

## The Talking Dog

Student Worksheet,

Your mission today is to figure out the correct order of a story which has been broken up into different strips. This is an oral activity and you'll be working with other students in a group.

You'll be given a strip of paper with a sentence written on it. Each of the other students in your group will also be given a strip of paper.

Each slip of paper has a different sentence written on it.

**Memorize** what is written on your piece of paper. **Do not show** your piece of paper to anyone else!

After you have memorized it, put your slip of paper face down on your desk. Now, by **talking** with the other members of your group, figure out which part of the text comes first, which part comes second, and so on.

If you're not sure whether you've memorized your sentence correctly, or if you have trouble remembering it, you can go back to your desk to check your strip. But **do not show** it to anyone else.

### How to use strip stories.

The so-called "strip stories" are used in various ways. The way in which "The Talking Dog" strip story can be used is but one of many.

Before the activity begins, show the students the picture of the talking dog and make sure that the students know the necessary vocabulary for the story.

Divide the class into groups of 10, 11, or 12 students; it is best if each group can move to its own part of the room.

If your classes are like ours, you never know from day to day exactly how many students will be there. Some days there are more, some days there are less. For this reason, some flexibility has been built into the number of strips in a passage.

The strip marked with the • [the "bullet"] is optional; that is, it can be left out. If you have an extra student, then leave it in; if you have one less student, then leave it out.

The lines marked A, B, or AB work in a similar way: if you need two separate lines, then use both A and B (and, leave out AB!); if you need only one line, use AB (and, leave out A and B).

Next, cut the text up into the indicated strips, one strip is distributed to each student in the group with the instructions given in the accompanying worksheet.

After the students have talked with each other and have begun to understand the basic text, let them recheck their slip of paper to make sure that they have memorized it correctly. It is not uncommon for parts of the text to have been changed, so returning to their desk and checking will correct for this.

They then return to their groups and finish figuring out the correct order of the sentences in the text (For some stories, there may be more than one correct order!).

After the groups have figured out their stories, have them tell the story in the correct order to the rest of the class.

This particular exercise has several general benefits. Among them, it forces the students to listen carefully to the text a number of times and it forces them to listen to each other.

As a corollary, it forces students to pronounce their own lines clearly; and, it forces students to pay careful attention to the details of language.

In short, jointly and individually the students learn through their efforts at making sense out of the text.

This particular texts have, in addition, number of direct quotations so that these stories can be used for further work on the punctuation of quoted speech. [These texts are adapted from texts used by Armando

Balra, who also contributed much to our understanding of how to use strip stories.]

After assembling the story correctly, the students could be asked to write out the story, as a writing exercise (and for the practice dealing with direct quotations).

On a more literary level, this story illustrates the conflict that sometimes arises when a parent — in this case, the mother — tries to force a child to follow one profession when the child really wants to follow another. In this case, even though we generally like to be supportive of parents, we have to side with the child: after all, who would go to a doctor that was a dog?



“The Talking Dog” For 10, 11, or 12 students.

A Then it jumped on the stage, grabbed the little dog...

B and dragged him off the stage.

AB Then it jumped on the stage, grabbed the little dog and dragged him off the stage.

when a big dog came in and listened for a while.

- The audience was very surprised to see the little dog disappear off stage.

“I’m sorry about this, folks,” he said.

But then the little dog came back on the stage.

It told jokes, sang songs, and danced on stage.

One day, he was in the middle of his show...

“She wants me to be a doctor.”

“She is my mother,” he added.

“She doesn’t want me to be an entertainer.”

A small talking dog was making a big hit in our local theater.