



Dog Interview: How Jeff Found the Perfect Dog

Philip Habeeb

Juan Diaz, Illustrator

Mascot Kids

(32pp)

979-889138332-6

A tender exploration of healthy relationship dynamics, Dog Interview is an upbeat picture book.

In Philip Habeeb's jovial picture book *Dog Interview*, a boy interviews an unconventional lineup of prospective best friends.

It's Jeff's seventh birthday, and he has always wanted a dog. To begin his hunt, he places ads around town before deciding to host a series of "dog interviews." His mother encourages this search, offering gentle guidance throughout and empowering Jeff to exercise his autonomy by conducting the interviews on his own.

Jeff encounters dogs who nap all day and others who "howl for hours," having no luck in finding his perfect pal. Then Jeff meets Sam, a golden beagle, during a game of fetch. He learns that best friends are never perfect; rather, their quirks are what make them unique.

The story is framed by Jeff's interviews, with each page featuring a new dog and witty exchanges. There are humorous references to professional questions, such as "Where do you see yourself in five years?" This upbeat approach results in an animated tale. However, some of the pages are quite text heavy, slowing the pace and dragging out scenes.

Monochromatic backdrops featuring blues, reds, purples, and greens offset the more active domestic settings. Different dog breeds are illustrated with charm and outlandish flair: A bulldog whose "pinky" remains lifted wears a top hat and a monocle, for example. Depictions of Jeff are also expressive, his face emotive and his poses amusing.

A boy is in pursuit of a furry companion in the funny, touching picture book *Dog Interview*, which is about friendship and its qualifications.

BROOKE SHANNON (November 15, 2024)

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