

Lesson Plan

Build a Breed

Book: *Golden Retriever*

Series: That's My Dog

Level: Beacon

Objective

To help students practice presenting about a topic, including using helpful visuals or drawings.

Supplies

- *Golden Retrievers* book
- Paper
- Colored pencils, pens, or markers

Before the Activity

Read through the *Golden Retriever* book, or assign it to students to read on their own.

Activity

Review Chapter 2 (“Scottish Roots”), which describes how people began breeding golden retrievers. To create the golden retriever breed, people crossed different breeds of dogs. First, breeders crossed a wavy-coated retriever and a Tweed water spaniel. Later litters came from crosses with flat-coated retrievers and red setters. Each of these breeds had the traits that breeders wanted their new dog breed to have. These traits, such as golden coats or good hunting skills, were passed from the parents to their puppies. By continuing to choose dogs that had the desired traits to be the parents of additional litters, breeders eventually created a new breed of dog: the golden retriever.

Ask students to imagine that they are dog breeders who want to create a new breed of dog. Students should choose two breeds of dogs to combine. They should write a paragraph explaining the personality and appearance of the new breed they hope to create. Students should make sure to explain which traits they are hoping the dog would inherit from each of the two breeds.

Students will read this paragraph out loud to the rest of the class. They should draw a picture of what their new dog breed would look like, including important features that will help the rest of the class see what makes the breed unique. Students should make sure to create a name for their new dog breed, too.

For example, students might like the personality of a poodle but not its coat that requires a lot of grooming. So, they might choose to cross a poodle with a short-haired dog breed, such as the German short-haired pointer. Because both of these dog breeds come from Germany, and *glatt* means “smooth” in German, this new breed of dog could be named the Glattpoodle.

Evaluation

Give students up to 14 points for their presentation, using the following rubric:

- 5 points for describing which traits their breed will inherit from its parent breeds
- 5 points for speaking clearly and coherently
- 2 points for drawing a helpful picture of the dog
- 2 points for giving their dog breed a creative name

Standards

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards’ speaking and listening standards, grade 3 (SL 3.4).