

*Passing the Bone: America's Next POTUS* By Heather Patterson  
Sample First Grade Reading & Writing Lesson, Compiled by Heather Patterson

**Common Core State Standards**

English Language Arts-Reading Literature, Grade 1

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1

Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.2

Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3

Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7

Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.

Writing, Grade 1

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.1

Write opinion pieces, in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.5

With guidance and support from adults, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.8

With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

**Focus**

Students will listen to *Passing the Bone: America's Next POTUS* and discuss key details provided in text and illustrations.

**Activation**

Introduce author Heather Patterson to students and share information about her by using her website [www.heathernpatterson.com](http://www.heathernpatterson.com). Explain that we will be reading a book written by Heather Patterson about the Presidential Pup requirements, told from the First Dog's perspective during the 2016 election season.

**Pre Reading Conversation**

- Do you think there are requirements to run for President of the United States?
- How might a dog become the White House Pup?
- Define and explain a presidential election. Discuss what an election season is, including campaigns, candidates, and voters.
- Define POTUS (President of the United States) as a known political acronym, First Family, First Lady, and First Dog.
- What character traits do you think make a good President?

- What character traits make a good First Pup?
- What is your character like?

### **Post Reading Conversation**

- How did Bo's point of view influence your opinion?
- You read some requirements to run for President (ex: must be born in the U.S.A.) Is there something else you would require in order for someone to be President?
- What do you believe should be part of the President's job?
- If the Presidential Pup had a job, what should it be?
- Have you ever voted for something before? If so, what was it? What made you vote the way you did?
- Would you ever run for President? Why or why not?
- Would people vote for you? Why?
- Discuss how children can be good citizens of the United States.

### **Vocabulary**

POTUS

Foreign

Domestic

Foes

International Dignitary Pets

Patriotic

Unpatriotic

South Lawn

Air Force One

Camp David

First Lady

Homeland

Global affairs

Chief Mouser to the Cabinet Office

Ally

Secret Service

Oval Office

First Family

Barney and Miss Beazley Bush

"Off the record"

Candidates

Chief of Staff

Lincoln Room

Citizens

\*Defined vocabulary terms are posted on [www.heathernpatterson.com](http://www.heathernpatterson.com) and available as a downloadable PDF.

### **Other Points to Discuss**

- Bo talks about making peace with cats, which are normally considered dog's enemies. Why is it important for our nation's leader to be peaceful?
- Bo warns that swimming in the President's pool is strictly forbidden; however, Bo is comfortably laying on a pool float and sun bathing with an ice cold drink. Notice the Secret Service agents and their expressions. Does Bo look concerned? How did he know that the President's Pool was off limits? (Infer) The author did not come right out and tell us.

### **Character Qualities**

- Leadership
- Patriotic
- Peacemaker
- Servant hearted
- Understanding

### **Guided Instruction**

#### **Writing Activity**

- Write a letter of why or why not your dog would make a good "POTUS" (Pup of the United States). If students do not own a dog, then can think of a dog they know.
- Students will need to explain why or why not their dog would make a good White House Pup. If their dog would make a good POTUS, give positive examples. If their dog would make a bad POTUS, give negative examples.
- Students may reread the story to remember examples of Bo's character and requirements. Use these clues to remember the attitude and character a Presidential Pup should have.
- Allow student think time and discussion to form their thoughts for their story.
- Have students draw a picture of their dog as the White House Pup.

### **Extended Learning**

#### **Historical Facts**

- "Only the President lands on the South Lawn."

Bo says in the book, "Only the President lands on the South Lawn," referring to an honored tradition reserved for the President; however, these are true words spoken from former President George H. W. Bush. Before George H. W. Bush was President, he served as Vice President to Ronald Reagan. While President Reagan was in office, he was shot and rushed to surgery. His advisors wanted Vice President George H. W. Bush to land on the South Lawn as a public symbol of leadership while Ronald Reagan was in surgery. However, Vice President George H. W. Bush refused and said, "Only the President lands on the South Lawn," showing an immense amount of respect not only to President Ronald Reagan, but the office of the President of the United States.

- "Chief Mouser to the Cabinet Office."

At a talk show, Bo sends "warm wishes to the Chief Mouser to the Cabinet Office, our friendly ally across the pond." ("Across the pond" is a saying that means across the ocean.) What a long

nickname for a cat! Bo is talking about sending friendly greetings to the official resident cat of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. The cat's real name is **Larry**, who lives at 10 Downing Street (head quarters of the executive office of the British Government). Larry is to the United Kingdom, what Bo is to the United States of America.

- British Prime Minister David Cameron and Prince William, Duke of Cambridge

Illustrated in the book is a picture of British Prime Minister David Cameron and Prince William, Duke of Cambridge in the White House. In the illustration, Prime Minister David Cameron is holding a bone wrapped with the United Kingdom flag. Bo Obama actually was given a bone shaped chew toy, decorated with the England flag, as a gift from Prime Minister Cameron when he visited the White House.

- Former First Dogs

Bo is seen walking through a hallway of former Presidential Pups, or, First Dogs. On the wall, you can see former President Bush's dogs, Mr. Barney Bush and Miss Beazley Bush. "43" is written above their portraits because they were the dogs of the 43<sup>rd</sup> President of the United States. Also in view is former 42<sup>nd</sup> President Bill Clinton's dog, Mr. Buddy Clinton.

- Five Living Presidents

In the White House dining room, you see five men illustrated around the table. What you might not know is these men are our nation's five living Presidents! Pictured from left to right are: Jimmy Carter (39<sup>th</sup> President), George H. W. Bush (41<sup>st</sup> President), Bill Clinton (42<sup>nd</sup> President), George W. Bush (43<sup>rd</sup> President), and current President, Barak Obama, 44<sup>th</sup> President of the United States. Also, did you notice George H. W. Bush and George W. Bush have nearly identical names? That's because they are father and son! George H. W. Bush, the 41<sup>st</sup> President, is the father of George W. Bush, the 43<sup>rd</sup> President. The only other father/son duo to be elected President is John Adams, the 2<sup>nd</sup> President and John Quincy Adams, the 6<sup>th</sup> President.

- Passing the Bone

On the last page, Bo "passes the bone" to his canine successor, by leaving a bone for him or her to find in the White House when he or she takes office. Bo's act is an allusion to the traditional departure letter written by the outgoing President to the incoming President, left on the Oval Office desk.