



A Well-Trained Dog

by Alvin Court
illustrated by Randy Chewing



HOUGHTON MIFFLIN

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HOUGHTON MIFFLIN HARCOURT
School Publishers

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Everyone in Robin's family had chores to do. Robin's big chore was keeping her bedroom neat. She had to make her bed, hang up her clothes, and put her toys in the toy chest. She had to do these chores every day.

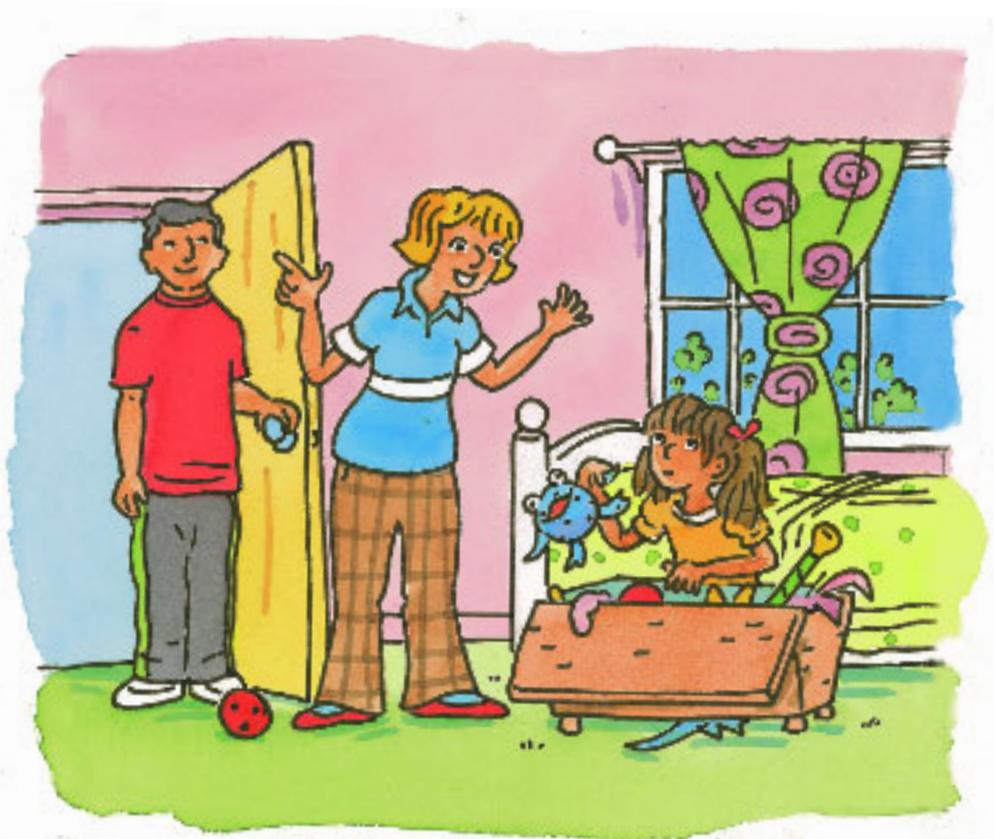
Robin was tired of chores. "When I finish one chore, it's time to do another. Then the next day I must do my chores all over again. The chores never seem to end."



▶ Robin's parents tried to be encouraging. They explained why they thought chores were important. Mom even gave a little **speech**.

▶ "Everyone has chores," Mom said. "I have chores, Dad has chores, and you have chores. We all have to pitch in and help out."

Robin didn't say anything. She knew her chores would never end.





One day Dad came home from the fire station with some news. He took off his safety helmet before he spoke.

“Robin, would you like one more chore?” Dad asked with a smile.

Robin groaned. “Dad! I have enough already.”

Dad continued, “What if the chore was taking care of our new dog?”



🔊 Robin jumped up. “A dog! Do you mean it, Dad? Are we really getting a dog?”

“If you think you can handle another chore,” Dad answered.

🔊 “I can! I’ll take care of the dog,” cried Robin. She couldn’t believe it. She had wanted a pet for a such long time, and now they were getting a dog!

▶ The next day Dad brought home an enormous dog. His name was King.

▶ Robin gave King baths and brushed his fur. She fed him and made sure he had fresh water every morning. She took him for long walks and threw a ball for him to chase. She wished all of her chores were like this. These were chores she could enjoy!



▣ Robin still did not enjoy making her bed, hanging up her clothes, and putting away her toys.

▣ But now she had an idea that would make it easy. After spending so much time with King, she knew that he was smart. He paid **attention** when she called his name, and Robin knew she could train him.





▶ Robin started training King the next day. The first lesson was “sit,” but it was not the typical “sit.” Robin taught King to pull up the blanket on her bed when she said “sit.”

▶ “There, the bed is made. So one chore is done,” said Robin. She patted King and gave him a treat.



🔊 The next unusual lesson was “roll over.” Robin taught King to push her clothes under the bed when she gave the command “roll over.”

🔊 “Great! Another chore is done. Good dog!” Robin said as she gave King another treat. This was fun!

🔊 The last lesson Robin taught King was “fetch.” When Robin gave this command, King would retrieve each of her toys and deposit it in the toy chest. Soon her room was completely picked up.

🔊 Robin said, “King obeys the commands so well. I will never have to do another chore. Except to take care of King, that is! But for now King, this will be our secret.” She looked at King and smiled.



🔊 Robin's plan worked well for a few weeks. King did Robin's chores every day. He made the bed, pushed the clothes under the bed, and put the toys in the toy chest. Her parents were happy that Robin had stopped complaining about her chores. And Robin didn't have to do anything except take care of King. And that was fun!



Then one day Mom came to Robin's room. Mom said, "I noticed you have been training your new **buddy**. How is it going? Have you taught him how to sit?"

Robin squirmed. "Yes," she said hesitantly. "Let me try," said Mom. "King, sit."



King pulled up the blanket on Robin's bed when he heard the command. He stood and wagged his tail proudly.

Mom stared in disbelief. She was shocked by what she had seen.

“Robin, what else have you trained King to do?” asked Mom.

Mom watched as Robin gave the “roll over” and “fetch” commands. Now it was clear who had been doing Robin's chores for the last few weeks.

Robin hung her head. She said, “I'm sorry, Mom. I didn't mean to deceive you about doing my chores.”





▶ Mom called a family meeting. The family agreed that King deserved a big steak bone for doing all the chores.

▶ Then they agreed that Robin had to keep her own bedroom neat from now on. She also got additional chores for a month. Mom and Dad knew that after doing extra chores, Robin wouldn't find tidying her bedroom so much trouble.

Robin knew that she still had the best chore of all. That was taking care of King!

Responding

TARGET SKILL Cause and Effect

Think about what caused things to happen in the story. Copy the chart and add details from the story.

Cause	Effect
? ?	Robin gets extra chores.

Write About It

Text to World Do you do chores at your home? Write one paragraph about doing chores. Try to persuade your readers that it's important to do chores, and explain why.



TARGET VOCABULARY

attention
buddy
enormous
obeys

safety
shocked
speech
station

EXPAND YOUR VOCABULARY

command
deceive
deposit
disbelief

retrieve
typical
unusual



TARGET SKILL **Cause and Effect**

Tell how one event makes another happen.



TARGET STRATEGY **Monitor/Clarify**

Find ways to figure out what doesn't make sense.



GENRE Humorous fiction is a story that is written to make the reader laugh.

Level: M

DRA: 28

Genre:

Humorous Fiction

Strategy:

Monitor/Clarify

Skill:

Cause and Effect

Word Count: 797

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