

A Teacher's Guide to
The Buddy Files Series
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Illustrated by Jeremy Tugeau

About the Books:

The Buddy Files is a series aimed at beginning chapter book readers. It's about a school therapy dog who solves mysteries. The books are told from the dog's point of view. Each book is a stand-alone mystery and can be read and enjoyed alone. But there's another mystery arc that spans several books. For instance, Buddy discovers CLUES to what happened to his original family in books 1 and 2, but he doesn't actually find out what happened to them until the end of book 3.



My dog Mouse and me

A Note from the Author:

I've always been interested in animal-assisted therapy activities. Shortly before I came up with the idea for the Buddy Files, I started visiting animal shelters to look for a dog I could train to become a therapy dog. I found a beautiful, black golden retriever mixed breed dog, and I adopted him. We trained for about nine months and then we tested with Delta Society, which is an International organization that promotes health and well-being through positive interactions with animals. (For more information, visit www.deltasociety.org) Now we visit schools, libraries, and nursing homes, and we participate in the R.E.A.D. program, which encourages kids to read with dogs. (Visit <http://www.therapyanimals.org/R.E.A.D.html>)

I've also always been a fan of series books. I've even been a ghostwriter for several popular series, but I've always wanted to write my own series. When I was offered an opportunity to do that, it was only natural that I would combine two things I really love: dogs and mysteries. I hope your students enjoy the books as much as I enjoy writing them.

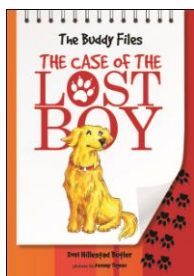
Pre-reading Activities:

1. Talk about what a mystery is. A mystery doesn't always have to include a crime. Sometimes a mystery is simply a riddle or a puzzle or some question that a detective needs an answer to.
2. Ask your students to think of words they might find in a mystery story. (Examples: detective, clue, crime, witness, solution etc.) Do they understand what all these words mean?
3. Talk about dogs and pet care. How many of your students have dogs? What kind of dogs do they have? Ask them to tell about their dogs.
4. In every mystery King/Buddy solves, he makes lists of a) what he knows; b) what he doesn't know; and c) what he's going to do to find out what he doesn't know (i.e. the Plan!). Staple four sheets of blank paper together for each of your students. Tell them this is their detective's notebook. Encourage them to decorate the cover. Then, at the top of the first page, have them write "This is what I know." At the top of the second page, have them write "This is what I don't know." And at the top of the third page, have them write, "This is my plan."
5. Does your school have a therapy dog? Talk about what therapy dogs do. Talk about the difference between a therapy dog and a service dog.



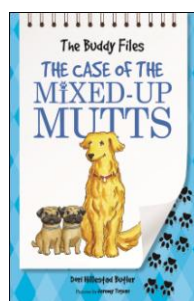
Discussion Questions:

Book 1: The Case of the Lost Boy (ISBN: 0807509108/Albert Whitman & Co, 2010):



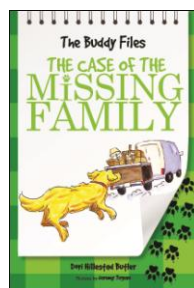
- 🐾 The series is called the Buddy Files, so why is the dog's name King?
- 🐾 How are King and Connor alike? How are they different?
- 🐾 How does King feel when Connor goes missing?
- 🐾 What do you think happened to Connor?
- 🐾 List the things Buddy does to find Connor.
- 🐾 At the end of the book, do you think King/Buddy belongs to Connor or to Kayla? Why?

Book 2: The Case of the Mixed-Up Mutts (ISBN: 0807509116/ Albert Whitman & Co, 2010):



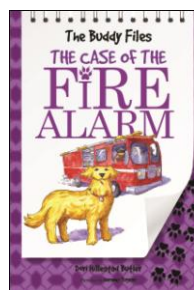
- 🐾 Why is Buddy at obedience school? What do you think he's going to learn there?
- 🐾 How are Jazzy and Muffin alike? How are they different?
- 🐾 Do you think Kathy and Jazzy like each other? Why or why not?
- 🐾 Is Buddy's idea to have Jazzy come live with Connor and Mom after she and Muffin are switched back a good idea or a bad idea? Why do you think that?
- 🐾 Do you think it's a good idea for Buddy to get a microchip?
- 🐾 Do you think Buddy will ever find Kayla? Should he keep looking for her? Why or why not?

Book 3: The Case of the Missing Family (ISBN: 0807509124/Albert Whitman & Co, 2010):



- 🐾 Why is Buddy looking for Kayla?
- 🐾 What do you think might be written in Kayla's secret notebook? Would you like Buddy to dig Kayla's notebook up in a future book?
- 🐾 Do you think Buddy should go in his old house? Why or why not?
- 🐾 Do you think it's a good idea for Buddy to hide in Uncle Marty's van? Why or why not?
- 🐾 How do you think Buddy and Kayla feel when they see each other for the first time?
- 🐾 Do you think Buddy chooses to stay with the right family? Why or why not?

Book 4: The Case of the Fire Alarm (ISBN: 0807509132/Albert Whitman & Co, 2010):



- 🐾 How do you think Buddy feels about going to school?
- 🐾 What do you think Buddy is going to do as a therapy dog?
- 🐾 Do you know why you should never pull the fire alarm?
- 🐾 How can Buddy tell if someone is telling the truth?
- 🐾 Why is Mouse so sure Michael is innocent? Why is Buddy so sure Jillian is innocent? Who do YOU think pulled the alarm? Why do you think that?
- 🐾 Do you think the school is really haunted? What makes you think yes or no?

Extensions

- 🐾 Draw a map of Buddy's neighborhood.
- 🐾 Draw a timeline of the events in one of the stories.
- 🐾 Visit your local animal shelter and report back on the dogs you saw there.
- 🐾 Find out what you can about three different dog breeds. Which breed do you like best and why? (It's okay to choose a mixed-breed!)
- 🐾 Think about how a dog spends his day. Make a list of everything he does in a day and what time he does it.
- 🐾 Talk to a dog trainer. Find out how to train a dog to sit, stay, come, and do three tricks.
- 🐾 Find a partner and act out your favorite scene in one of the Buddy Files books.
- 🐾 Buddy and Mouse are best friends. Tell a story about your best friend.
- 🐾 Pretend you are a dog and you have something you want to tell your friend. How would you tell your friend:
 - 1) You want to go outside.
 - 2) You are hungry.
 - 3) You have a tummy ache.
 - 4) There is an intruder in the house.
 - 5) You want to go to the park.
- 🐾 Buddy can tell whether someone is telling the truth by looking at them and by sniffing them. How does he do that? Pick a partner (preferably someone you don't know very well) and take turns telling each other two things about yourself that are true and one thing that isn't true. Can you and your partner tell which story the other tells that isn't true? What clues do you use?
- 🐾 E-mail Buddy! His e-mail address is buddy@thebuddyfiles.com. Maybe he'll even e-mail you back!

Suggested Reading:

- 1) ABC Dogs by Kathy Darling (Walker, 1997)
- 2) May I Pet Your Dog: The How-to Guide for Kids Meeting Dogs (and Dogs Meeting Kids) by Stephanie Calmenson (Clarion, 2007)
- 3) Rosie: A Visiting Dog's Story by Stephanie Calmenson (Sandpiper, 1998)
- 4) The Right Dog for the Job by Dorothy Hinshaw Patent (Walker, 2004)

Coming Fall 2010: The Case of the Lost Boy, The Case of the Mixed-Up Mutts, and The Case of the Missing Family IN PAPERBACK!

Coming Spring 2011: The Buddy Files #5: The Case of the Monster in the Library

