

## Literature Circle Questions

Use the questions and activities that follow to get more out of the experience of reading *Love That Dog* by Sharon Creech.

1. Jack doesn't want to write poetry at the beginning of the book. Why doesn't he want to?
2. In Jack's first poem, he writes:

*So much depends  
upon  
a blue car  
splattered with mud  
speeding down the road.*

Why was the blue car important to Jack?

3. What caused Miss Strechberry to be so interested in Jack's first poem? Describe what Miss Strechberry does to get Jack to write more poems, especially about the blue car.
4. How does Jack respond when Miss Strechberry asks him to write about a pet? Why do you think Miss Strechberry insists he write the poem despite Jack's reaction?
5. What are Jack's feelings toward Sky? Make a list of details from the book that describes Jack's feelings toward his dog.
6. Jack changes a great deal in the novel. Think about these changes. Then create a two-column chart with two headings: "Beginning of school year" and "End of school year". Under each heading, list examples of the things Jack does, thinks and says in the beginning of the year compared to the end of the year.
7. Imagine Miss Strechberry has just asked Jack to write an essay telling what he has discovered about poetry and how it can change a person's life. What would the essay say?
8. Sky's death affected Jack deeply. If you had just lost a much-loved pet, what things could you, or other people, do to help you cope with the loss? Create a list of ideas.
9. Miss Strechberry is able to convince Jack to write poetry and share his feelings even though he doesn't want to. Point out the qualities Miss Strechberry has as a person, and as a teacher, that allow her to reach Jack.
10. Why does Jack fall in love with Walter Dean Myers' poetry? What effect does Mr. Myers' visit to the school have on Jack? How do you know?

11. There are many ways a poet can paint a picture in a reader's mind with words. They include, similes, metaphors, onomatopoeia, and more. Find examples of the techniques the poets use in *Love That Dog*. As a group, choose three verses from the novel that created the most vivid pictures.
12. How might Jack's life have been different if he hadn't had Miss Strechberry as his teacher?
13. It's the end of the school year, and Jack wants to thank Miss Strechberry for being such a great teacher. Compose a letter or write a poem from Jack that shows his appreciation for Miss Strechberry.
14. How did reading *Love That Dog* change your point of view about poetry? Explain your answer.
15. At the end of the book, the author includes poems by seven famous American poets. Which poem did you like the best, and why?

**Activities:**

1. Choose your favorite poem at the end of *Love That Dog*, and tell what the narrator was trying to say in your own words.
2. Create your own poem where the words make the shape of the poem's subject. Use *The Apple*, by S.C. Rigg and *My Yellow Dog*, by Jack, as models to work from.
3. Get a collection of poems from your favorite poet. Read the collection, then select your favorite poem. Create a collage that illustrates what the poem is about.