When you begin reading the autobiographical book, *My Life in Dog Years* by Gary Paulsen, you will learn that Mr. Paulsen tells a story about his dependence on dogs to help him cope with loneliness and other difficult times in his life.

Many people in our world today depend on dogs or other animals to help them in life. In this research lesson, you will read and learn about different service animals to answer the essential question:

**Aside from being companions, how have animals served humans?**

First, read the article "Tale of the Dog" and write a summary in your own words. Use this Cornell Notes Organizer to make notes as you read and then write your **summary** in the space provided.
2. Information Sources

You will use 3 resources to complete the Student Activity on Slide 3.

- Help Wanted: Dogs
- FBI Working Dogs: Service Dogs
- Trained Dogs Watch Over 2 Diabetics
- FBI Working Dogs: Chemical Explosive Dogs
- Police Dog
- Therapy Animal
- Working Like Dogs
- Tator Tot the Miniature Horse and Service Animal
- Monkey Helpers

- Dogs to the Rescue
- Dog Defenders
- Alzheimer’s Dog
- Raising Hope
- Easing the Way
- Medical Service Dogs

Videos
- Working Dogs
- Therapy Dolphin Gets Surgery
- Dogs in Court
- Medical Service Dogs
3. Student Activity

Think about some questions about service animals and the people they serve, such as:

– Why do some people need animals to help them?
– In what situations are animals helpful?
– What kinds of animals can be service animals?
– What unique characteristics make certain animal species well-suited for service to people?
– What are you wondering about service animals?

Use the Cornell Notes organizer to organize the ideas you gather from the information resources on previous slide.

Collaborate with classmates in small groups to share and discuss what you learned about service animals before completing the Assessment Activity.

– Your teacher may have you use a collaborative learning space like VoiceThread, Edmodo, or a pb Works wiki to share your ideas.
Now, create an informational essay or PowerPoint to answer the essential question:

**Aside from being companions, how have animals served humans?**

Be sure to include information and ideas from:

- Your article summary
- Your Student Activity research notes
- Your collaboration with classmates

Before you start to write, take a “brain break” and enjoy this cute video on helpful dog tricks.
5. Enrichment Activities

Would you like to learn more about service animals? Check out these awesome resources!

**Websites**
- Puppy Prodigies
- How Dog Training Works
- Top Golden Retriever Sites

**Infographics**
- [Dogs and Cats: Pets and Beyond](#)
- [Benefits of Owning a Dog](#)
- [Are Pets Good for your Health?](#)

**Videos**
- [How Smart Are Dogs?](#)
  Watch this amazing video of a Border Collie who knows the names of a thousand different toys that she plays with.
- [From Service Dog to SURFice Dog](#)
  Watch this sweet video about a dog that becomes a surfer. Better have some tissues handy! (YouTube video)
6. Teacher Support Materials

**BCPS Curriculum**
Grade 6 English Language Arts
Literature: Gary Paulsen, *My Life in Dog Years*

**Common Core State Standards**
Reading: 1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
Writing: 7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

**Standards for the 21st Century Learner**
1.1.6 Read, view, and listen for information presented in any format (e.g. textual, visual, media, digital) in order to make inferences and gather meaning.
2.1.3 Use strategies to draw conclusions from information and apply knowledge to curricular areas, real-world situations, and further investigations.
2.1.6 Use the writing process, media and visual literacy, and technology skills to create products that express new understandings.
2.2.4 Demonstrate personal productivity by completing products to express learning.

**Maryland Technology Literacy Standards for Students**
3.0: Use a variety of technologies for learning and collaboration.
4.0: Technology for Communication and Expression: Use technology to communicate information and express ideas using various media formats

**Time Frame: 3 days**

**Differentiation:**
Silver star articles are in the lower half of lexile levels and gold stars are in the upper half of the lexile levels.

**Learning Styles:**
Visual, Auditory, Tactile, Active, Reflexive, Global, Analytical, Field Dependent, Field Independent

**AVID Strategies:**
The following AVID strategies are supported in this lesson: inquiry based learning, use of Bloom’s questioning Cornell Notes

**Notes to the teacher:**
Consult with your School Library Media Specialist to implement this Slam Dunk lesson.

Many of the articles are from the BCPS databases and if accessing from outside the BCPS network will require logins. See your Library Media Specialist for passwords.