



 **Talking
with
Birds**

by Ann Sheridan

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN HARCOURT



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A Talking Pet

 It happens all the time. A person walks into a pet shop and hears a loud “Hello!” But the greeting did not come from a person. It came from a talking parrot!

 Many pet owners choose a parrot because they want a pet that talks back. Also, a parrot is a pet that can live up to 50 years, much longer than a dog or cat.

 There are about 350 different kinds of parrots.





▶ Parakeets are loyal pets. They like lots of love and attention.

▶ **Parakeets**

▶ A talking parrot is an amazing pet.

But before you buy one, you need to do some homework. The best way to learn about pet birds is to start with a smaller bird.

▶ A parakeet is a small and gentle bird.

Many pet parakeets can learn to talk.

Some parakeets can learn up to 100 words.

🔊 Birds are different than mammals.

A mother parakeet hatches her babies from a group of eggs. Most mammals give birth to a baby that does not hatch out of an egg. Some mammal babies, like puppies and kittens, are born in a litter.





🔊 Parakeets grow from 8 to 14 inches long.
They live from 5 to 10 years.



Quaker Parrots shake and quake their heads. That's how they got their name.

Quaker Parrots

 Quaker Parrots are some of the top talkers in the bird world. They can learn 50 to 60 words in their first year of life. A Quaker Parrot grows up to 12 inches long. With good care, it can live to be 20 to 30 years old.




▶ A pet Quaker Parrot is happy to be outside its cage.

▶ A Quaker Parrot is full of energy. It needs exciting toys and time outside its cage to stay healthy.

▶ Quakers Parrots are not hairy, like dogs and cats. They have a coat of bright green feathers. But they do shed their feathers. Their cages need to be cleaned once a week.

African Grey Parrots

 An African Grey Parrot is one of the smartest birds in the world. It can learn hundreds of words. This clever parrot can make other sounds, too. It can **imitate** the sounds of a telephone, a doorbell, or a video game.




 The African Grey Parrot can live 50 to 60 years.




🔊 The African Grey parrot grows up to 13 inches long from beak to tail.

🔊 The African Grey Parrot is so smart, it gets bored without enough to do. This bird likes puzzles, games, and lots of toys to chew. Pet owners clip toys all over the parrot's cage so it gets exercise when it plays.


Learning to Say “Hello!”


 Many people buy a parrot just to hear it talk. But some parrots never learn to speak. One reason might be that even smart parrots need a lesson or two. There are tricks to teaching a parrot to speak.

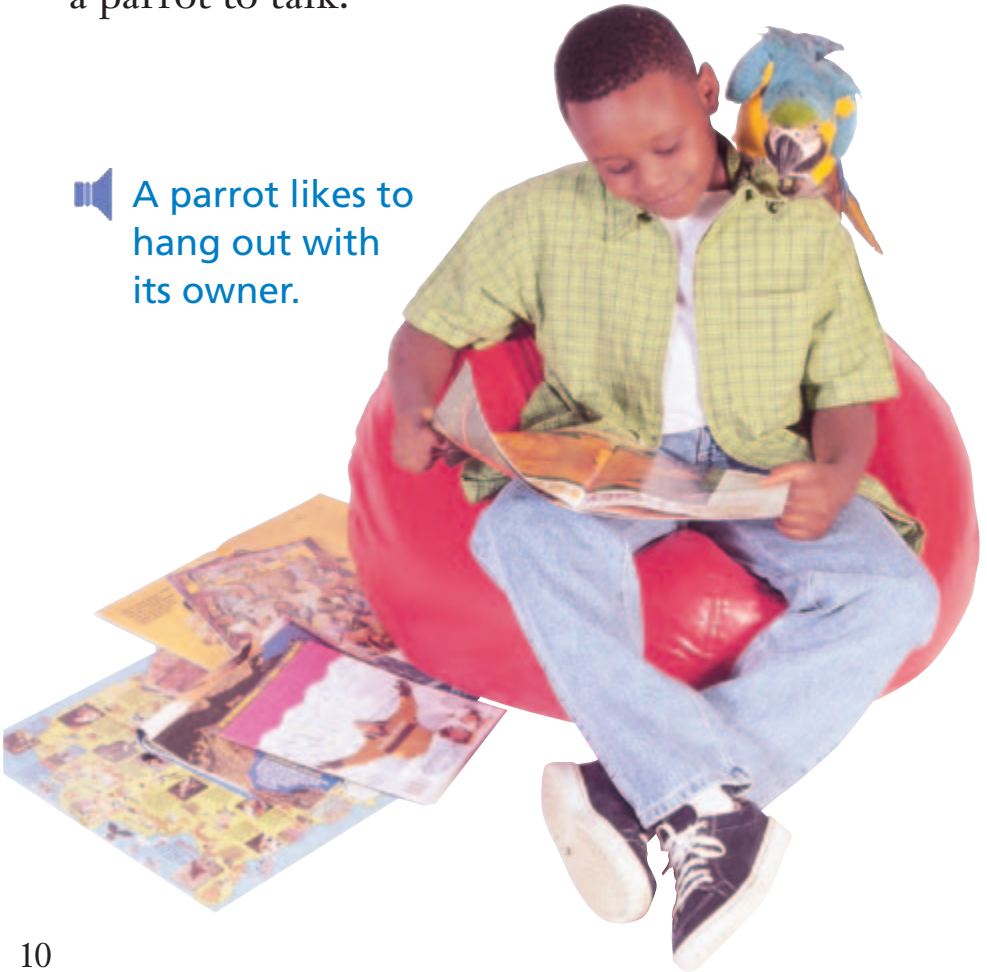
 Each pet bird is different. Some learn to talk right away. Others take months or years to say their first word.




Training Tips

 The first tip is to put the bird cage in the right place. Put the cage in a room where people come and go. Parrots like different sights and sounds. All the **action** will help get a parrot to talk.


 A parrot likes to hang out with its owner.






 Use a happy voice when you talk to your parrot about food.

Food Words

 The next tip is all about food. Parrots need a good diet. They don't eat canned food, like cats and dogs. They eat special dry bird pellets. A parrot that likes its food is easier to train.

 A parrot's first words should be short. Use food words like "treat" or "chew." Each day, repeat the food words when you feed your pet.

Music and Movement

 Another good tip is to play music.

Parrots love all kinds of music. They try to match the sounds they hear. You can whistle to your parrot, too. Before you know it, it will whistle back to you.





🔊 A parrot likes to copy the ways its owner moves. Try flapping your arms as if they were wings. Before long, your parrot might flap its wings in return.

🔊 Pet parrots are full of amazing surprises. Did you know that some parrots like to dance? It's true. If you get a feathered friend for a pet, watch out. It might copy your best dance moves!

🔊 Dancing parrots like music with a strong beat!

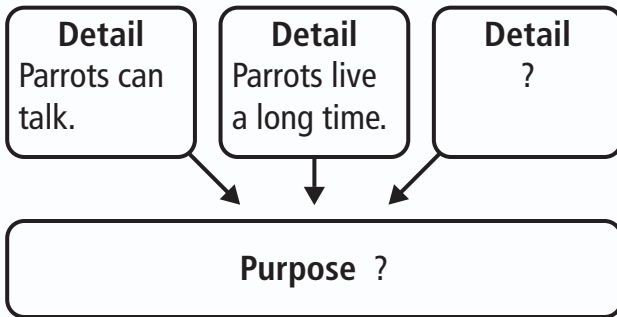


Responding



TARGET SKILL **Author's Purpose**

What was the author's purpose in writing this book? Copy the chart and add another detail that helps tell the author's purpose. Then write the author's purpose.



Write About It

Text to World What do you think is interesting about parrots? Write a paragraph. Use details to explain what you think.



TARGET VOCABULARY

canned
chews
clipped
coat

hairy
litter
mammals
stayed

EXPAND YOUR VOCABULARY

action
energy

feathered
imitate



TARGET SKILL **Author's Purpose**

Tell why an author writes a book.



TARGET STRATEGY **Analyze/Evaluate**

Tell how you feel about the text, and why.



GENRE Informational text gives facts about a topic.

Level: L

DRA: 24

Genre:

Informational Text

Strategy:

Analyze/Evaluate

Skill:

Author's Purpose

Word Count: 543

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