



Blue, the pocket elf, is bored. She really wants to do something fun – like training next door's dog to become a waiter! But when Blue gets impatient and her magic goes wrong, Jasper escapes. Now, both she and Emma will need to follow the clues to find him. Will Emma and Blue be able to bring Jasper home, or will the great dog escape end in disaster?

Also available:



MERCURY / Brown A



**Rising Stars**  
**Reading Planet**

ISBN 978-1-5104-4422-5



[www.risingstarsreadingplanet.com](http://www.risingstarsreadingplanet.com)

# The Pocket Elf and the Great Dog Escape

Abie Longstaff



## A note from the author

Not long ago, my daughter had a tricky time at school when a friend of hers started being mean. This gave me the idea for the Pocket Elf stories. I wanted Emma to speak up for herself more often – so I gave her a new friend who would encourage her to do just that! Blue might be a loud and mischievous elf, but I hope she's the kind of friend you would appreciate, too.

### Now try this!

Create a WANTED poster for Jasper. Include what type of dog he is, what he looks like and where he was last seen. Look in the book for clues.

Write a diary entry from Blue that explains how she felt when she was covered in green slime from the pond.

Find out more about how dogs can be trained to carry out important jobs such as becoming guide dogs or rescue dogs.

# The Pocket Elf and the Great Dog Escape

Abie Longstaff



## Book overview

In the second book featuring the Pocket Elf, Emma and Blue are discussing dogs. Blue thinks dogs can be trained to be waiters. She sees Jasper, next-door's dog, from the window and, in a flash, she's standing on his collar! Emma and Blue give Jasper his first lesson, but he escapes through the gate when the elf's magic accidentally opens it. Now they've lost Jasper! Eventually, after following a trail of clues, they find him – he's filthy and smelly. They clean him up, only for him to get dirty again.

This fun story is action-packed and entertaining. The main characters are appealing to children and the simple plot and clear narrative will provide many opportunities to explore the author's writing techniques and choice of vocabulary.

## Key words

Discuss these key words with the children to test understanding before reading or as you read.

**embroidery** (p6), **exasperated**, **cockapoo** (both p10), **smirking** (p15), **tutted** (p17), **frustrated**, **beloved** (both p20), **distracted** (p21), **clamber**, **situation** (both p22), **palm** (p23), **focus**, **saluting**, **trampled** (all p26), **ditch**, **whimpered** (both p32), **rippled** (p35), **scent** (p36), **peered** (p37)

## Reading and SPaG\* objectives

This text and the suggested activities will support the children to:

- ★ draw inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justify inferences with evidence
- ★ discuss words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
- ★ know about word families based on common words, showing how words are related in form and meaning.

## Before reading

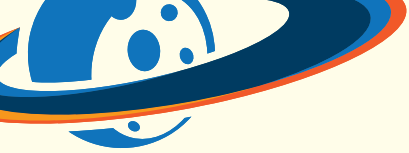
Introduce the children to the book by looking at the front and back cover.

- ★ If they have read the first book in the series, ask the children to recall what the main characters are like. (E.g. *Emma – a loner, who lacks confidence; Blue – the Pocket Elf – who tries to help her; Melanie – she says she's Emma's friend but she doesn't behave like one.*)
- ★ Discuss the word 'Great' in the title. Does this refer to the dog (so 'Great Dog') or the escape (so 'Great Escape')? Ask the children if they find the story title appealing and, if so, why?
- ★ *Where and when is the story set?* Look for clues in the cover illustration and in the back-cover blurb. (E.g. *It's set in Emma's home/ neighbourhood, and is in the present day.*)
- ★ Read together the blurb for the book. Find clues to establish what the story will be about.

## During reading

Discuss the contents page, noting that the chapter headings are single words, and read 'The Story So Far', which is written by the elf. Read Chapter 1 aloud to the class, asking the children to join in. Remind the children how and why exclamation marks and inverted commas are used, and read with expression.

- ★ After reading the chapter heading, ask the children: *Who do you think is going to be bored?* Recall what you know about the elf.
- ★ On page 6, ask: *Do you think the elf lives in the dolls' house? If so, why?*
- ★ Talk about what you have learned about the characters so far (on pages 6–7). Ask questions to elicit information: *How old do you think Emma is? What evidence do we have?* (E.g. *She reads Harry Potter, and thinks her dolls' house is babyish and boring.*) *Is Emma's brother older than her? How do we know?*
- ★ *Why did Emma think Blue was a 'pesky elf' (on page 10)?*



- ★ At the end of the chapter, ask the children to predict what they think will happen next.

**V** Jasper is described as 'much-loved' (page 10). The word 'loved' comes from the word family 'love'. Other words that are related in form and meaning include 'beloved' (page 20), 'lovely', 'loving', 'lovable'.

Ask the children to read Chapters 2 and 3 in small groups, taking turns to read a page each. Chapter 2 introduces Jasper, the neighbour's dog. In Chapter 3, Jasper is lost!

- ★ At the end of page 11, ask the children if they think Jasper is a friendly dog. Look for evidence in the text.
- ★ *Which word tells us that he's been for a walk with Emma before?* ('another' on page 11)
- ★ At the bottom of page 14, ask: *Why did Jasper jump up on to Emma? Did the treat work? Why did Emma groan?* Make a prediction: *Whose voice do you think it is?*
- ★ Refer to the book title. *Was it Blue's fault that Jasper escaped? Where did he escape from?*
- ★ Jasper is called Mrs Fraser's 'beloved dog' (page 20). *What does this mean?* Remind children of the previous work they've done on the word family 'love'. Use PCM1 to explore different adjectives to describe Jasper.

Read Chapter 4 aloud to the class, asking the children to join in with the dialogue only. Encourage them to speak with expression.

- ★ Point to the chapter heading, 'Clues'. Ask the children to predict what the clues could be.
- V** On page 21, ask: *Why does Blue think the slide is a 'silver mountain'? How might Blue describe the swings?* (E.g. *flying chairs*) Encourage the children to think about the world through Blue's eyes.
- ★ *Why does Blue say she loves the human world on page 24?* Discuss following questions with the class. *What is the 'human world'? Was Blue right when she said the grown-ups get their own playground?*
- ★ Look at page 26. Ask: *What is another word for 'focus'? Why did Blue salute?*
- ★ At the end of the chapter, recap what the clues were and in what order they were found (muddy paw prints; bits of red chew ball; tufts of yellow fur; trampled flowers; patches of smelly slime; a woman screaming). The children can use this information to complete PCM2.

Ask the children to read the final chapter in small groups, taking turns to read a page each.

- ★ Jasper was hoping for a juicy treat on page 30. Ask: *Did he want to be a waiter, as Blue suggested?*
- ★ At the top of page 31, ask: *Why has the author repeated the words 'all over' three times in the same sentence?* (E.g. *For emphasis.*) Read the sentence again, saying 'all over' just once – 'all over Steven, the customers, the tables and the food.' Ask: *Which sounds stronger/better?*
- ★ On page 32, ask: *Do you think Steven knows about Blue?* The children need to find evidence to support their answer.
- ★ *When Jasper is stuck in the ditch on page 33, does he remember what 'Up!' means?* Link back to earlier in the story when they tried to teach him this command but failed.
- ★ At the end of page 37, ask the children if they think Blue has done enough to turn the seed into a flower.
- ★ Finally, ask: *Did you like the story ending?* Discuss the children's overall impressions of the book.

## Reading for pleasure

As part of your discussion at the end of the book, encourage the children to discuss whether they liked the book. You could rate the book as a class alongside the other books you've read.

- ★ Ask: *What did you like about the book?* Prompt the children to think about the plot, the characters and the setting.
- ★ *Was there anything that you would change about the book?*
- ★ *Do you think there will be another book in this series?* (Remind the children that the seed needs to bloom before Blue can go home.) *Are you keen to read another book in this series?*

## Follow-up activities

Write a different ending to the story. Re-read the final page and discuss how it could have ended differently. *Could Blue have used her magic to stop Jasper running into the mud?* Encourage the children to share ideas with a writing partner and, in their pairs, they could act out and/or write a new ending.

Discuss how dogs can be trained to help us. *Would a dog like Jasper make a good waiter? Was Blue's idea ever going to work?* Talk about guide dogs trained to help the blind, police sniffer dogs trained to find drugs, mountain rescue dogs that can locate people who are lost and lapdogs that are companions for people living alone.



## The Pocket Elf and the Great Dog Escape

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Describing Jasper

Here are some of the different ways in which Jasper was described in the book.

Mrs Fraser's much-loved cockapoo (page 10), her beloved dog (page 20), her precious pet (page 27), "Bad dog!" (page 31), the tired-out dog (page 37).

- 1 Write your own phrases to describe Jasper as you remember him in the story. You might use different adjectives for different parts of the story. Use the book to help with ideas. Share your descriptions with the rest of the class.**

---

---

---

---

---

---

- 2 Draw a picture of Jasper to match one of your descriptive phrases.**

## The Pocket Elf and the Great Dog Escape

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Story map

- 1 Draw a story map or comic strip to show what happened in Chapter 4. Use the words from the box. You could also include other places or details from the story. Split your page up into boxes to help to show the main events.

playground	hedge	flowers	path
pond	fountain	café	paw prints
yellow fur	slime	bits of ball	slide

- 2 With a reading partner, use the map to retell this part of the story in your own words.