LESSON SIX

A good book will chase away the dark.
ABOUT THE BOOK
Miss Wilhelmina Moon is a dog governess. At her first placement, on a small island off the coast of France, Miss Moon looked after sixty-seven dogs of all shapes, sizes, colors and personalities. It was quite a challenge! But along with her trusted companions—a monkey named Mitford and a French bulldog named Petunia—Miss Moon was up to the task, and she cared for her furry brood with aplomb. It was the beginning of a lifelong career and the making of a dog governess second to none.

Collected in Miss Moon: Wise Words from a Dog Governess are the life lessons that Miss Moon imparted to those canine charges. Some are practical, some are playful, one or two are a little unusual, but all are necessary for the raising of happy, healthy, well-mannered dogs (and humans).

This whimsical, tongue-in-cheek book of wisdom for pooches (and people) can be used in a number of ways including:

- Exploring themes and concepts such as responsibility, connection, wisdom, patience and careers
- Exploring a non-traditional storybook structure
- As an example of the importance and impact of illustrations in picture books
- As a fun and entertaining read-aloud experience

Discussion prompts and suggested activities have been linked to Common Core State Standards where applicable.

PRE-READING DISCUSSION / ACTIVITIES

1. TWENTY LESSONS
- Re-read Miss Moon’s twenty lessons. Select one of the lessons that you feel to be most important. Why do you think this lesson is so important? How does this lesson apply to both dogs and people? Write and/or draw an explanation of your thinking.
- Re-read each of the lessons in Miss Moon and look carefully at the illustrations. In partners, small groups, or as a class talk about what is happening in each of the illustrations. How does each of the illustrations connect to their lesson? How do the illustrations deepen or change your understanding of the lesson?
- Imagine Miss Moon is not a governess for dogs but some other kind of domesticated animal. Select three of her lessons and show how they might apply if she were the governess to the following animals: cats, birds, fish or hamsters. Draw three pictures that help explain your thinking.

2. STORY STRUCTURE
- Consider the structure of the book. Does Miss Moon have a typical storybook structure? For example, does it have a beginning, middle and ending? Is there an established setting? Does the story remind you of any other books that you have read which do not have typical storybook structures?
- Like any good story, Miss Moon has a problem that needs to be solved but it may not be as obvious as in other stories. What is the problem in the story? How is it solved?
- The illustrations are full of funny and interesting details. Can you spot the following details within the illustrations?

3. MUST LOVE DOGS
- Write a description of Miss Wilhelmina Moon.
- What kind of qualities does a person need to be a successful governess to sixty-seven dogs of all shapes and sizes?
- Do you think you would be a successful governess to sixty-seven dogs? Why or why not?
- What made Miss Moon so successful in her job? Why did she choose to share what she had learned?
- Which of the following words describe Miss Moon: caring, sloppy, intelligent, boring, fun, adventurous. Refer directly to the book to explain your thinking.
- As a class, look at a few examples of job advertisements online or in a newspaper. Write an advertisement for Miss Moon’s job. Make sure to include the necessary skills and experience a person would need to be successful in the role.

4. PETUNIA AND MITFORD ET AL.
- Who are Petunia and Mitford? What role do they have in the story?
- Write a short story about one of Miss Moon’s adventures with her canine charges from the perspective of Petunia or Mitford.
- Look at the class photo on the last page of the story. How are the dogs organized in the picture? Match up the listed names with the pictured pooches. Are there any names that you found to be exceptionally funny or interesting? Are there any dogs that you feel were misnamed? Choose one of the names that really made an impression on you and speculate how the dog was named.
- If you were a dog, would you want Miss Moon to be your governess? Why or why not?

APPENDIX
Common Core State Standard

Reading and Literature (Stories)
- Reading and Literature 1.1, 1.7, 2.7, 3.3, 3.7
- Speaking and Listening 1.1, 2.1

Writing
- Writing 1.1, 1.3, 1.7, 2.5, 2.7, 3.7

Speaking and Listening
- Speaking and Listening 1.1, 1.3, 2.1

References
- Pre-Reading Discussion / Activities
- Reading and Literature 1.1
- Speaking and Listening 1.5

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