

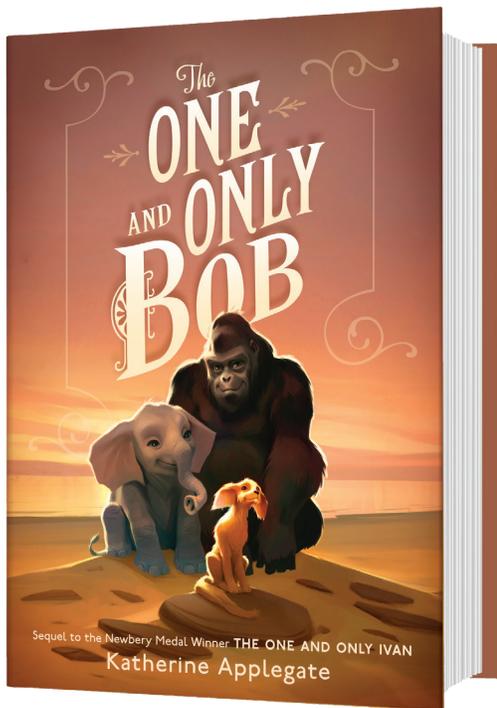
✿ Educators' Guide ✿

The **ONE AND ONLY BOB**



Sequel to the Newbery Medal Winner **THE ONE AND ONLY IVAN**
Katherine Applegate

ABOUT THE BOOK:



Bob is a realist. Once a homeless puppy, tossed out of a truck on a highway, he has learned the hard way how to be a survivor. One thing's for sure—it certainly helps to have good friends, like Ivan, the gorilla who let Bob sleep in his cage at a shopping mall. Bob was part of the plan that helped Ivan and the baby elephant Ruby move to a nearby zoo and a much-improved habitat, while Bob's reward was to be adopted by Julia, whose dad now works at the zoo. It was a happy ending for all, especially since Bob can now visit his old friends by sneaking into the zoo in Julia's backpack. But Bob has a secret about his past, something he was too ashamed to share with anyone, until . . . a series of events forces Bob to share his secret. In the chaos of a horrendous hurricane, Bob needs to find the courage to help his best friends and allow them to help him in ways he never dreamed were possible.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How does Bob feel about the phrase “man’s best friend,” which he heard on a TV show he watched with Ivan? Why does that phrase make him so angry? Discuss how his early experiences in life shaped his personality. What does Bob mean when he says, “When you’re an animal, it helps to be a realist”? (p. 32)
2. Compare Bob’s character with Ivan’s. How were their early lives different and how were they similar? Why do you think Ivan was so accepting of Bob sleeping on his stomach when he first came to the mall?
3. Discuss the difference between Bob’s friendship with Ivan and Ruby and his interactions with Minnie and Moo, the guinea pigs, and Nutwit, the squirrel. Why does he dislike Snickers, the poodle?
4. According to Bob, what are the biggest differences between dogs and humans? What is the one human feature that he says he would find very useful? What can you learn about other animals that have opposable thumbs?
5. Why does Bob hate to walk past the animal shelter? Describe his feelings about the animals he can hear in the shelter. What does he mean when he says, “. . . the shelter harshes my mellow”? (p. 77)
6. Compare Bob’s stories about his conversations with Droolius, when he was a stray, and with Kimu the wolf, when he visits the zoo. How does Bob feel about their different environments and their interactions with humans?
7. Describe Bob’s impressions of the zoo and the animals that live with his friends Ivan and Ruby. What does he mean when he says he is considered “enrichment” at the zoo? (p. 102) Why doesn’t Bob like Kinyani?
8. Why has Bob never told anyone the secret that haunts him? Why does he think he is really a coward? Describe the ways in which Bob shows bravery at the zoo after the tornado and at the animal shelter later.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

9. How does Ruby come up with the idea to save the baby gorilla Kudzoo? Why do the other elephants allow Ruby to go with Bob to find Ivan? Why does Bob call Ruby “wise beyond her years”? (p. 191)
10. Why hasn't Bob told any of his animal friends about Boss? Why did he not look for her on the highway? What does he mean when he says, “There's a certain freedom that comes with owning your faults”? (p. 234)
11. Compare Boss's experience of the last several years to Bob's. How has her life experience affected her feelings about people? What does Boss mean when she says, “I've had to forgive myself plenty, just, you know, to get through the day”? (p. 256) Why is it so hard for Bob to forgive himself?
12. Why does Bob go to look for Boss's puppy? What does he mean when he says to Ivan, “I let her down once, and now, well, I have a second chance”? (p. 290) What is the bravest thing Bob does in his rescue of Rowdy? How have Bob's feelings about people changed throughout this story?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:



MAN'S BEST FRIEND—REALLY? Bob refers to Hachiko, though he can't remember the dog's name. This is a true story about a dog's loyalty to the man he lived with in Japan. Research information about him through one of the books or websites that tell Hachiko's story. Write a short biography of this famous Japanese dog and compare his life to the experiences that Bob lives through in this book.

TRUTH IS STRANGER THAN FICTION. Both *The One and Only Ivan* and *The One and Only Bob* are works of fiction, but they are based on a true story. Find information about the real Ivan and what happened to him. (www.zooatlanta.org/animal-legend/ivan/). Compare the fictional story and the true story and make a chart of the ways that they are different. Discuss the decisions authors might make when they are writing fiction as opposed to relating a true story and why they might make those decisions.

ANIMALS IN DANGER. While dogs are not an endangered species, some of Bob's friends are. Find out how the World Wildlife Fund is trying to help animals in the wild and save them from becoming extinct.

www.worldwildlife.org/species/western-lowland-gorilla

www.worldwildlife.org/species/elephant

Learn about other efforts to keep animals safe in their native habitats.

BUILDING A BETTER ZOO. Zoos have been changing rapidly in recent years to provide better experiences for the animals and the humans who come to see them. Look up information about some of the best zoos in America and make a list of changes that have been made to improve zoos over the last fifty years. How do they compare with a zoo that you have visited? Draw a map of the zoo as Bob describes it when Julia takes him in her backpack.

STORMY WEATHER. Make a list of the warning signs of a hurricane or tornado and the precautions that need to be taken for people to stay safe during a major storm. Learn about the ways in which various animals can sense a storm approaching better than humans can. What are the tools that humans use to detect and predict hurricanes and tornadoes?

Guide prepared by Connie Rockman, Youth Literature Consultant.

A NOTE FROM KATHERINE APPLGATE

Dear reader,

Dogs. Aren't they just the best?

If you answered "no," or even "yes" with hint of ambivalence, um . . . what is *wrong* with you?

Sorry. Even if you're not on Team Canine, I'm sure you're a swell person. Maybe you're a cat fanatic, or a guinea pig fan. I get that. I love all kinds of creatures, right down to tarantulas and naked mole rats.

And I'll admit that some dogs are easier to love than others. My own mutt, Stan, is a case in point. Mercurial, needy, narcissistic, he's not exactly the poster dog for Man's Best Friend. Still and all, when Stan cuddles up just so (usually while I'm busy on my laptop), he somehow manages to pull off that mysterious canine magic trick: he makes me feel a little bit better about life.

Stan also serves as my muse, albeit sporadically. As a matter of fact, Bob, the narrator of *The One and Only Bob*, was modeled on Stan, right down to the misanthropy, the gluttony, and the odor.

Bob originally appeared as a character in my novel *The One and Only Ivan*, inspired by the true story of a western lowland gorilla. The real Ivan spent twenty-seven years, alone and caged, in a shopping mall in Tacoma, Washington. Did he ever have a pal like Bob? I don't know. But there was a pet store at the mall where Ivan lived, and he had lots of visitors. It wasn't a stretch for me to imagine such a friendship evolving.

And so Bob was born. He had to be tiny, to fit in a hole in Ivan's cage. He had to be wily. He had to be a street dog: tough and blunt and no-nonsense. (You can imagine my delight when I learned that the inimitable Danny DeVito would be voicing Bob in the Disney *The One and Only Ivan* movie. Yep. That's Bob, all right.)

Bob's had a tough life. He's seen the darker side of humans. He doesn't really get the whole "man's best friend" thing. (His best friend, as it happens, is a gorilla.) He's carrying some pretty heavy baggage for such a little dog. And he faces down a lot in the story: tornadoes and owls, floods and wolves, terror and guilt and self-doubt.

But through it all, Bob never loses his tiny-mutt swagger. And he never stops listening to his good-dog heart.

Even if you're a devout cat person, I think you'll like the guy.



ABOUT KATHERINE APPLGATE

Katherine Applegate is the Newbery Medal-winning and #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of numerous books for young readers, including *The One and Only Ivan*, *Crenshaw*, *Wishtree*, the *Endling* series, the *Roscoe Riley Rules* chapter books series, and the *Animorphs* series. She lives with her husband, who writes as the author Michael Grant, and their children in California.



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