>
 <p>Murphy joins a pack of coyotes.</p>	<p><b>4</b></p>
<p>Murphy encounters a mountain lion.</p> 	<p><b>5</b></p>
 <p>Murphy plays with a salmon and a bear.</p>	<p><b>6</b></p>







Paj would love to have a pet like Murphy for her very own, but her parents don't think animals are part of the family. Write a letter that Paj would write to her parents, asking them for a pet and explaining why she would benefit by having a dog of her own.

A series of horizontal lines for writing the letter.

## Grammar Exercises

**Circle the nouns in the following sentences:**

The bear looked at her, eyes narrowed, while Murphy's heart and legs froze with fear.

As she traveled deeper into the forest, the trees began to eclipse the sun until daytime was as dark and lonely as the night.

In the forest there was no easy water to drink, no quick laps from the silver bowl she was accustomed to, and no warm shelter where her family eventually came home and gave her affection and plenty to eat.

**Circle the verbs in the following sentences:**

The days of easy, highchair scraps were over. Murphy wasn't a housedog any longer. She would have to survive in the wild, which meant that whether she ate or not would be up to her.

All eyes were on the action the dads were creating, but Murphy's ears were desperate for peace.

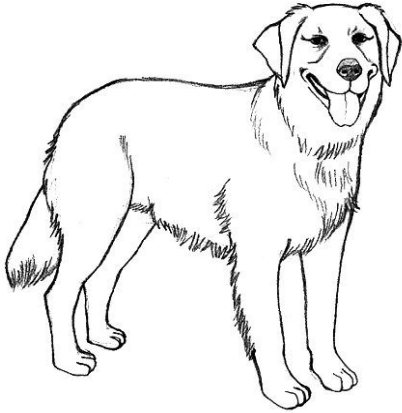
Murphy circled until she was about to burst. *Please stop*, her eyes begged and her tail demanded.

**Circle the adjectives in the following sentences:**

Paj saw something golden colored standing next to the iron pot over the fire, *a coyote or a mountain lion*, she thought, and her heart jumped.

"That's a boy's name," people said, but Murphy was feminine enough, a perfect name actually.

The frigid days and even colder nights also brought with it the realization that Murphy may not have survived.



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## **Murphy's Miracle Story Quiz**

1. What kind of dog is Murphy?

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2. Name two animals that Murphy encountered while she was in the forest:

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3. What was Murphy's family doing when she was lost in the forest?

Fishing

Camping

Hiking

4. What kinds of vehicles was the group driving along the Rubicon Trail?

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5. What were the animals that Paj's family hunted and cooked in a stew?

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6. What was the type of animal that Paj's family really wanted to get, but was very elusive and difficult to find?

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7. Paj's family originally came from Asia. The name of their culture is,

German

British

Hmong

8. What kind of animals accepted Murphy into their pack?

Bobcat

Coyote

Wolf

9. Drake fought in a war that began after the attack in New York on this date:

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10. Murphy loved to swim before she was lost, but seemed afraid of the water after she was reunited with her family.

True

False