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# Activity Guide

800-788-1121

## A Dog Like Jack

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### ABOUT THE STORY

Mike, the narrator of this story, loves his dog Jack. They play together all year round. In fact, Jack is as much a part of the family as Mike, his mother, or his father. But Jack is old, and eventually he dies. How can the family deal with this terrible loss?

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR

Dyanne DiSalvo-Ryan grew up in Brooklyn, New York, and went to school at the School of Visual Arts. She worked for Hallmark Cards and published her first children's book in 1980. Her inspiration for *A Dog Like Jack* was her own dog, also named Jack. Ms. DiSalvo-Ryan lives in a small town in New Jersey.

### INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask children if any of them have a pet. Have volunteers describe their pets and tell how they feel about them. Then explain that the book they will read is about a family and the dog they love.

### READING ACTIVITIES

#### *Comprehension/Thinking Skills*

- "What does Jack do on Halloween?"
- "What do Mike and Jack do in the park?"
- "Where is Jack's favorite place?"
- "How old is Jack when Mike is 8?"
- "Why do you think the family buries Jack at the summer house?" (Draw conclusions)
- "Why does it sometimes make Mike laugh to see another dog?" (Draw conclusions)

### Vocabulary

Write these parts of compound words from the story on the chalkboard. Ask children to match each pair of words to make a compound word. Then they can define each compound and use it in a sentence.

sea	boy
birth	space
back	shore
cow	day
outer	yard

### CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

#### *Math: Dog Years*

When Jack is eight years old in the story, he is 56 in dog years. Explain to children that is because there are 7 dog years to each human year ( $7 \times 8 = 56$ ). Using this equation, have children figure out how old Jack is in dog years when he is 9, 10, and 12 in human years.

#### *Art: Halloween for Pets*

Jack dresses up as a sheep for Halloween. Have children think of and design costumes for their pets or for an imaginary pet. Children can draw the pets wearing the costumes. Display their creations in the classroom.

#### *Science: Dog Breeds*

Have children find information on different dog breeds. Each child can decide which breed they would most like to have as a pet. Encourage them to draw a picture of the dog and write a description of the breed.

#### *Science: Animal Lifespans*

In the story, Jack lives until he is 13 years old. Have children research other animal lifespans. Some animals to find out about are the mayfly, the cat, the elephant, and the whale. Ask children to report on the information they find.

### INTERNET ACTIVITY

Before you send children to do research using any of the keywords listed below, you may wish to try them yourself to be sure the sites are suitable.

#### *More About the Author*

Children can find out more about Dyanne DiSalvo-Ryan by going to her website on the Internet, using her name as a keyword. Encourage children to read more about Ms. DiSalvo-Ryan and to read descriptions of the other books she has written. Children can take notes on the book they would most like to read and report on it to the class.