

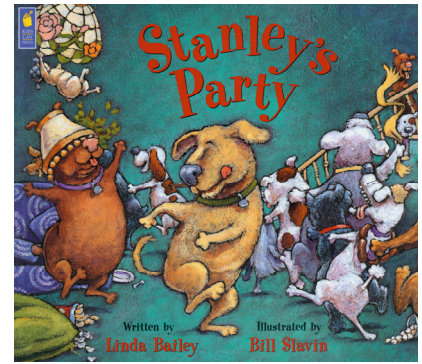
Ideas and Activities to Use with  
*Stanley's Party*

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Ideas and Activities

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with thanks to Marlene Iversen for art ideas



Themes: parties, rules, dogs and their adventures, dog care

**Before Reading:**

1. Before showing the cover, ask students to think about having a party for a dog. Who would come? What would they do? What kind of party would it be?
2. Have students think about different kinds of parties and what they are for. Make a list. Discuss the different kinds of things you might do at a party.
3. Ask how many of the students have dogs. Other pets? Do they have rules at home about what their pets can and cannot do? (Prompt if needed with questions such as: Can they get on the kitchen counters? the couch? the bed? Can they take things off tables, out of closets and wastebaskets?) List some of these rules. Why do they have rules? Have any of their dogs been taken to Obedience Training?

**During Reading:**

4. After reading, **Something was still missing** ask, "What was it?"
5. After reading **and those dogs talked to still other dogs . . .** ask, "What do you think will happen?"
6. After reading **It took two whole days** ask, "What do you think Stanley's people are going to do with him when they want to go out?"

**After Reading:**

7. Hand out the **Stanley's Party Word Sort** to review vocabulary. If students are younger or have not had experience with word sorts, use the Closed Word Sort with the headings. With older or experienced students, use the open word sort where students have to name the categories. With an open word sort, allow a miscellaneous category but limit it to three words.
8. Use the sheet, **Sequencing Events for Stanley's Party**. Cut the events apart and put them in envelopes. Let students work in pairs or threes to put the events in order. When all are finished, let students take turns reading the events to see if all have them in the correct order. If there is a difference of opinion, go back to the story to confirm the correct order.

9. Discuss one or two things in *Stanley's Party* that couldn't have really happened. Let students use the **Real or Make-Believe, Stanley?** sheet to list things in the story that could have actually happened and those that couldn't have. Some might be debatable.
10. Read *Always in Trouble* by Corinne Demas or *Chewy Louie* by Howie Schneider about dogs getting into trouble. Let students think about their pet or one they know, especially one who often does something unexpected or troublesome. Have them tell a partner about it. After telling it and letting the partner ask questions, they can write about it. Encourage students to make it humorous by exaggerating (using hyperbole). They can even make up some funny parts that didn't really happen but are related. Remind them that some of the things in *Stanley's Party* couldn't really happen. After they have written their stories, have them share with a partner to see if there are any other events or situations they might add or how they might exaggerate further or make it funnier.
11. Ask students if they have ever thought about what dogs might do at night when their people are asleep. Read *Stanley's Wild Ride* by Linda Bailey or *The Night I Followed the Dog* by Nina Laden. Have them think about what adventures their pet (real or imagined) might have. They can work individually or with a partner to list some possibilities. They can then plan and write their stories.
12. Compare *Stanley's Party* with *Stanley's Wild Ride* using the **Comparison of Two Stories** sheet for these books.
13. Give students the page of **Ten Things About Winn-Dixie**. Have them think of ten characteristics of Stanley and write them down. Share with the class. They can come from either book about Stanley, if you have read both.
14. What other adventures might dogs have? Read *The Adventures of Taxi Dog* by Debra Barracca, *Albert, the Dog Who Liked to Ride in Taxis* by Cynthia Zarin, *Benny: An Adventure Story* by Bob Graham. or *Bad Dog* by Nina Laden (for older students because of the word play). Have students make a sequential list of ten events in the story, skipping a line between each. They can then cut them apart and give them to a partner to put in the correct order.
15. Let students brag about their pets, pets they know—or imaginary pets. Read the three **Excerpts from *Speak: Children's Book Illustrators Brag About Their Dogs*** by Michael J. Rosen (ed.) that are reprinted in this packet. Notice how the illustrators describe their dogs by how they behave and what they do. The illustrations show what they look like. Ask students to think about two or three things this pet does that are unusual, special, or funny. They should describe them with plenty of detail so the reader can picture the incidents. After revising and editing, these can be published along with an illustration of the pet.

**Variation:** Students can make a poster showing a picture of their pet with some of the pet's characteristics or special qualities listed below.
16. Read *Dogs' Night* by Meredith Hooper. Compare it with *Stanley's Party* using the **Comparison of Two Stories** sheet for these books.