



The Dog Who Lost His Bark

Author: Eoin Colfer
Illustrator: PJ Lynch

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Synopsis:

A warm, uplifting story for young readers about a boy and his dog and the power of music to heal; a first-time collaboration from two Irish Children's Laureates.

Patrick has been desperate for a dog of his own for as long as he can remember - and this summer, with his father away, he longs for a buddy more than ever. In his short doggy life, Oz has suffered at the hands of BAD PEOPLE. Somewhere out there, he believes, is an AWESOME BOY - his BOY. Maybe when they find each other he will learn to BARK again...

Author Bio

Eoin Colfer (pronounced Owen) was born in Wexford on the South-East coast of Ireland in 1965, where he and his four brothers were brought up by his father (an elementary school teacher, historian and artist of note) and mother (a drama teacher). He first developed an interest in writing in primary (elementary) school with gripping Viking stories inspired by history he was learning in school at the time!

After leaving school he got his degree from Dublin university and qualified as a primary school teacher, returning to work in Wexford. He married in 1991 and he and his wife spent about 4 years between 1992 and 1996 working in Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and Italy. His first book, Benny and Omar, was published in 1998, based on his experiences in Tunisia; it has since been translated into many languages. A sequel followed in 1999, followed by some other books (see below). Then in 2001 the first Artemis Fowl book was published and he was able to resign from teaching and concentrate fully on writing.

He says, "I will keep writing until people stop reading or I run out of ideas. Hopefully neither of these will happen anytime soon. He lives in Ireland with his wife and two children.

<https://www.eoincolfer.com/home>



Illustrator Bio

P. J. Lynch has worked as a children's book illustrator since leaving Brighton College of Art in England in the 1980s. He has won many awards including the Kate Greenaway Medal on two occasions, first for "The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey" by Susan Wojciechowski, and again for "When Jessie Came Across the Sea" by Amy Hest.



"The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey" has sold more than a million copies in the USA alone, and has recently been made into a movie. In recent years PJ has designed posters for Opera Ireland and the Abbey Theatre as well as several sets of Irish stamps. In 2006 Lynch completed two large murals on the theme of Gulliver's Travels for the new Cavan County Library, and he has recently designed a giant mosaic for the Marian Shrine in Knock, Co Mayo which was unveiled in February 2016.

PJ has lectured on his own work, and on Art and Illustration at the National Gallery of Ireland, The National Library of Ireland and at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, as well as at numerous conferences and colleges across the U.S.

He lives in Dublin with his wife and their three children.

<http://www.pjlynchgallery.com/>

Curriculum Links

English Year 3

[ACELT1598](#)

[ACELT1594](#)

[ACELT1599](#)

Themes:

Pets

Trust

Family

Loyalty

Love

Pre Reading

Identify the author and the illustrator of the book.

It states on the back cover that that the author and illustrator are Children's Laureates.

What does that mean?

Find out about our Australian Children's Laureate:

<http://www.childrenslaureate.org.au/>

Looking at the cover, an the title, what do you think this book will be about?

Discussion Questions

Chapter One:

Read the first chapter

- Who is telling us the story. Whose perspective?
- What do you think the author chose to tell the story in this way?

This book features illustrations on nearly every page

- Do you think the illustrations add to the story?

Chapter Two

Some of the words are in capital letters.

- Why do you think the author uses capital letters?
- What are these words important to Dog?

Chapter Three

The perspective changes in this chapter.

- Whose story are we hearing now?
- Why would the author decide to change perspective?

Chapter Four

Inside Oz's box, Zane had left Patrick a note, on what he needed to do with OZ.

The list in the story is specifically for Oz, a dog that has been mistreated by a previous owner.

- Think of an animal you would like to have as a pet, and then make a list of everything you would need to have, and things you would need to do, to care for that pet.

Chapter Five

On page 59: Patrick says there is 'magic in the house'.

- What does he mean by this?

Page 65. Patrick's Grandad uses the phrase 'music soothes the savage beast'

- What does this mean?

Do you think that dogs are musical? See clip below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5AkBooIZ4U>

Patrick is starting to get suspicious about his Dad's absence.

- Why do you think his Dad isn't rushing home to his family?

Chapter Six

On page 79: Zane tells Patrick that Oz is afraid to go outside because he has lost his bark.

- Before you get to the end of page 79, ask why would it be important for a dog to be able to bark?

Interesting FACT:

There is a breed of dog that can't bark, the Basenji.

Some believe that the ability to bark was intentionally bred out of the breed in Central Africa, where a dog barking the jungle was a clear giveaway to enemies.



Discussion Questions

Chapter Seven

Patrick has helped Oz get over his trauma, and this has made Patrick happy. Oz has been a distraction for Patrick.

- Ask the class if they have changed their mind as to what they think about Patrick's Dad not coming home?

Chapter Eight

We finally find out what is happening with Patrick's Dad.

- How do you think Patrick feels knowing that his parents are splitting up?
- How do you think Patrick feels about his Dad keeping the truth from him?
- Is 'not telling Patrick what was going on' the same as lying?
- Do you think Patrick will send Oz back to the animal shelter?

Chapter Nine

The perspective in this chapter has changed back to Oz.

- Why has the author chosen to do this now?
- How important are the illustrations in this chapter?

Chapter Ten

After finishing the book :

Discuss how the students feel about the story.

- Does it make them feel sad, happy, angry?
- What genre do you think this story fit into?
- Is this a genre of story they would read again.
- If not, what kind of story do you like, what genre?

Other books which feature dogs that have helped people through difficult times:

Picture Book

- Madeline Finn and the Library Dog



Novels

- Dog's Purpose: Ellie's Story - Bruce W Cameron
- Dog's Purpose: Bailey's Story - Bruce W Cameron
- Marley: A Dog Like No Other Movie Tie-In - John Grogan



Or how a bird helped a family:

- Penguin Bloom - Bradley Trevor Greive

Short clip about Penguin the Magpie

<https://youtu.be/NYPSM16v-48>

