

No More Dead Dogs

By Gordon Korman



Eighth-grade football hero Wallace Wallace is sick of reading books about dogs that die. After his English teacher assigns the class to read and report on *Old Shep*, *My Pal*, it's the final straw.

Wallace writes a book report that earns him detention and he's off the football team. As if that's not bad enough, he has to work off his detention by attending rehearsals for the school production of *Old Shep*, *My Pal* which his English teacher is directing.

Wallace Wallace gets frustrated just sitting there listening to the story he dislikes so much, so he starts making suggestions to make it a better play. To the dismay of Rachel Turner, Drama Club President, his ideas are a hit! Suddenly, the play takes a new form, going from a somewhat dreary classic to a rock musical. Wallace Wallace not only gets his grade, but he gets the girl, too.

- ◆ Winner of numerous state and regional book awards including the 2003 Young Reader's Choice Award given by the Pacific Northwest Library Association.

Gordon Korman

(Did you know . . .)

- ◆ He wrote his first book, *This Can't be Happening at MacDonald Hall*, when he was 12 years old.
- ◆ His favorite books as a kid were the *Great Brain* series.
- ◆ He was born in Montreal, Quebec, in Canada but lives in New York.

The View From Saturday

By E. L. Konigsburg

Four sixth-graders, none of them the best or most outstanding students at their school, are chosen by their teacher to represent the school in the Academic Bowl. The reason these particular students were chosen is a mystery, even to the teacher who chose them. She can't explain it, she just knows they are the right ones for the job.

The four students, who call themselves The Souls, each have their own stories to tell. The four stories combine to reveal four unique people who together form a whole.

Each student brings something special to the team. One by one, they defeat their opponents, until they find themselves at the championship meet.

The story is told through the eyes of each of the four kids as they reveal their struggles and their triumphs. Another wonderful story by Newbery medalist, E. L. Konigsburg.

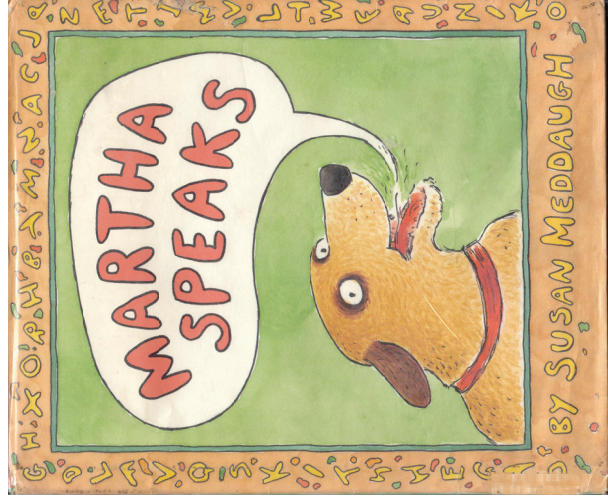


- ◆ Winner of the 1997 Newbery Award
- ◆ 1997 ALA Notable Children's Book Award
- ◆ 1996 School Library Journal Best Books List title

Martha Speaks

Written and Illustrated By:

Susan Meddaugh



When Martha the dog eats a bowl of alphabet soup one day, the letters go to her head instead of her stomach. All of a sudden, Martha can talk. Her family thinks her talking is by turns funny, irritating, and sometimes embarrassing. No matter what though, Martha's talking is never boring. Listed on the 1992 New York Times Best Illustrated Children's Books Award list and winner of the 1992 Parent's Choice Gold Award for Picture Books.

What is "Read the Same Book?"

Communities across the U.S. have discovered that choosing a book to read together brings together friends and strangers to discuss good literature and ideas. *Idaho Statesman* writer Dan Popkey introduced the concept to Boise in late 2000, modeled after a similar program in Seattle. Boise began its program in 2001 with *Housekeeping*, by Marilynne Robinson. Children's titles were added in subsequent years so that the whole family could participate.

Books are chosen by a committee that includes representatives from local libraries, plus teachers, writers and readers of all ages. The committee chooses a book based on literary merit and relevance to local readers.

As you and your family read a book, we encourage you to talk about it with friends and neighbors, and to attend related programs in the community. We hope you'll find it an avenue for exploring new ideas and making new reading friends.

2008 Adult Selection: Again this year, the Log Cabin Literary Center is partnering with Boise Public Library and Ada Community Library to present The Big Read, a national initiative from the National Endowment of the Arts. Like Read the Same Book, this program encourages literary reading by inviting communities to come together to read and discuss one book. This year, the Log Cabin chose *My Antonia*, by Willa Cather.

Discussion Topics

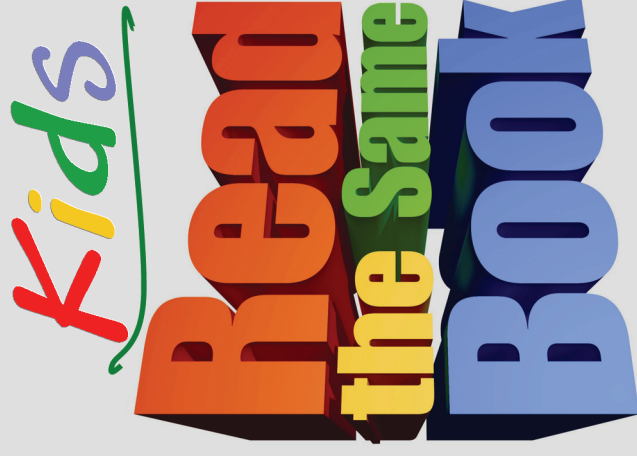
- ◆ **Martha Speaks** (Young Readers)
Explore a "what if" notion — if animals really could talk to us what they would say? If students have pets of their own, what would their pets tell them?
- ◆ Have the students collect newspaper and magazine articles about "dogs in the news." Are there similarities in theme? Do the stories make them feel happy, sad, afraid, angry? Do any of the articles make them want to take action?

The View From Saturday

(Middle Readers)

- ◆ Have the students create a board game similar to the academic bowl that The Souls competed in.
- ◆ Talk about random acts of kindness and ask students to perform an act of kindness, then write a paper about how it made them feel.
- ◆ **No More Dead Dogs** (Young Adult)
Choose a story that might be considered "boring" or dated and brainstorm ideas about what the class would do to liven it up if they were going to produce a play based on the book.
- ◆ Wallace Wallace says that "... honesty is not just the best policy; it's the only one." Have students keep track of how many times in a day or week they are tempted to tell a lie—no matter how small.

Watch for related activities and programs at your library, or visit www.idahokidsread.org.



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