

Rescue and Jessica: A Life-Changing Friendship

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RedRover Readers Program Objective 4: Lesson 4B

Goals and Objectives: Understand how relationships with animals or people can serve as a social support; and how the decisions people make and how people treat others impact individual lives, communities and society.

Time: 45 minutes (25 reading and discussion, 20 writing activity)

Materials: Anchor text (“Rescue & Jessica: A Life-Changing Friendship”), blank sheet of paper for activity

1. Before Reading: As a class, discuss the following topics:

- Have you ever *seen* a service animal? A dog with a special vest on perhaps?
- The title is *Rescue & Jessica: A Life-Changing Friendship*. Look at the cover. Describe what you see. What do you think this book will be about based on the cover?
- Could a girl and a dog be friends? What would that friendship look like?
- What does “friendship” mean?
- What is a “service dog”? (A dog specifically trained to help people or other animals)
- What does “prosthetic” mean? (An artificial body part)

2. During Reading: Read the book to the class. Pause on different pages and discuss the story.

- Go to the page where Jessica gets the news that she will get a service dog. How do you think Jessica is feeling in this picture? Why do you think the decision was made to get a service dog for Jessica? How will this decision impact Jessica and her family?
- Pause on the page where it says, “Jessica made sure that Rescue had playtime every day.” What does it mean when it says that Rescue is a regular dog too? What do dogs need to be healthy, happy and safe? How does Jessica feel about Rescue?
- How does Rescue just lying next to Jessica on her bed make her feel better? Has a pet or family member ever helped you when you were feeling sad? What did they do?
- How do you think Rescue feels lying next to Jessica in the picture? How do you think he feels living with her and helping her?

3. After Reading: Review the story’s illustrations with students and ask to reinforce and extend their understanding of the text:

- How can having a dog change someone’s life for the better?
- Re-read the second to last page, “You changed my life, Rescue. I couldn’t have done this without you.” “You rescued me, Rescue,” said Jessica. Ask, “How do you think Rescue changed her life? What do you think Jessica’s life would be like without Rescue?”



5. Activity: Friends come in all shapes and sizes. Ask students to draw a picture of themselves with their friend(s) doing something they like to do together. Are they friends with animals? If so, which animals? Ask students to label their drawings.

6. At the End of the Lesson: Ask students to reflect on these questions. Try this with the whole group, in a sharing circle or ask students to fill out index cards.

- How did you feel about today's book and discussion?
- Did today's book and discussion change how you think about anything in your life?
- What did you learn from today's book and discussion that you didn't know before?

7. Report about your reading: Please share your students' response in your online report by going to: RedRover.org/teach and click on the link near top of the page that reads [\[Report about your reading\]](#)

