

Janet's Favorite Book

(Story Word: Cookie)

When Janet wants to give someone a gift, chances are she will send them her favorite book, *My Life in Dog Years* by Gary Paulsen. *My Life in Dog Years* is sold as a young adult book, but Janet thinks that it is a book that any person, particularly any person who loves dogs, will love.

Each chapter of the book contains a short history of a different dog that Paulsen has known. It might seem that a book of dog stories would be repetitive or boring, but this is not the case. Paulsen has known so many dogs in his life that he selected very different kinds of dogs for each chapter. He described sled dogs, guard dogs, farm dogs, hunting dogs, and dogs that were just pets.

The book is dedicated to a dog named Cookie, who saved Paulsen's life. Paulsen was ice-fishing in Alaska with a group of sled dogs. Paulsen was ice-fishing alone which he writes is foolish because many people have died from falling through thin ice.

In a moment, Paulsen felt the ice crack, and he began to fall. He had just a split second to grab for the rope that was attached to his sled. He also was able to make eye contact with Cookie. Cookie and the other dogs had been sleeping while Paulsen was fishing, but Cookie woke up the other dogs and together they dragged Paulsen out of the icy water.

Paulsen writes that all the things he has been able to do, including writing books, are due to Cookie saving his life. In each of the other stories that portrays a dog's life, Paulsen communicates understanding and respect for the important roles that dogs play in some people's lives.