

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Marley A Dog like No Other: discussion questions Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Complete ANY TWO questions in your notebook for each chapter. Answer in complete sentences with correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

### **Preface, The Perfect Dog**

- 1) "You want to pick on that's not timid," my father coached. "Try rattling the cage and see which ones aren't afraid." P. 2 Criticize this advice from the author's father. Do you believe this is solid advice? Why or why not? Back up your answer with supporting details.
- 2) On page 3 the author states that Shaun was born with a curse. What was that curse? Why did the author refer to that issue as a curse? Do you agree with the author's opinion?
- 3) Create a chart in which you give the character traits of Shaun with an explanation.

Character	Trait	Explanation
Shaun	Intelligent	Mastered every command the author gave him

### **Chapter 1, And Puppy Makes Three**

- 1) Why do you think the puppy the author and his wife (Jenny) purchased was cheaper than the rest? Explain using details.
- 2) Develop a way to tell if the dog you were looking at would be an excellent adoption. Be specific and use details.
- 3) Why does the author have a slight queasiness in his gut when he meets the "Dad?"

### **Chapter 2, Homeward Bound**

- 1) Read the second full paragraph on page 12 again. How does Marley show his musical ability in the car? Be specific and back up your answers with details.
- 2) At one point towards the end of this chapter Marley begins crying. Why does this start? Design a way in which you might make Marley feel better.
- 3) John brings Marley into the bedroom and helps Marley feel comfortable enough to sleep. Do you agree with his method of taking care of Marley in this situation? How do you think Jenny will feel about Marley in the bedroom? Be specific use details.

### **Chapter 3, Mr. Wiggles**

- 1) "Marley strolled like a runaway locomotive strolls." This is a simile, comparing two things using like or as. Can you create three more similes about Marley?
- 2) "But when Marley had something to hide, he couldn't keep it to himself. He would explode into hyper-drive. His body would quiver, his heard would bob from side to side, and his entire rear would swing in a sort of spastic dance. We call it the Marley Mambo." I feel like I am just like Marley, I HAVE to tell the truth, I can not lie, especially to my

husband and parents. What happens to you when you do something wrong and you know you have to tell your parents? Does your body react in a different way, do you speak differently, does your stomach feel different? Explain your answer with details.

- 3) On page 18 Marley's tail is referred to as "the wildly wagging weapon." This reminds me of what I call me dog Jesse James, "You are like a bull in a china shop." Describe how this quote used to describe my dog fits the description of Marley in this novel. Use details to explain your answer.

#### **Chapter 4, Master and Beast**

- 1) Read the first full paragraph on page 24 again, it starts with "You're supposed to be..." What does John mean when he calls "Marley a Labrador evader?" Be specific when stating your answer. Do you think John was correct in calling Marley that?
- 2) Read the first through the third full paragraphs on page 25 starting with "This is I am the master..." Does Marley really understand what John is saying to him? Do you think there is an unspoken language between animals and their owners?
- 3) At the end of this chapter John tells Jenny that he thinks Marley is really getting the hang of walking on the leash with out pulling. Jenny states. "I wouldn't be so sure about that." What does Jenny mean by this comment? Does she know something John doesn't know?

#### **Chapter 5, A Battle of Wills**

- 1) What do you think John means in this line, "...[the] trainer believes that there are no bad dogs, only weak willed and hapless owners?" Be specific with your answer and give details where possible.
- 2) On page 30 the trainer says, "A dog can only answer to one master." What does the trainer mean by this? State who you think the master of Marley should be, Jenny or John. Make sure you defend your choice with details.
- 3) On page 38 John works with Marley with the command "sit" and "stay." How else would you train a dog to do those commands? Would you train like John or do you think you have a better way? Be specific and use details where possible.

#### **Chapter 6, The Great Escape**

- 1) Oh my gosh! Marley escaped from the car as it was moving! Imagine you were one of the drivers behind John and Jenny watching this scene unfold. Compare what you would do with what John and Jenny did to fix this situation. You may use chart form (with complete sentences) to answer this question.
- 2) The gas station attendants had a choice to make. They could either assist John and Jenny with getting Marley back into the car or they could just stand there and laugh. We know what they chose to do, but would you choose to do the same? Defend the choice the gas station attendants made in the "Marley escapes from the car" scene.

## **Chapter 7, The Things he Ate**

- 1) After reading this chapter it should be clear why it was named "The Things he Ate." For what purpose did the author name the chapter that? If you were the author, would you change the name and what would you change it to? Be sure to defend your answers with details.
- 2) You may have to do some research for this one: Have you ever heard of certain types of foods that dogs can not eat? If so, what are the foods and why shouldn't they eat them. Back up your answers with details and possibly the source where you found the answer (book, internet website, encyclopedia, etc).

## **Chapter 8, The Dog's Got to Go**

- 1) Uh oh, Jenny seems to be at her breaking point. What are some of the events that have led up to Jenny feeling this way? Use specific examples from the book.
- 2) I am sure you can understand how upset Jenny is as well as John. Pick a person's side and DEFEND their stance on the issue of getting rid of Marley. Make sure you create a persuasive argument to either keep or get rid of Marley.
- 3) At the end of the chapter John sings the song "We are the Champions" at the top of his lungs. What significance does this song now have for John and Marley. State a time where you felt like singing that song at the top of your lungs. Be specific and give details.

## **Chapter 9, The Final Round**

- 1) Devise a way in which you would break Marley of his habit of jumping on people. What made you choose this way of training Marley? Be specific
- 2) On page 66 John talks about how he has to knee Marley repeatedly to drive home the "no jumping" point. What must be going through Marley's head as his master is cruelly forcing his knee up into Marley's chest? Was John right to train Marley like this?
- 3) At the end of the chapter Jenny's feelings towards Marley begin to change. Document how her feelings change through out the chapter....you may make a timeline to show your answer. What events made Jenny change her mind about Marley?

## **Chapter 10, The Audition**

- 1) Describe how Marley would be great for the part in the movie and how he may not be the right dog for the movie. You may use a chart to answer this question.
- 2) Last year I had a student who tried out to be a character in the movie made from this book. If you had to be one of the characters in this book, which one would you be and why? Be specific and use details.
- 3) At the end of the chapter on page 80 John writes, it was the "don't call us we'll call you" routine. What did John mean by this comment? Use details from the story or your own life to answer this question.

### **Chapter 11, Take Two**

- 1) On page 83 the author writes, "I was in Blockbuster when on a whim I asked the clerk if he knew anything about the movie called *The Last Homerun*. He knew about it *and* he had it in stock. In fact, as luck would have it, not a single copy was checked out." What assumptions can you make about this movie based on fact that every copy of the movie was still available in Blockbuster? Be specific.
- 2) After the fiasco Marley created when he was on set in the last chapter, formulate a reason the director wanted him back the next day. Be specific with your answer.

### **Chapter 12, Jail Break**

- 1) On page 88, Grogan says, "I know, I know you can't help it" about Marley chewing up the laundry room. When there are thunderstorms it is like something takes over Marley and he just can not help but be destructive. Has there ever been a time for you when you "just did something" and couldn't stop yourself? Think of both positive and negatives things you have done in the past. Be specific with your answers.
- 2) "Peace of mind" was supposed to be the crate that was purchased by Marley's owners, however it didn't quite do the trick. Explain how their peace of mind was sabotaged and then develop your own "peace of mind" for Marley.

### **Chapter 13, Dinnertime!**

- 1) "In fancy-pants Boca Raton, Marley stuck out like a sumo wrestler at a ballet." Create 3 more similes to show how Marley would stick out in Boca Raton.
- 2) We all know what happened the day Marley was brought out to the restaurant with his owners. State why you think it was a fantastic idea to try Marley out at a restaurant, or State why you think it was a terrible idea to bring Marley out to eat. Whatever your opinion is about this situation be sure to back up your response with details and defend your answer.

### **Chapter 14, Lightning Strikes**

- 1) On page 102 Grogan replies, "He hasn't eaten one yet." What was he referring to and what was he talking about when he made this statement? Does this scene remind you of any other dog's in any other stories or movies? Be specific with you answers.
- 2) Simile: "He wriggled toward me on his belly like a soldier trying to slide beneath barbed wire." P. 103. Create 3 more similes for Marley crawling close to the ground.
- 3) At the end of this chapter Grogan says that he will never under estimate Marley's fear of the "deadly force of nature." What happened to Grogan during the storm that would make his say something like that? Do you believe that Marley's fear of thunder and lightning is exaggerated? Why or why not? Be specific.

### **Chapter 15, Dog Beach**

- 1) The first time Marley got sick at the beach, a milk jug cap and several tiny plastic soldier heads were found in the water. Should this be a surprise to Grogan? Explain your answer and be detailed.

- 2) The next time Marley got sick in the water it was a little more gruesome. Would you have brought Marley to the dog beach, why or why not? If you were one of the other onlookers at the beach would you have criticized Marley's owner, what would you have said to him?
- 3) What is really Marley's fault that he got sick at the dog beach? What were some of the things that could have made him sick to his stomach at the beach?

### **Chapter 16, A Northbound Plane**

- 1) Right away it should be obvious that Marley is going to be a lot tougher to get onto the plane than we thought. "Airline rules say that the dog has to be able to stand up and turn all the way around [in their crate]." Was Marley able to do that? Explain with details.
- 2) As the airplane is about to take off some awful noise arises from the bowels of the plane. What was that noise? If you were a passenger on the plane would you have been worried?
- 3) If you were Grogan on the plane and you heard those loud moans coming from the baggage area of the plane what would you have done? Explain in detail.

### **Chapter 17, In the Land of Pencils**

- 1) On page 125, the children see snow for the first time in their lives. Describe snow to someone who has never seen it in their life. Be very specific and use similes and metaphors where necessary. Your response must be 6-8 sentences long (one paragraph).
- 2) On page 129 before the big paragraph break, Grogan states that he is "getting too old for that stuff," and then states that in the months ahead it is clear that Marley was too. This statement is something called foreshadowing (hints as to what is to come)? What predictions can you make about Marley as he gets older?
- 3) P.131, "In a dog's life, some plaster would fall, some cushions would get ripped open, some rugs would shred. They were costs we came to balance against the joy and laughter and protection and companionship he gave us. We could have bought a yacht with what we spent on our dog and all the things destroyed. We'd take Marley any day." AWWWWW, in the end it seems like Grogan and his family found everything with Marley to be worth the trouble. Do you agree why or why not? Do you have any similar stories about your own pet you can relate to this quote? Have you ever had something that was a lot of trouble but in the end completely and totally worth it? Explain in detail.

### **Chapter 18, Poultry on Parade**

- 1) p. 136 "That's when it first occurred to me that maybe he wasn't just ignoring the crowing. Maybe he couldn't hear it." What is Grogan trying to say here? What is he talking about, the crowing?
- 2) Devise a test to diagnose whether or not Marley is having trouble hearing.
- 3) P. 142, the second full paragraph. What was Marley busted for? Why did Grogan say "secretly I had hoped he had been faking it all along?" What does he mean by this statement?

## **Chapter 19, The Potty Room**

- 1) p. 148, "I did not realize just how weak his hips had become until one day when I gave his rump a light pat. His hindquarters collapsed beneath him as though he had just received a cross body block. Down he went." Wow, this seems like a very depressing moment for Grogan, what do you think he is realizing about Marley? Explain your answer.
- 2) On page 153 the second full paragraph of the page Marley shows incredible determination. When have you ever saw or had determination like Marley? What situation may give you the strength to rise above the challenge and complete your goal?
- 3) Grogan eventually had to go rescue Marley out in the deep snow. As Grogan was coming to get Marley something happened. Explain what happened and why Marley may have had this reaction.

## **Chapter 20, Beating the Odds**

- 1) Page 163, "My miracle dog had beaten the odds." What dose Grogan mean by this statement? Have you, a family member, or pet ever beaten the odds? Explain in detail.
- 2) At the end of the chapter Grogan talks about his dream of Marley. Describe some of your most vivid dreams. Do they mean anything to you? Answer with details.

## **Chapter 21, Borrowed Time**

- 1) Why do you think this chapter was entitled "Borrowed Time?" What does that title have to do with the chapter? Why is it appropriate?
- 2) Why does Grogan have to prepare himself for Marley's passing away?
- 3) How do you think Marley will let Grogan know it is time to go to the vet?

## **Chapter 22, The Big Meadow**

- 1) This is a very upsetting chapter for anyone who has ever lost a pet or someone close to them. What could Grogan do to help this time be easier for him and his family?
- 2) If you could compare Marley to one of your closest friends, how would you do it? You may use a chart, you may write a paragraph...remember Marley was Grogan's best friend for many reasons.
- 3) What are some consoling words you could say to Grogan to make him hurt a little less as he sits with Marley in his final moments?

## **Chapter 23, Beneath the Cherry Tree**

- 1) Write a letter to someone letting them know how much you love them or are thankful for their friendship.
- 2) P. 190, "Honestly, he might just have been the world's worst behaved dog. But he knew from the start what it meant to be man's best friend." Reflect, connect, explain this quote.

## **Chapter 24, Lucky**

- 1) Why is Lucky the name of this chapter?
- 2) Do you think this new puppy will ever take the place of Marley? Explain your answer.