

## ***The Buddy Files: The Case of the Lost Boy***

Author: Dori Butler

Illustrator: Jeremy Tugeau

- **Summary:** King's family is missing, and he is sent to the P-O-U-N-D. A new family arrives and adopts him, and names him Buddy. They have a son named Connor, who also disappears! Can Buddy solve the case?
  - The Case of the Lost Boy is the first in a series of four short chapter books told from the perspective of Buddy, the dog. The books may be read as stand alone mysteries, however an overall mystery solving what has happened to Kayla's whereabouts is revealed in the third book.
  
- **Awards received:**
  - 2010-2011 Cochecho Readers' Award Master List (Delaware)
  - 2011 Edgar Award Nominee (Juvenile)
  - 2011-2012 Goldfinch Award (Iowa) Master List
  - 2011-2012 Texas Bluebonnet Master List
  - 2012 Monarch Award (Illinois) Master List
  
- **Reviews:**
  - From *School Library Journal* (February 1, 2010): Grade 2<sup>nd</sup> –3<sup>rd</sup> —The type is large, the text is easy, and the occasional black-and-white illustrations complement the text well. The clues are unique and true to the fact that a dog is telling the story. The addition of paw prints used as bullet points in King's lists of what he knows about the case and chapter headings with titles like "Nose to the Ground" add to this involving story. Fans of dog stories, mysteries, or readers reluctant to start chapter books will appreciate this story.— Kira Moody, Hunter Public Library, West Valley City, UT
  - Booklist (January 1, 2010): Grades 1-3. This first installment in a new trilogy for early readers introduces a dog whose first family went away and never returned. Buddy ended up in the pound, where he was adopted by a boy, Connor, and his mom, who coincidentally live in his old neighborhood. Buddy, who enjoyed sleuthing with his original owner, is now trying to solve the mystery of his missing family, a mission he will pursue throughout the series. First, though, he has an immediate problem to solve: Connor has disappeared. Buddy tries to find him, relying on methodical reasoning and unexpected assistance from a cat who can read. The story moves quickly to its obvious conclusion, but unanswered questions will propel readers to the series' second title. Particularly well drawn are scenes in which Buddy tries to overcome dog-to-human communication obstacles, the numerous distractions of delicious smells, and Connor's reluctance to love Buddy as he deals with changes in his own life. With twists and turns, humor, and a likable canine character, this series should find a wide fan base.
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- **Author Information:**
  - **Dori Butler** <http://www.kidswriter.com/>

- About the Author: <http://www.kidswriter.com/about.htm>
- Author's Blog: <http://dorihbutler.livejournal.com/>
- **Illustrator Information: Jeremy Tugeau**
  - <http://jeremytugeau.com/index.html>
  - <http://www.pennellogallery.com/painting/page4.html>
  - This one shows more of the books he has illustrated  
<http://www.jacketflap.com/persondetail.asp?person=73605>
- **Discussion Questions:**
  - The series is called the Buddy Files, so why is the dog's name King?
  - How are Buddy and Connor alike? How are they different?
  - How does Buddy feel when Connor goes missing?
  - Have you ever felt sad?
  - How do you think King felt when his owners left him and he ended up at the pound?
  - What did you think happened to Connor? How did you feel while reading this story?
  - 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?
  - Where do you think Kayla might be?
  - Was it a good idea for Connor to run away from his home?
  - How do you think his mom felt when she found out her son was missing?
  - Are you planning to read more books in the series? Why or why not?
  - Would you recommend this book to a friend? Why or why not?
- **Curricular Activities**
  - Reading/oral language –
    - Read the book aloud together. Read the book with partners. Have students read the book on their own. Have students listen to a recording of the book.
    - Have a discussion about words relating to a mystery such as detective, clue, crime, witness, observation, and solution. What do these words mean? Which of these concepts did you observe in the book?
  - Writing –
    - Have students create a journal going along with the book. Have students create their own endings to the chapters as well as predict what is going to happen next.
    - In *The Case of the Lost Boy*, Buddy solves his mystery through a list making process. First he lists what he knows. Second he lists what he doesn't know. Third he lists what he is going to do to find out what he doesn't know. Have your students (either individually or in pairs) create a mystery to solve. Give them a packet of four pages to be their detective notebook. Encourage students to decorate their notebook's cover. On the next page, they should list what they know. On the third page, they should

list what they don't know. On the last page, they should design their plan on how they will find out what they don't know. Alternately, you can do this as a class project or in teams.

- Math – Create a class graph about pets. You can gather data based on number of pets or based on types of pets (dogs, cats, fish, other). Ask other classes if you can collect additional data and create additional graphs across grade levels.
- Science – Do research on dogs. Learn scientific facts about them. Have students report back their findings about various breeds including information such as size, color, weight, height, skills, and other interesting, unique facts. Have students report back these findings and discuss similarities and differences. Vote on favorite dog breeds.
- Social Studies –
  - Discuss the geography of where California is as well as Minnesota. Show on a map how far they are away from each other. Talk about the different climates of these places. Find out the first people to have dogs.
  - Using information from *The Case of the Lost Boy*, create a neighborhood map of Buddy and Connor's neighborhood. Have students create maps of their neighborhoods as well. Include a legend with certain landmarks such as schools, parks, stores, etc. Are there similarities between the student maps and the map of Buddy's neighborhood? How do we use maps?
- Art –
  - Have the students draw their favorite animal or their own animal.
  - Have students draw different parts of the book that do not have a picture to go along with it. Have students explain what they drew, and share with the class.
  - Buddy uses his nose and sense of smell as his main tool to gather clues. Human mystery solvers sometimes use a magnifying glass to gather clues because we have to depend a lot on our sense of sight. Have students draw an image of a magnifying glass and an object as it would appear within that magnifying glass. Have students guess each other's magnified images.
- Drama: In *The Case of the Lost Boy*, in what ways did Buddy try to communicate to the humans? Have your students pretend that they are a dog and have them to try communicate an idea or need using only methods that a dog has accessible. How does this change if you are a different kind of animal such as a cat or a hamster?
- Music – Sing "I Want A Dog" – <http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/lyrics/wantdog.htm>
- Technology –
  - Have students draw a picture related to the book on the computer.
  - You can email Buddy! Send him a letter and (hopefully) he'll write back!  
[Buddy@thebuddyfiles.com](mailto:Buddy@thebuddyfiles.com)
- Cooking/food –
  - Make Puppy/People Chow.
  - Buddy needs to use his sense of smell a lot to help him solve his mysteries. For example, he knew that Connor and his Mom were from near Kayla's house just by their scent. Is a dog's sense of smell stronger

than ours? Put several spices and smells into unlabeled jars (but covered) for students to test. Have them guess what the fragrances are in each jar. (Ex. cinnamon, vanilla, chili powder, pepper, maple syrup, ketchup, ranch dressing, orange peel, ginger snaps)

- **Related Books:**
  - *Jack Russell: Dog Detective* by Sally & Darrel Odgers Illustrated by: Janine Dawson
  - *Dog On It: A Chet and Bernie Mystery* by Spencer Quinn
  - *Scoobie-Doo: A Spooky Strikeout* by James Gelsey
  - *Help Me Mr. Mutt: Advice for Dogs with People Problems* by Janet and Susan Stevens
  - *Dear Mrs. LaRue* books by Mark Teague
- Dori Hillestad Butler shares that she has a passion for dogs and a strong interest in therapy dogs. This is her suggested reading list:
  - *ABC Dogs* by Kathy Darling (Walker, 1997)
  - *May I Pet Your Dog: The How-to Guide for Kids Meeting Dogs (and Dogs Meeting Kids)* by Stephanie Calmenson (Clarion, 2007)
  - *Rosie: A Visiting Dog's Story* by Stephanie Calmenson (Sandpiper, 1998)
  - *The Right Dog for the Job* by Dorothy Hinshaw Patent (Walker, 2004)
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- **Other titles by Butler:**
  - *The Buddy Files: The Case of the Mixed-Up Mutts*
  - *The Buddy Files: The Case of the Missing Family*
  - *The Buddy Files: The Case of the Fire Alarm*
  - *The Buddy Files: The Case of the Library Monster – Coming Spring, 2011*
  - *Detective Cluck and the Missing Hens*
  - *Do You Know the Monkey Man?*
  - *F Is for Firefighting*
  - *H Is for Hoosier*
  - *Hansel and Gretel: The True Story*
  - *How The Rhino Got Wrinkly Skin: An Adaptation Of A Rudyard Kipling Story*
  - *The Great Tooth Fairy Rip-Off*
  - *Late Again!*
  - *M Is for Minnesota*
  - *My Grandpa Had a Stroke*
  - *My Mom's Having a Baby! A Kid's Month-to-Month Guide to Pregnancy*
  - *P Is for Police*
  - *The S. H. A. Club*
  - *A Sheep In Wolf's Clothing*
  - *Sliding into Home*
  - *Tank Talbott's Guide to Girls*
  - *The Time Capsule*
  - *The Tortoise And The Hare: An Aesop's Fable*
  - *Trading Places with Tank Talbott*
  - *The Truth about Truman School*

- *W Is for Wisconsin*
- *Whodunit?: How Police Solve Crimes*
- *Yes, I Know the Monkey Man*
  
- **Other titles by Tugeau:**
  - *Ghostville Elementary Series* by Debbie Dadey & Marcia Jones
  - *Who Were the Beatles* by Geoff Edgers
  - *You Are So Wonderful* by Jacqueline Lewis
  - *Always an Olivia: A Remarkable Family History*
  - *Bedtime with Mother Goose*
  - *Cars, Trucks and Planes*
  - *Classic Bedtime Stories*
  - *I Will Not Be Afraid*
  - *Jingle Bell Sleigh*
  - *John Henry*
  - *Lizzie Newton and the San Francisco Earthquake*
  - *The Seven Days of Kwanzaa*
  - *Spooky Ghost Stories*
  - *A Time for Everything*
  - *Weather Fun with Mother Goose*
  - *Writing Mysteries, Movies, Monster Stories and More*
  
- **Websites for further study or enrichment:**
  - The song “I Want a Dog”: <http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/lyrics/wantdog.htm>
  - Buddy Files website with novel units. Some you must purchase: [http://suzyred.com/2011\\_The\\_Case\\_of\\_The\\_Lost\\_Boy.html](http://suzyred.com/2011_The_Case_of_The_Lost_Boy.html)
  - Fun Dog Facts for Kids: <http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/sciencefacts/animals/dog.html>
  - Kids Mysteries: Mysteries to solve, scary stories, and magic tricks <http://kids.mysterynet.com>
  - First Clues: Mysteries for Kids lists many mystery books for children divided by age groups. Reviews of these books by children: <http://www.firstclues.com/first-clues.html>
  - Teacher’s Guide: <https://www.albertwhitman.com/resources/BookResources/9/documents/buddy-files-teaching-guide-april-20101.pdf>
  - Coloring Pages: [http://www.albertwhitman.com/resources/BookResources/8/documents/aw310\\_05\\_buddy1.pdf](http://www.albertwhitman.com/resources/BookResources/8/documents/aw310_05_buddy1.pdf)
  - Further information about Therapy Dogs: <http://www.therapyanimals.org/R.E.A.D.html>