

# *Max Talks to Me: Classroom Guide*

Claire Buchwald, Author  
Karen Ritz, Illustrator  
Gryphon Press, April 2007  
ISBN 978-0940719033

Teachers, librarians, parents, and readers, feel free to use any and all of the ideas below to enhance the ideas shared in this book.

## **Before Reading**

It is important to activate the “3 Ps” prior knowledge, purpose, and prediction, to help young readers get ready to read.

### **Prior Knowledge:**

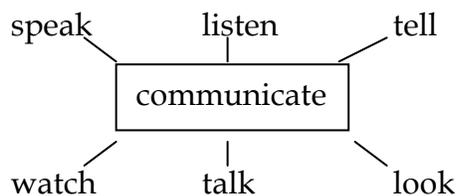
#### **Questions to Activate Prior Knowledge**

Have you ever had a best friend that knows what you are thinking and feeling?  
What were some of the ways that you and your friend communicated without speaking?  
What are some of the feelings that friends have for one another?

### **Purpose:**

**Communication!** While reading the book, you will be thinking about the many ways that Max and his boy communicate with one another. Verbs are words that show actions and tell us what the people, animals, or things are doing in a story. In the story, *Max Talks to Me*, verbs such as speak, listen, tell, watch, talk, and look are words that explain the ways that Max and his boys communicate with one another. As you read, watch for these words. You can write these words on a sticky note and put them right in your book as you find them, if you like, or you can just watch for them. Think about how each word is a different way of communicating ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

### **Communication Connector**



### **Prediction:**

The title of this book is *Max Talks to Me*. To predict is to use information to make an educated guess about what might happen in the story. Brainstorm and make a list the many ways in which Max might “talk to his boy. After reading, check the list and see how many of your predictions were correct.

## **During Reading**

While you are reading the story, keep track of all the ways that Max “talks” to his boy. You have already predicted many of the ways that Max “talks” before you even started to read, but

there may be more in the story. See how many of Max’s communication strategies you predicted and how many more he has. As Max “talks” to his boy, mark the spot with a sticky!

**Questions to think about during reading:**

What kinds of things might Max be thinking about when he is barking?

What kinds of things might Max smell while on his walk? How does Max let his boy know when he is proud of himself?

**After Reading**

*Max Talks to Me*

Go back through the story and find all the places where Max “talked” to his boy. You may have already marked them with a sticky note. Fill in the chart as a class, with your parent, or on your own when you are all finished. You will be filling it out as if you were the boy in the story. This is called writing in the first person.

**I know that Max talks to me. He talks to me by...**

<b>When Max needs to “talk” to his boy...</b>	<b>How Max “talks” to his boy...</b>
When it is time for me to get up...	Max puts his paws on the bed and breaths hot doggy breath on my face.
When Max is hungry...	He sits by his empty dish and looks at me.

### Other Ways Dogs Can Talk

In addition to all of the ways that Max talked in the story, are there other ways that dogs can talk? Brainstorm all of the ways that dogs can “talk” in the thinking cloud below:



### After-Reading Questions to Ponder:

Why is it important to have a friend that really listens to you?

Why is it important for a child to have a pet?

What are some things that a pet can teach us?

### Writing Extension

Think about a pet that you have or a pet that you would like to have. What would be some of the ways your pet would talk to you? How would they share their feelings without saying a word? How would you share your feelings with them in return? Write a short story about your special friendship with your pet.

## ***Companion Books***

Cleary, Beverly. *Henry and Ribsy*.  
HarperTrophy; reissue edition. 1990.  
ISBN 978-0380709175

Christopher, Matt. *The Dog That Pitched a No-Hitter*.  
Little, Brown Young Readers, 1993.  
ISBN 978-0316141031

Christopher, Matt. *The Dog That Stole Home*  
Little, Brown Young Readers, 1996.  
ISBN 978-0316141871

Christopher, Matt. *The Dog That Stole Football Plays*.  
Little, Brown Young Readers, 1997.  
ISBN 978-0316134231

Martin, Ann M. *A Dog's Life: Autobiography of a Stray*.  
Scholastic, 2005.  
ISBN 978-0439715591

Rylant, Cynthia. *Henry and Mudge*.  
Bradbury, Aladdin. 1987.  
ISBN 978-0689810053

## **Picture Books**

At the Dog Park with Sam and Lucy  
Bix, Daisy and Amelia Hansen  
The Gryphon Press, 2006  
ISBN 978-0940719019

Buddy, Unchained  
Bix, Daisy and Joe Hyatt,  
The Gryphon Press, 2006  
ISBN 978-0940719002

Juster, Norton and Jules Feiffer. *Bark, George*  
Laura Geringer; 1st edition. 1999  
ISBN 978-0062051851

Yorinks, Arthur *Hey, Al*  
Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 1986.  
ISBN 978-0374330606

Casanova, Mary and Ard Hoyt. *Some Dog!*  
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007  
ISBN 978-0374371333

## **Stories to Read Aloud**

Herriot, James. *James Herriot's Dog Stories*  
St. Martin's Press ISBN 978-0312439682

Herriot, James. *James Herriot's Treasury for Children Warm and Joyful Tales by the Author of All  
Creatures Great and Small*  
Illustrated by Ruth Brown & Peter Barrett St. Martin's Press  
ISBN 978-0312085124