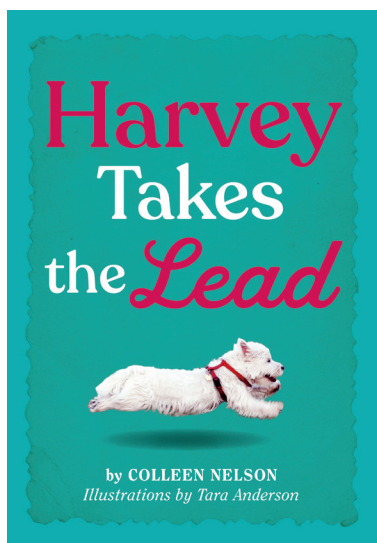


Harvey Takes The Lead



Story Summary

Harvey is back with Maggie, Austin, and the residents of the Brayside retirement home. When Brayside's new Assistant Director Hilary Appleby starts enforcing strict new rules, visits for Harvey become more difficult and the residents and staff aren't too pleased with the changes.

At the same time, Maggie and Austin see their fair share of problems at school. Maggie's audition for the school play doesn't go as planned, and Austin struggles to admit he can't afford an expensive school trip. Still, the kids and Harvey regularly check on Mr. Kowalski, a resident at Brayside whose wife is in the hospital.

As Mr. Kowalski's need for comfort collides with Ms. Appleby's rules, can Harvey stay a part of the Brayside community?

An author and elementary school teacher, **Colleen Nelson** earned her Bachelor of Education from the University of Manitoba in her hometown of Winnipeg. Her novels in The Harvey Stories include the multi-award-winning *Harvey Comes Home* and *Harvey Holds His Own*, which was a finalist for the Governor General's Award. She is also the author of *Sadia*, winner of the 2019 Ruth and Sylvia Schwartz Award, *Blood Brothers*, selected as the 2018 McNally Robinson Book of the Year for Young People, and the picture book *Teaching Mrs. Muddle*. Colleen writes daily in between appearances at hockey rinks and soccer fields in support of her two sports-loving sons.

A folk artist and award-winning illustrator who trained at the Ontario College of Art and Design, **Tara Anderson** is known for her lively and humorous illustrations of animals. Her books include the illustrated novels *Harvey Comes Home*, *Harvey Holds His Own*, and *Sapphire the Great and the Meaning of Life*; the holiday picture books *Pumpkin Orange*, *Pumpkin Round* and *Easter Morning, Easter Sun*; and the award-winning *Nat the Cat Can Sleep Like That*. Tara shares a farmhouse in Tweed, Ontario, with her husband, her young daughter, and several cats.

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BISAC Codes

JUV002070 JUVENILE FICTION / Animals / Dogs

JUV039020 JUVENILE FICTION / Social Themes / Adolescence & Coming of Age

JUV016180 JUVENILE FICTION / Historical / Canada / Post-Confederation (1867-)

JUV039140 JUVENILE FICTION / Social Themes / Self-Esteem & Self-Reliance



DISCUSSION GUIDE

This Discussion Guide will offer a variety of tasks, discussion prompts and questions to provoke thinking and deepen comprehension prior, during, and post reading of the novel. The range of options will allow for students to reach optimal learning and success. These are suggested tasks. As it is not necessary to complete the entire list of suggestions, the educator is encouraged to make choices according to the strengths, needs and interests of the students.

BOOK CLUBS

This guide has been developed for use in classroom book clubs/literature circles. In book clubs, small groups of students (4–8) meet to discuss a book they are reading.

In book clubs, students will:

- support the development of a love of reading
- help students build deep comprehension while engaging in discussions with their peers
- support the development of collaborative learning and critical thinking

Book clubs are student led with students taking turns assuming a leadership role within the group. They meet regularly and set the pace for their reading, deciding as a group how much they will read between meetings. Students take ownership for their learning in a number of ways: they select the book (usually from a pre determined list provided by the teacher), they determine the pace of the reading and prepare for and run their discussions.

Prior to beginning with book clubs, teachers:

- take time to develop and nurture whole class discussions about books while modeling the skills and behaviors needed to collaborate and work together as a book club
- provide guidance, modeling and support
- become familiar with all texts prior to making them available to students

Teachers develop a schedule for book clubs ensuring they provide time for reading and discussion, mini-lessons for any needs that may arise, time for teacher monitoring through observation and conferring as well as student self-assessment.

Key elements:

- Groups meet on a regular basis, with time provided in class to read and discuss their book
- Students use a “reader’s notebook” to write notes, comments, insights and questions while they read
- Students bring their reader’s notebook to each meeting to support their discussion
- Discussion topics may emerge from the students as they read; however the teacher provides discussion topics and provocations to help students engage in rich discussions
- Group meetings are collaborative and open with the groups developing a set of norms for their group
- The teacher serves as facilitator
- Assessment is grounded in teacher observation, student conversations and student self assessment
- To promote a love of reading

Thinking about Assessment...

This Discussion Guide offers a range of prompts, tasks and provocations to support Book Club discussions. While using this guide in the classroom, teachers have a number of opportunities to use observation, conversation and product to assess student thinking and learning. The tasks and prompts offered in this guide are designed to support discussion,



sharing and student thinking while providing an opportunity for students to demonstrate comprehension, extension of thinking and critical literacy. Assessment can include: self assessment and peer assessment, conversations with students through teacher/student conferences, group discussions as well as products created by the students.

For the teacher and student to have a clear, common understanding of the expectations and criteria to achieve success while reading the novels, educators develop learning goals based on curriculum expectations and share them with the students in language they can understand. Then together, the educator and students co-create criteria to make the path to success visible and clear.

These success criteria are posted in the classroom visible to all students; and they are revised and edited based on the learning and understanding of the students.

As the Book Club meetings are collaborative and begin with the groups developing a set of norms for their group, it is suggested that all groups open each meeting with a reflection of the previous discussion. These reflections can highlight what went well during the discussions; what needs to improve in these discussions; and considerations for the current discussion.

Note:

This discussion guide offers a variety of tasks, discussion prompts and questions to provoke thinking and deepen comprehension before, during and after reading of the novel. These are suggestions only and it is certainly not necessary to complete the entire list of suggested activities/questions. Educators are encouraged to make choices based on the strengths, needs and interests of the students.

Highlighted Curriculum Expectations

Ontario Ministry of Education Language Arts Curriculum K–8

Oral Communication

- 1.2 Active Listening Strategies
- 1.3 Comprehension Strategies
- 2.4 Demonstrating Understanding
- 1.5 Making Inferences/Interpreting Texts
- 1.6 Extending Understanding

Reading: Reading for Meaning

- 1.4 Demonstrating Understanding
- 1.5 Making Inferences/Interpreting Texts
- 1.6 Extending Understanding
- 1.7 Analyzing Texts
- 1.8 Responding to and Evaluating Texts

Reading: Understanding Form and Style

- 2.1 Text Forms
- 2.3 Text Features
- 2.4 Elements of Style

Reading with Fluency

- 3.1 Reading Familiar Words
- 3.2 Reading Unfamiliar Words

Reading: Reflecting on Reading Skills and Strategies

- 4.2 Interconnected Skills

Media Literacy

- 3.1 Creating Media Texts



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Pre-Reading Suggestions

The purpose of these tasks is to develop knowledge and understanding as well as to prompt conversation and discussion about the topics mentioned throughout this novel. In doing so, the hope is that the readers will become engaged as they read, comprehend the issues presented, and develop a sense of empathy for the characters and become aware of the author's organization of the text.

1. Take time to read the summary of the text on the inside flap of the front cover. Does this summary pull you in as a reader? Why? Why not?
Do you think the summary provides enough/too much detail?
2. Located on the page prior to the title page for *Harvey Takes the Lead* is a page of praise for two other texts written by the same author.
What information did you gather from reading this page? Why is this information important for someone who may be interested in reading, *Harvey Takes the Lead*?
3. With a partner, discuss what you think this text may be about. If you have read other texts by this author, share your opinion of those books.
4. Most authors include a dedication in their text. Read the dedication in this text. Why do you think this is important for an author to include?
5. With the group, discuss the meaning of the word *loyalty*. Provide examples of when it is important to be loyal to someone. Explain your thinking.
6. Friendship can take place in many forms and across many ages.
With a partner, define what friendship means to you. Share examples of friendships you may have with others who are both your age and not.
7. As a group, share any facts you may know about dogs, i.e., about their sense of smell, what they like to eat, how they show loyalty to their owners, etc.
Make a list of these facts. As a group, add new information to this list as you read the text.

During Reading

Chapters 1–7

1. What do we learn about Harvey in chapter 1? Record new facts on the group list.
2. In chapter 2, the reader may get the impression that Maggie and Harvey are very familiar with Brayside Retirement Villa. Provide examples from the text to support this.
3. At the end of chapter 2, what information is being provided to make the reader think changes are going to happen at Brayside?
4. In chapter 3, the reader is told of Maggie and Harvey's roles when visiting Brayside. With a partner, discuss their roles and how they can help the residents at Brayside.
5. As a small group, discuss how Harvey identifies people. Provide a few examples from the text to support your answer.
Add new facts about dogs to the list created by the group.
6. In chapter 5, the reader is introduced to another dog, Bertie. In a short paragraph, describe what you have learned about Bertie.
7. The reader is also learning about the important people in Austin's life. Create a list of these people and explain why they are important to Austin.
8. How does Harvey develop relationships with people? Choose an example from chapter 6 to support your answer.
9. How does Maggie work through her problem in chapter 6?
10. With a partner, discuss: Why do you think Maggie is hesitant about signing up for the audition for the school show?
Can you relate to Maggie's concerns? Explain your thinking by providing personal examples.



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Chapters 8–15

1. What do you notice about the title of the chapters? Why do you think they are organized and titled this way?
2. Why do you think Austin doesn't tell Amar the truth about the Edu-Trek trip?
3. What does Mrs. Alvarez do to boost Maggie's confidence about auditioning for the show?
4. Why else do you think Maggie is hesitant about these auditions?
5. How does Harvey show his love for Maggie in chapter 10? Provide examples from this chapter that prove dogs can be very sensitive to their owner's feelings.
6. Choose a relationship Austin has with one of the residents of Brayside Retirement Villa. Why did you choose this relationship? Use a few adjectives to describe this relationship. Why did you choose these words?
7. For a very short time, Austin considers taking Isaac's money from the desk drawer. Why did he consider this option?
8. With a partner, list and comment on the new safety protocols the new assistant director, Ms. Appleby, plans to implement at Brayside. Do you think they are wise changes? Why? Why not?
9. How do Harvey and Maggie help Mr. Kowalski in chapter 13?
10. Why do you think the residents of Brayside dislike the suggestions made by Ms. Appleby?
11. In chapter 14, Austin is shown to be a thoughtful, mature boy. Provide examples from this chapter to support this statement.
12. Austin asks Mr. Kowalski to reminisce about his first meeting with his wife, Alice Kowalski. Do you think this helps Mr. Kowalski deal with his wife's illness? Why? Why not?

Provide a sentence from this chapter to support your answer.

13. Dogs are very intuitive. Provide examples from chapter 15 to prove this statement.
14. Add new learnings about dogs to the group list.

Chapters 16–24

1. In chapter 16, Mr. Kowalski shares a story with Austin. What part of this story did you enjoy most? Share your answer with a partner.
2. In chapter 17, Maggie seems to be having a bad day. Describe the events that are not going well for Maggie. In a small group, share some strategies that would help Maggie deal with these unfortunate events.
3. Austin is able to show empathy toward others. In a small group: Define the word *empathy*. Discuss examples from chapter 18 to prove Austin has shown empathy towards others. How can students show empathy towards others in a school setting?
4. Make a prediction as to what you think may have happened to Isaac's money.
5. The reader is getting a good idea as to what the residents and workers of Brayside think of Ms. Appleby. Why do you think the residents and workers aren't enjoying this new boss? What do you think Ms. Appleby needs to do in order to develop better relationships at the retirement villa?
6. How does Maggie show she cares for the residents of Brayside Retirement Villa?
7. Do you think the plan to hide Harvey from Ms. Appleby in chapter 19 will work? Why? Why not?
8. What did Ms. Appleby do in chapter 20 to further upset the others at Brayside? What adjectives would you use to describe Ms. Appleby?



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9. Austin and Maggie frequently visit the retirement villa. Explain how these visits are just as important for Maggie and Austin as they are for the residents.
10. How does Harvey's nose get him into trouble in chapter 22? In a short paragraph, summarize what happened in this chapter. Share your summary with a partner.
11. In chapter 23, who comes to Maggie and Austin's rescue in helping to find Harvey? Why do you think Harvey wandered into the dining room of the retirement villa?
12. Harvey displays a few new characteristics of being a dog. Share your new learnings with a partner. Add these to the group list.
13. How do you think Lexi and Brienne's phone call will impact Maggie? What do you think Maggie will do with this new information?
6. In chapter 29, the reader may get the impression that Mrs. Alvarez is aware of something going on in Ndidi's life. Provide clues from this chapter to support this thinking.
7. Do you think Maggie is doing the right thing by helping Ndidi out with learning her lines? Why? Why not?
8. Why do you think Harvey is very happy to sit with Mr. Kowalski?
9. In chapter 31, Mr. Kowalski shares another story with Austin. What part of this story did you find amusing?
10. What do you think will happen with Ms. Appleby and the health inspector? Provide facts from chapter 31 to support your thinking.
11. How has Lexi lied to Maggie? Why do you think Lexi has done this?
12. What has Maggie learned about friendship? Who do you think has taught Maggie the biggest lessons about friendship? Why?

Chapters 25–32

1. Role models are very important in a child's life. How are both Mr. Kowalski and Austin's grandfather good role models for Austin? What does he learn from both of these characters? Who would you describe as a good role model in your life? What lessons are you learning from this person?
2. Do you think there could be a misunderstanding about Ndidi and her commitment to the school show? Explain your thinking using evidence from the text.
3. In chapter 27, Mr. Kowalski shares a story of a misunderstanding when he first met his wife, Alice Kowalski. With a partner, share your interpretation of this misunderstanding.
4. Why does Austin feel responsible for both his mother and Bertie?
5. Do you think Austin is doing the right thing by not telling his mother the truth about the Edu-Trek trip? Why? Why not?

13. How has your impression of Ndidi and her commitment to the school show changed? Why do you think it is important not to judge people too quickly based on what others think and say? Provide examples from the text to support your thinking.

Chapters 33–41

1. Why is Harvey determined to chase this new scent at Brayside? How has this become a big problem at the retirement villa?
2. What do you think Ndidi meant as she whispered to Maggie, "This isn't what I thought a senior's home would be like!"?
3. How is what Maggie and Ndidi are experiencing different from your impression of a senior's home?
4. How did Austin, Maggie, and the residents of Brayside solve the problem of Harvey wandering off?

5. “Harvey saved the day,” exclaims a resident of Brayside. Do you agree? Why? Why not?
6. How does Maggie show her friendship towards Ndidi in chapter 38?
7. Why was Mr. Kowalski’s story to Austin in chapter 39 necessary and appropriate for that point in the story?
8. How have Maggie’s feelings and actions towards Ndidi changed? Explain your thinking.
9. List three verbs to describe Ndidi’s emotional state in chapter 40. Explain why you chose these verbs.
10. Why do you think Austin finds it difficult to tell Amar the truth about the Edu-Trek trip? What do you think Austin should do about this dilemma? Why?
11. The residents continue to have difficulty with Ms. Appleby as an assistant director.
 - a. With a partner, discuss what you think are the issues with Ms. Appleby’s leadership skills and her relationship with the residents of Brayside. Provide examples from the text to support your thinking.
 - b. What do you think Ms. Appleby needs to do to repair her relationship with the residents?

Chapters 42–49

1. The reader is learning about life during WWII from Mr. Kowalski’s stories. What is your impression of life for:
 - a. the families of those fighting in the war during this time?
 - b. The German-born population living in other communities during this war?
2. In chapter 42, Austin comments about Mr. Kowalski, “Maybe remembering things is good for him.”
 - a. Do you agree with this thought? Why? Why not?
 - b. Does remembering good times from the past help you when you feel sad? Why? Why not?
3. With a partner, share your favourite part of Mr. Kowalski’s story in Chapter 42.
4. How have the events in chapter 43 given Harvey the new title, “number one mouse catcher”?
5. What does Maggie want to do about the Valentine’s Dance at Brayside? Do you think her plan will work? Why? Why not?
6. In chapter 45, the author writes, “Mrs. Becker and Ms. Khokhar share a look...”. What do you think they are both thinking as they share this look?
7. Why do you think Austin’s teacher, Mrs. Becker, wants to help Austin with the music for the Valentine’s dance? Explain your thinking using information from the text.
8. Why do you think Mrs. Becker wanted to meet the residents of Brayside?
9. How is Austin being a friend to Mr. Kowalski? Provide examples from the text to support your answer.
10. What do you think Maggie means by the last sentence in chapter 46?
11. Choose three adjectives to describe Maggie’s character with examples from the text to support your choices.
12. How do both Mrs. Becker and Austin help Mr. Kowalski and Ms. Appleby? Provide examples from the text to support your thinking.
13. What new information did you learn about Lexi and her friendship with the other girls?
14. How would you describe Maggie’s act of standing up to Lexi?
15. In a small group, share your thoughts and feelings about Mr. Kowalski’s story to Austin in chapter 49.



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Chapters 50–55

1. How does the information in chapter 50 contradict general stereotypes of elderly people?
2. What has Ms. Appleby been learning during her time at Brayside Retirement Villa?
How has this thinking changed from when she first arrived?
3. Make a list of the ways Maggie and Harvey have grown up since they first met four years ago. Share and compare this list with a partner.
4. Do you think Austin deserves the surprise presented to him in chapter 52? Why? Why not?
5. What do you think Austin will do with the cash prize? Give evidence from the text to support your answer.
6. Austin’s mom and grandfather appeared very proud of Austin.
Describe a time when you were very proud of someone. Describe a time when you were very proud of yourself.
Share your answers with a partner.
7. In chapter 52, the text reads, “...and you would do anything for family.”
Explain what these words mean to you.
8. In a small group, share why Maggie’s plan to perform songs from the school play to the residents of Brayside is a good idea. Explain your thinking.
9. How does the reader know Harvey has won acceptance from Ms. Appleby?
10. List new facts the reader has learned about dogs. Add these facts to the list.
11. How has Maggie and Austin’s friendship developed? Provide examples from the text to support your answer.

Post-Reading Suggestions

1. Choose a character from the text and describe how they have changed over the course of the story. Provide examples from the text to support your thinking.
2. Choose a friendship from the text and, using adjectives, describe this friendship. What qualities did you like about this friendship?
3. Review the list of facts the group has recorded about dogs. Which characteristic did you find most interesting? Why?
4. With a small group, discuss how the themes in Mr. Kowalski’s stories connected to the events of the text. Provide examples from the text to support your answer.
5. Read the “Acknowledgments” pages at the end of the text.
Create a list of new information you have learned after reading these two pages.
Why do you think these acknowledgments are important for an author at the end of a text? Did these two pages help you as a reader? Why? Why not?
6. If you could create a movie trailer for this text, which part of the story would you include in this trailer?
7. Create an advertisement poster for this text. Consider the characters you would want to include in this poster and the information you think would be necessary for a future reader.

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