

Classroom Study Guide

Doctor

By Hugh Lofting

Dramatized by Olga

Doctor



Dolittle

Fricker

Dolittle learns

how to talk to the animals that stay with him in Puddleby. After discovering this power of his, Dolittle encounters many problems and tasks throughout the story, including going to Africa and joining a circus! Dr. Dolittle focuses on taking care of all animals and helping them if they are sick or in bad living situations. Find out how Doctor Dolittle takes on these crazy events!

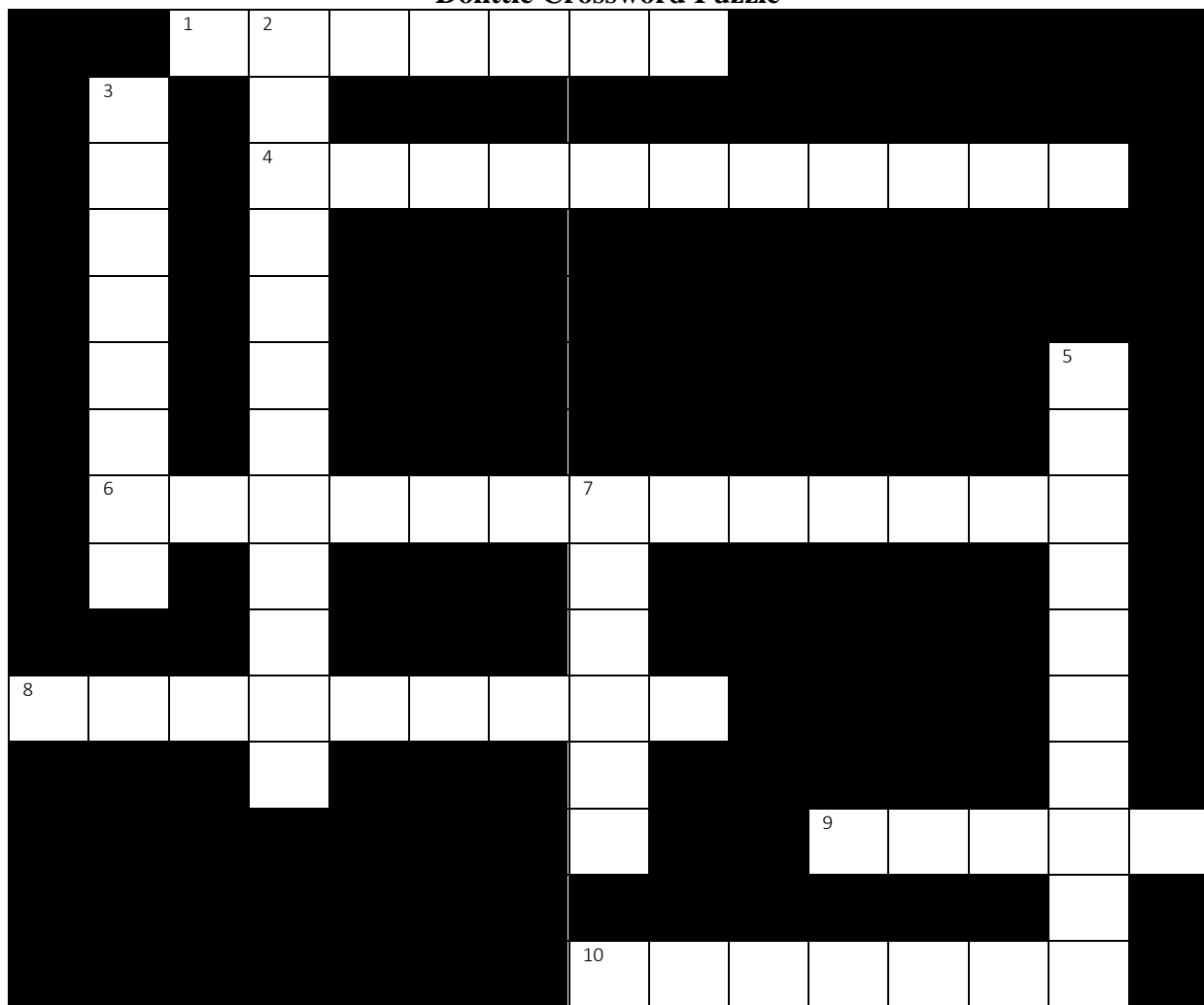
Who Was Hugh Lofting?

Hugh Lofting was born in Maidenhead, Berkshire in January 1886. He studied at Mount St Mary's College in Spinkhill, Derbyshire, then in 1904 moved to America to enroll at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 1906 he came back to England to finish his coursework at London Polytechnic. He went through many different career paths, and eventually joined the British army during World War I. While he was there, he would send letters back to his children, and thus **Doctor Dolittle** was born. He was inspired by the war-employed animals and how poorly they were treated. So, he made up a doctor who decided to treat animals instead of humans and did this by learning to talk to them.

In 1917 he got wounded, so he was discharged back home two years later. There, he worked on the first book *The Story of Doctor Dolittle*. The public was highly entertained by this exotic and fun story. In 1923 he published his second book *The Voyages of Doctor Dolittle*, which won a Newbery Medal. He published four more books after that. After going through 2 tragic losses of his wives, he himself began declining in health. He wrote eight more books, but sadly died in Santa Monica, California on September 26, 1947.



Dolittle Crossword Puzzle

**Across**

1. What the other vet was treating Beppo the horse for.
4. A medical instrument for listening to the action of someone's heart or breathing, typically having a small disk-shaped resonator that is placed against the chest, and two tubes connected to earpieces.
6. Fish stew
8. The name of Dolittle's parrot
9. Frequent, prolonged and intense crying or fussiness in a healthy infant.
10. The owner of the circus Dr. Dolittle joins

Down

2. The two-head animal that Dr. Dolittle takes from Africa.
3. This is where Dr. Dolittle lives
5. Any disease marked by inflammation and pain in the joints, muscles, or fibrous tissue, especially rheumatoid arthritis. (Ms. Mumford has this!)
7. The world's second largest continent

Word Bank: AFRICA, SPAVINS, PUSHMIPULLYU, PUDDLEBY, RHEUMATISM.
STETHOSCOPE, POLYNESIA, BOUILLABAISSSE, COLIC, BLOSSOM

Discussion Questions

1. After Dr. Dolittle decides to become a full-time veterinarian, Polynesia helps him learn the languages of all the different animals. She explains that it is not always about their voices but also their actions and behaviors. In your life, do you think you are able to tell what an animal wants just by observing them? If so, give an example of a time where you have witnessed that and how that relates to Polynesia's argument that animals use their whole body to communicate.

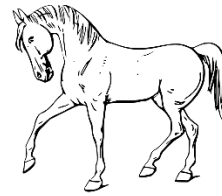
2. Pushmi-Pullyu is the two headed rare African animal. The animals suggest that Pushmi-Pullyu should be a gift to Dr. Dolittle since he cured the monkey's sickness. Pushmi agrees to go back to England with the Doctor and other animals and be a part of a circus since he is so rare. Do you think that it was okay for the animals to bring up the idea that Pushmi-Pullyu should be Dolittle's gift knowing that he would be leaving his home and friends in Africa? Do you feel like he was treated unfairly compared to the other animals? Was it all right for him to be used to earn customers for the circus because of his unique looks?

3. Dr. Dolittle always seems to put the animals and their needs first, even if it means that he must go against his sister's wishes. Do you believe that it was the right thing to tell Sarah to leave if she was not okay with the animals staying in the house? List other times when Dr. Dolittle puts the animals before himself or others.

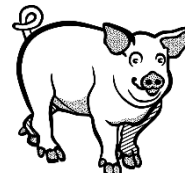
Challenge:

Can you remember the names of Dr. Dolittle's animals? Match the animal to its name.

Polynesia



Jip



Gub-Gub



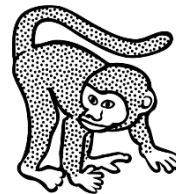
Dab-Dab



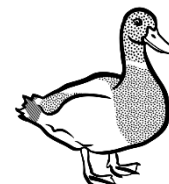
Too-Too



Beppo



Chee-Chee



Learning Activity:

Actors deliver their lines in certain ways so that the audience can understand how they feel about a certain situation. Now it's your turn:

Try different ways of delivering each line. Then, figure out who said them!

- “Go and get some of your lazy friends and bring them back here at once! Do as the Doctor says!”
- “Do you hear that, my friends? I’m going to be able to talk to all of you.”
- “You mind your business and I’ll mind mine. There’ll be plenty of vegetables for all of us.”
- “Well, bless my soul! I never saw anything like it in my life. How much do you want for the beast?”
- “I hate boats. They’re always rocking or bumping into things. I’m exhausted!”

True or False Questions

1. Dr. Dolittle didn’t want to be a veterinarian at first because he thought that he worked better with humans. TRUE or FALSE
2. Pushmi-Pullyu uses one head for talking and the other to eat so he can do both without being rude. TRUE or FALSE
3. Dr. Dolittle’s monkey, parrot, and crocodile decide to stay in Africa instead of going back to Puddleby since that is where they are originally from.
TRUE or FALSE

“Doctor Dolittle”

Thank you for watching our production of “Doctor Dolittle!” We hope that you enjoyed the story of these fun animals and their kind, nurturing doctor. We hope that you share this story with your friends and family at home. And remember, if you have lovable pets at home, care for them just as Doctor Dolittle would!

