Command & Cuddles

TEACHER CORNER • FREE CLASSROOM RESOURCE

Book 1 Read-Aloud Discussion Guide

for **Command & Cuddles: The Adventures of Sarge & Arwen** by R. L. Sarwen

Ages 4-6 · PreK-1



The story: When the backyard gate swings open, best friends Sarge and Arwen set off on a neighborhood adventure with one rule: stay together. Along the way they race new friends, chase a runaway ball, cross a wiggly bridge, and help each other out of a tight spot. They make it home just in time, two very good dogs.

At a glance

Time: About 20 minutes (10 min reading, 10 min talk and draw)

Materials: The book, crayons, this guide

Goal: Talk about kind choices and being a good friend.

Today's Choice: Choose kindness. Be a good friend.

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☆ **Today's Choice:** Choose kindness. Be a good friend.

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TEACHER NOTES

Before & During Reading

Read the book aloud in about 10 minutes. Stop 3 or 4 times to talk. Keep each stop short: one or two answers, then keep reading.

Before reading: meet the pups



Sarge

The brave little leader

Big, silly, and always hungry. **Leader strength:** being brave and cheering on the team. **Still learning:** slowing down to make a plan.



Arwen

The thoughtful little heart

Small, smart, and notices everything. **Leader strength:** noticing how friends feel and making a plan. **Still learning:** being brave enough to share ideas out loud.

- **Picture walk.** Show the cover and flip through a few pictures without reading. Ask: "Who do you see? Where do you think the pups are going?"
- **Set a purpose.** Say: "Today we will watch for kind choices. Show me a thumbs-up when you see one!"

During reading: 4 stopping points

1. **Pause when the gate swings open and Arwen sets a rule for the trip.** "Why is staying together a good rule for friends?"
2. **Pause at a moment when Sarge heads the wrong way.** "How does Sarge feel? Show me with your face. What do his friends do?"
3. **Pause when the ball gets stuck.** "What could Arwen do now? How can friends help?"
4. **Pause when Sarge gets stuck in the play tunnel.** "How do his friends help him? How would you help a friend?"

Read-aloud tips

- Use a big voice for Sarge and a quiet, careful voice for Arwen.
- Point to the pictures and let children say the sound words with you.
- Each page has a short read-aloud line, so the whole story takes about 10 minutes.



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TEACHER NOTES

After Reading & Take It Home

Talk it over

- **Turn and talk.** Give partners this sentence frame: **"I would choose ___ because ___."** Ask: "Which friend made a kind choice? What kind choice can you make today?"
- **Thumbs up, thumbs down.** Read each sentence on the "Kind Choice or Not?" page (p. 5). Children show a thumbs-up for a kind choice, a thumbs-down for an unkind one, then circle the matching pup.
- **Feelings check.** Use "Show Me With Your Face" (p. 4). Name each feeling together, make the face, then ask: "When did a pup in the story feel this way?"

Follow-up page

Draw a Kind Choice (p. 6). Children draw a kind choice they can make today. They label it with a word or tell you, and you write their words on the line.

Make it fit your class

- **Extra support:** point to the pictures and name the feeling for them; accept pointing or one-word answers.
- **Stretch:** ask "What else could they have chosen?" and "What happened because of that choice?"

Take it home

Families can keep the fun going with the free **Fun Zone coloring pages for ages 4-6** at **commandandcuddles.com/fun-zone**. No sign-up needed.

End the lesson by saying it together: **"Everything is a choice we choose to make."**



Keep it going this week

- Make a class chart titled **"Kind Choices We Noticed."** Add a paw print each time someone spots a kind choice this week.
- Revisit the story later in the week and ask: "What would Sarge and Arwen do in our classroom?"

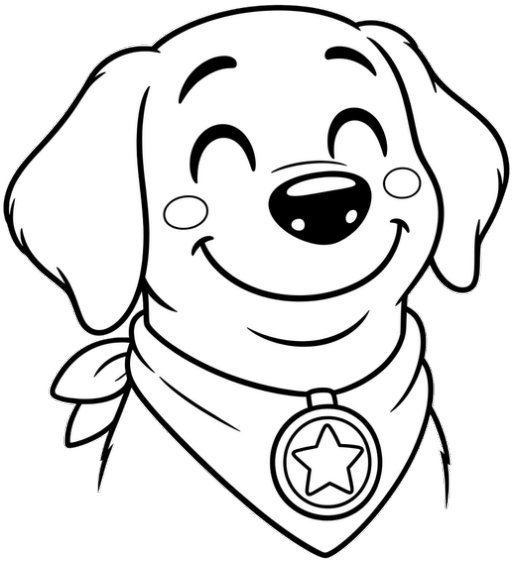
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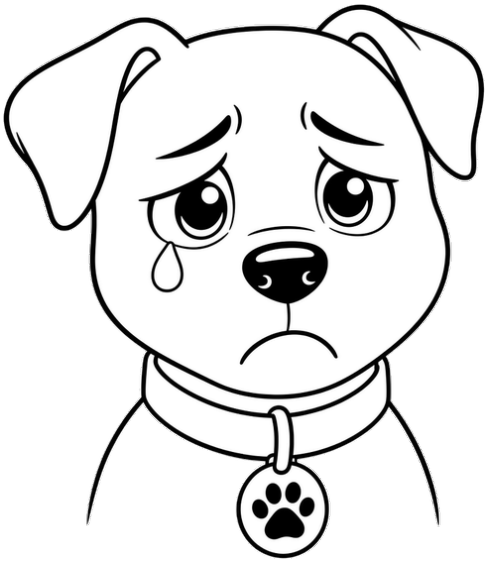
Show Me With Your Face

Name _____ Ages 4-6 · PreK-1

Look at each pup. Make the same face! Then color the pup that shows how you feel right now.



HAPPY



SAD



SLEEPY



EXCITED

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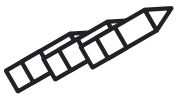
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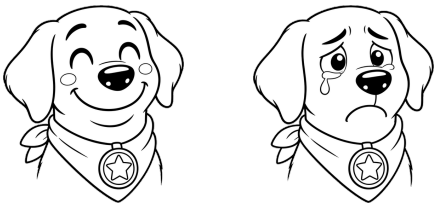
Kind Choice or Not?

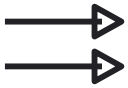
Name _____ Ages 4-6 · PreK-1

Listen to each sentence. Circle the happy pup for a kind choice. Circle the sad pup for an unkind choice.

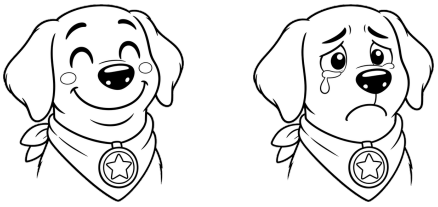


I share the crayons.



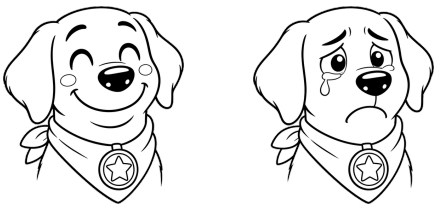


I push to be first in line.



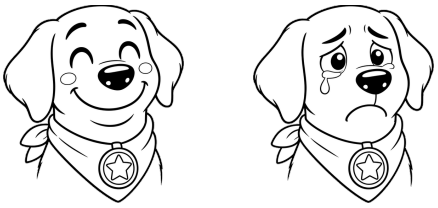


I help a friend pick up blocks.



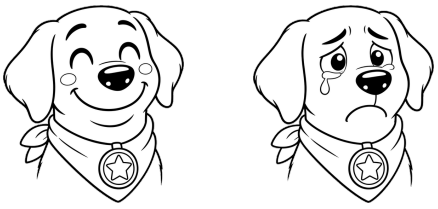


I say "Good morning!" to a new friend.



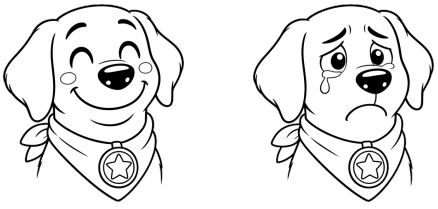


I grab a toy from a friend.





I tell a friend, "Nice try!"



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Draw a Kind Choice

Name _____ Ages 4-6 · PreK-1

Draw a kind choice you can make today. Tell a grown-up about it, or write a word.



I can be a good friend by _____

Grown-ups: write the child's words on the lines.

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