

## Activity Ideas and Guides

### Pre-Reading Activities

- Discuss: *What makes someone brave? Can you be brave and still feel afraid?*
- Introduce point of view: *How might a story change if it's told by an animal?*
- Brainstorm ways animals help people in everyday life.
- Come with ideas about why efforts to help heroes (like firefighters, police, and maybe others) might need help managing stress. Do they know any heroes?

### Discussion Questions

(Can be done in full-group discussion or small groups.)

1. How does Puma change from the beginning of the story to the end?
2. What helps Puma feel safe when she is unsure or afraid?
3. How do the humans in the story show care for Puma in different ways?
4. Why is trust important in the story? How is it built over time?
5. What message do you think the author wants readers to remember?
6. What did you learn about empathy and kindness?
7. What other animal-centered books have you read, and what did you like about them?
8. Was there something about how Puma changed in the book that might help you to become confident?

### Extension Activities

- Writing: Write a short story from an animal's point of view.
- Art: Draw Puma during a moment of courage or growth.
- Research: Learn about real dogs who help people (therapy dogs, service dogs, police dogs).
- Reflection: Have students share or journal about a time they tried something difficult.

### Other Activities

- Invite a firefighter, police officer, or other first responder to speak in the classroom
- Invite a therapy dog team, ideally one with experience in working with first responders, to bring their dog and explain what they do. The children should experience how the dogs work.
- Have the class create "calming kits" for their local first responders, including items like notes and thank-you cards that demonstrate empathy, respect, and community engagement for the work these heroes do.
- Create a Bingo card with 25 words/pictures/symbols that describe what they learned about therapy dogs from the book or from the first responders and other research.