

## ***The Restricted Adventures of Raja: Book 1 and 2***

### ***Empathy Book App***

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### **RedRover Readers Program Objectives 1-5**

#### **Goals and Objectives:**

1. Observe animal behavior and use evidence to analyze the likelihood that animals experience emotions and mixed emotions, as well as when animals may not experience other emotions, such as pride, guilt and judgment.
2. In the context of a narrative, analyze and understand similarities and differences between how people and animals respond to environmental cues.
3. Relate narratives to their own lives to understand how people and animal characters in a story may feel and do things differently or the same as they would.
4. Understand how relationships with animals or people can serve as a social support; and understand how the decisions people make and how people treat others impacts individual lives, communities and society.
5. Identify and evaluate problems by weighing factors such as safety, responsibility and impact on others while developing self-motivation and self-reflection skills and applying these skills to various situations Students will observe animal behavior, body language and emotions. Use evidence from text to analyze the emotions and mixed emotions animals likely experience as well as others animals may not.

#### **RAJA BOOK 1: BECOMING ROVER**

**Time:** 40 minutes (20 minutes reading and discussion, 20 minutes for one extension activity)

**Materials:** [The Restricted Adventures of Raja Empathy Book App](#): Book 1, a way to project the app so students can see it, 8-1/2 x 11 piece of drawing paper or cardstock, board or chart paper

#### **Concepts**

- What emotions do cats and dogs express? How can we tell?
- How are cats, dogs and people different? How are cats, dogs and people the same?
- What choices do we have when we see someone upset or in trouble?

### **Before Reading**

Write these questions on the board for students to think about while you read and project the graphic novel:

- Can dogs and cats feel emotions? If so, how can we tell?
- What choices do we have when we see someone upset or in trouble?

### **Clarify Vocabulary**

- What is a conversation? (talk between two or more people in which thoughts, feelings, and ideas are expressed) On page 20, what does AJ mean by a “dog conversation”?
- What is a responsibility? (a task or job you are expected to do) What does it mean to “take responsibility? (to act independently or to do your job without being asked)

Ask students to think about the questions you wrote on the board as they listen to the story.

### **During Reading**

Project the e-book onto a screen. Read the story aloud and make sure all the children can see the illustrations. Use the Warrior Practice questions and information (starting on page 23) that are embedded as icons into the book to guide the discussion as you read. Touch the icons as they appear for discussion questions and animal facts. Be careful not to ask so many questions that you lose their attention for the story. Generally asking 3 to 4 questions during the reading serves as a good guideline.

#### Tips for Asking Questions

1. Ask one question at a time. After you ask a question, listen to whatever response they have. Avoid answering for them, correcting their answers or praising their responses.
2. Avoid asking too many questions or extending the conversation so much that you lose the feel for the story. Each time you read the story together, you can choose to focus on different Warrior Practice questions. You can also ask kids whether *they* want to open the icons.
3. Ask clarifying, open-ended questions to deepen their awareness of their thinking and to help keep their responses truly their own:
  - “Tell me more about that.”
  - “Why do you think that?”
  - “What in the story or illustration makes you think that?”
  - If you’re working with more than one child, ask the others, “What do you think?” or “Does anyone think anything different?”

4. Ask questions to deepen their self-awareness:

- “Have you ever felt that way?” (“When?”/“Tell me about that.”)
- “How would you feel if you were in this situation?” (“Would you do anything different?”)
- “Can you show me what your face looks like when you feel that way?” (Show them what your face looks like, too!)

**After Reading**

- Ask: Why do you think AJ wants a dog in the beginning of the story? Can people be friends with an animal? What does that friendship look like?
- Ask: Can cats feel emotions? If so, how can we tell? Go back to page 35 and review the icon content.
- Ask: Can dogs feel emotions? If so, how can we tell? Go back to page 51 and, if you haven’t already, go through the Warrior Practice questions and information provided.
- Ask: Why does Raja go through the book portal to Earth even though it’s restricted? What choices do we have when we see someone upset or in trouble?
- Ask: Rutherford is accused of not taking responsibility (something that is your job or duty to deal with). Do you agree? If so, why do you think he’s not taking responsibility? What are ways you act responsibly in your life?

### **Activity: Emotion Game**

Pair up students. Ask them to take turns acting happy, sad, scared or mad. To help them act, ask them to think of something that recently made them feel each of these emotions. Have one partner make observations about what the second partner's face looks like. Optional: Have the students share what this was like. Was it harder to act or describe the emotions? Were any emotions harder than others?

### **Activity: Practicing Responding with Empathy**

Pair up students. Ask them to imagine their best friend has just told them they don't want to play with them and have them take turns with their partners acting sad about this. Have their partner respond to their sadness. Ask the students to share as a class what their partner did when they acted sad. Then repeat the activity, this time, have the students practice "just being with the person," saying sincerely, "I'm sorry that you are sad," or "It's OK, I'm here for you." Or they can just touch a shoulder or arm if they feel like they are sharing some of their partner's sadness, too. Tell them not to say anything else. (If this activity is too difficult for them, you could also model this with another teacher or adult.) Then have the students share as a class which responses they liked the best. Have them compare the two experiences. For example, if they gave advice or told their partner things like, "Don't be sad," or "At least I'm still your friend" during the first round, ask the students what it was like to be given advice versus just feel like someone was there; that they were not alone; they were "being felt." Guide the students towards understanding that the goal of responding empathetically is to not give advice, but simply help someone "feel felt." Empathy is connecting with someone. Nonverbal communication, like just touching a shoulder or arm or mirroring another's emotional state can also communicate empathy, that you are paying attention; that you "see or feel" with another. For a video to help understand empathetic responses, visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw>

### **Extension Activities: Choose one or more depending on time and interest.**

#### **A. Friendship Book**

As a class, ask students to share stories of animals they have been friends with or animals they imagine being friends with in the future. Ask them what they think makes a good friend and write these qualities on the board.

Give each student an 8-1/2 x 11 piece of drawing paper or cardstock. Invite students to illustrate a real or imaginary friendship between themselves and a cat, a dog, a person or another animal, showing at least one of the qualities of friendship on the board. Bind all of the pages together and create a title page for this class book.

#### **B. Activity: Compare and Contrast**

Draw a chart on a board or chart paper, using the sample template below. Review the chart together, referring to pictures in the story to complete it as needed.

Pick 1-2 basic emotions (happy, sad, fear, anger/aggression) and using a different chart for each emotion, compare how cats, dogs and people show this emotion.

After this activity, discuss how students might feel and what students might do (what behaviors would they respond with) if they came across an animal or person displaying the behaviors in the chart.

Emotional State: \_\_\_\_\_

	People	Dogs	Cats
Eyes			
Ears			
Mouth			
Body			
Other behaviors			

### C. Taking Responsibility Design Activity

As a class, brainstorm all the ways the students take responsibility in their classroom or at home. Ask, "Why do you think it is important to take responsibility?" Have students use the process of Design Thinking to individually or as a class come up with ways to take more responsibility in their home, community or classroom.

Steps to do this may include:

1. Interview a parent or teacher to establish the need or brainstorm as a class ways that students not acting responsible are causing problems (finding the need or understanding others' perspectives/empathy).
2. Brainstorm with classmates (in small or large group) ideas to address the needs or problems identified in the first step.
3. Test 1-3 of the ideas.
4. Change the ideas based on feedback from parents, teachers or classmates.

### Goals and Objectives:

1. Observe animal behavior and use evidence to analyze the likelihood that animals experience emotions and mixed emotions, as well as when animals may not experience other emotions, such as pride, guilt and judgment.
2. In the context of a narrative, analyze and understand similarities and differences between how people and animals respond to environmental cues.
3. Relate narratives to their own lives to understand how people and animal characters in a story may feel and do things differently or the same as they would.
4. Understand how relationships with animals or people can serve as a social support; and understand how the decisions people make and how people treat others impacts individual lives, communities and society.
5. Identify and evaluate problems by weighing factors such as safety, responsibility and impact on others while developing self-motivation and self-reflection skills and applying these skills to various situations. Students will observe animal behavior, body language and emotions. Use evidence from text to analyze the emotions and mixed emotions animals likely experience as well as others animals may not.

### BOOK 2: DOWNLOADING DANGER

**Time:** 40 minutes (20 minutes reading and discussion, 20 minutes for one extension activity)

**Materials:** [The Restricted Adventures of Raja Empathy Book App](#): Book 2, a way to project the app so students can see it, small slips of paper for each student, board or chart paper, [Name the Emotions handout](#)

### Concepts

- What clues can we look for to find out what emotions cats and dogs might be feeling?
- How are cats, dogs and people different? How are cats, dogs and people the same?
- What choices do we have when we see an animal or person showing or expressing an emotion or we suspect they may be masking or hiding one?
- What choices do we have when we see a stray animal? How might this change if an animal is feral?

### Before Reading

Write these questions on the board for students to think about while you read the book:

- What clues can we look for to find out what emotions people or animals might be feeling?
- Why or when do people hide or mask their emotions? When do you do this? Do you think animals do this?

### Clarify Vocabulary

- **Anthropomorphic** is when animals are described, shown or thought of as being like human beings in appearance (how they look) or behavior (how they act). Why do you think writers, illustrators and filmmakers use animals that act like people in their story telling? What do you think about this? What happens when Raja transports to Earth?
- What is the difference between **feral** and **stray**? (Feral is more like an animal in the wild. Stray is a tame or domesticated animal that is lost or has no home.)

Ask students to think about the questions you wrote on the board as they listen to the story.

### During Reading

Project the book from the app onto a screen or use tablets with small groups and one facilitator or student leader. The facilitator reads the story aloud and makes sure all the students can see the illustrations.

Look for the flashing eye icons in the story and touch to open. Use these Warrior Practice questions and Warrior Knowledge to guide the discussion as you read.

#### Tips for Asking Questions

1. Ask one question at a time. After you ask a question, listen to whatever response they have. Avoid answering the questions for them or correcting their answers. Use active listening as a way to encourage discussion instead of praise.
2. Avoid asking too many questions or extending the conversation so much that you lose the feel for the story. Each time you read the story together, you can choose to focus on different Warrior Practice questions. You can also ask kids whether *they* want to open the Warrior Practice icons.
3. Ask clarifying, open-ended questions to deepen their awareness of their thinking and to help keep their responses truly their own:
  - “Tell me more about that.”
  - “Why do you think that?”
  - “What in the story or illustration makes you think that?”
  - If you’re working with more than one child, ask the others, “What do you think?” or “Does anyone think anything different?”
4. Ask questions to deepen their self-awareness:
  - “Have you ever felt that way?” (“When?”/“Tell me about that.”)

➤ “How would you feel if you were in this situation?” (“Would you do anything different?”)

“Can you show me what your face looks like when you feel that way?” (Show them what your face looks like, too!)

### **After Reading**

Ask: Where in the story do characters try to hide or mask their emotions or say something that sounds different from how they look like they are feeling? (page 9, 27). Why do you think people do this sometimes? When do you do this? Do you think animals do this? (It is likely some animals, especially prey species, mask pain or injury to not appear weak to predators. There are also examples of animals using deceptive behaviors [limping, for example] to lure predators away from nests in order to protect babies.)

Ask: On page 21, what emotion do AJ and Meg feel from Raja? What do they do? On page 28, do you think Belle understands what AJ’s Mom feels? What does Belle do? When have you tried to help someone because of how they were feeling? What did you do? Do you think dogs and cats can help people? If so, describe how they might do this. What can we learn from animals?

Ask: What choices do we have when we see a stray cat or dog? How might this change if a cat or dog is feral?

Ask: On page 34, Meg is petting another animal. Did you think Belle was jealous? If so, how could you tell? What were the clues? Although dogs can feel and show they are jealous, Belle doesn’t show any signs of feeling jealous in this illustration. If you were Belle, do you think you’d feel jealous? Sometimes, people misread emotions because they imagine or project how they would feel in that situation. Also, because people like to give anthropomorphic characteristics to animals, people sometimes misread animal emotions and behaviors. A good way to check whether you might be projecting emotions onto another is to ask yourself how you know; what are the clues? If you can’t find any clues or signs that tell you a person or animal is feeling an emotion, you might be projecting.

### **Activities**

**Looking for Clues: Name the Emotion (use the Name the Emotions handout listed in the Materials section).** Using the illustrations in the handout, find clues and using an arrow, point to every emotion you can find and label what emotion you think it is.

### **Responding with Empathy**

Review the labelled drawings from the activity above. When you see the characters feeling certain ways, do you feel a little bit of what the character feels? If so, this is called **empathy**. People and animals feel connected and become good friends when they can share emotional states. If you show or tell someone



that you can see that they feel a certain way, it makes them feel that they matter and this feels good. Pick one drawing and write how you would like to act or respond to the person or animal.

### **Practicing Responding with Empathy**

Print these directions on slips of paper: “Say, “I’m sorry that you are sad,” Say, “I can feel that you are sad.” “Say, I’m here; it’s OK.” Pair up students. Hand half of the pairs the slips of paper with the directions. Have one student in the pair think of a time they were sad and act sad. Have their partner respond to their sadness, either using their own idea or what’s on the slip of paper you gave them. Ask the students to come back together and share what happened. What responses did students like? What do they think would make them feel better? Then repeat the activity, instructing students to try one of the ideas that the class came up with that they liked.

Guide the students towards understanding that the goal of responding empathetically is to not give advice or tell someone not to feel a certain way, but simply help someone “feel felt.” Empathy is connecting with someone. Nonverbal communication, like just touching a shoulder or arm or mirroring another’s emotional state, can also communicate empathy, that you are paying attention; that you “see or feel” with another.

### **Be a Pet Game Extension**

Have students work in pairs or individually to play the game on the app, Be a Pet. Afterwards, as a class brainstorm answers to the question, “What makes a good pet caregiver or owner?” Then have students write from the perspective of a cat or dog, either real or imagined. Ask them to pretend to be a dog or cat and write about their “dream” human or family and their “dream” home.

### Compare and Contrast

Draw a chart on a board or chart paper, using the sample template below. Review the chart together, referring to pictures in the story to complete it as needed.

Pick 1-2 basic emotions (happy, sad, fear, anger/aggression) and using a different chart for each emotion, compare how cats, dogs and people show this emotion.

After this activity, discuss how students might feel and what students might do (what behaviors would they respond with) if they came across an animal or person displaying the behaviors in the chart.

Emotional State: \_\_\_\_\_

	People	Dogs	Cats
Eyes			
Ears			
Mouth			
Body			
Other behaviors			

### Social Awareness Design Activity

In the story, Rutherford receives a lot of support and encouragement from his family and friends (and this helps him win). Ask the students, “Why do you think it is important to provide support and encouragement to others?” As a class, brainstorm ways that the students find and feel support in their lives. Then brainstorm the ways they could show support and encouragement for their friends, family or classmates. Have students use the process of Design Thinking to individually or as a class come up with ways to be more socially aware and supportive in their home, community or classroom.

Steps to do this may include:

1. Interview students, parents or a teacher to establish the need (ask what behaviors do they see in students that they would like changed; behaviors that show a lack of empathy).
2. Brainstorm with classmates (in small or large group) ideas to address the needs or problems identified in the first step.
3. Test 1-3 of the ideas.
4. Change the ideas based on feedback from parents, teachers or classmates.