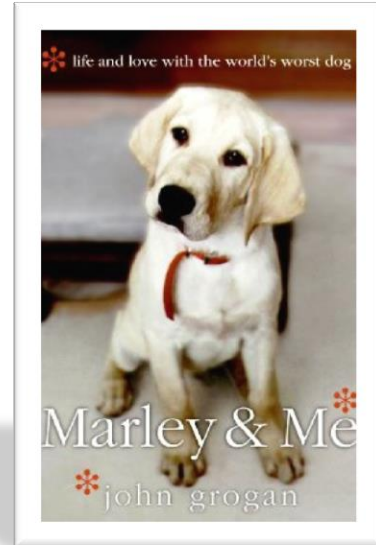


Title: Marley and Me
Author: John Grogan
Grade Level: 7th Grade

SUMMARY

Marley and Me, is a touching memoir written by award winning journalist John Grogan about life with an adorable but disobedient dog, Marley. This story follows the making of the Grogan family from marriage to children through moving houses and jobs. Your family will genuinely relate to the chaos, happiness, hurt, and laughter that comes with years of growing and living together. The book touches on some of the important challenges that families face like miscarriage, depression, moving, and the loss of a loved one.

Equally, it highlights those hilarious moments of life that your family is sure to laugh about. This book is great for seventh graders to read with you or independently. You'll absolutely fall in love with the loveable troublemaker Marley!



QUESTIONS TO TALK ABOUT WHILE READING

VOCABULARY

It's important to make sure that your child has an understanding of key words in the book. Talking about words while reading is a great way for your child to learn new words.

In this book, you might talk about these words:

- manic (pg. 18)
- commotion (pg. 36)
- indomitable (pg. 53)
- gushed (pg. 118)
- bespectacled (pg. 146)
- postpartum (pg. 146)
- scrutinize (pg. 136)
- palpable (pg. 196)
- catharsis (pg. 196)
- adolescence (pg. 256)
- condolences (pg. 282)
- elaborate (pg. 294)

You might use a question like:

Jen Grogan was diagnosed with postpartum depression. Think about the timeline of their lives at this point in the story and try to figure out what postpartum means?

KEY IDEAS and THEMES

In addition to words, it's important to talk about key ideas and themes and how they develop over the course of the book. Here are some examples to get you started:

1. This book speaks to more than just the story of a dog. It's about family and the journey of living through the ups and downs of life together. What were some of highs and lows of the Grogan family's life? How was Marley a part of these experiences?
2. Humor has a strong presence in this book. What were some of the funniest parts and why? How does Grogan accomplish these parts through his language and structuring of the story?
3. The subtitle of this book is "Life and Love with the World's Worst Dog." Do you think Marley really deserves to be called the World's Worst Dog? Why or why not?
4. Do you see any similarities between John and Marley? In what ways do they reflect or highlight one another's flaw or redeeming qualities?
5. What do you think were some of the biggest challenges the family faced in raising a pet?
6. How did the Grogan children connect to Marley? In what ways was Marley more than just a dog but an essential part of their family?

EXTRA ACTIVITIES

1. Read John Grogan's original column in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* from January 6, 2004 saying goodbye to Marley that inspired him to write *Marley and Me*. This column received an overwhelming response from readers who encouraged Grogan to write the whole story of him and his dog. What do you think it was about this column that was so compelling to readers? What qualities or quotes from the column really spoke to the readers?
2. Have you ever loved or lost a pet? Write a short memoir depicting some of the best stories and memories of life with your pet and what he or she meant in your life. Describe how having a pet has impacted the happy or sad times in your life.
3. In 2008, this memoir was made into a box office hit starring Owen Wilson and Jennifer Anniston. Watch the movie and create a [T-Chart](#) comparing and contrasting the plot and characters of the book and movie.