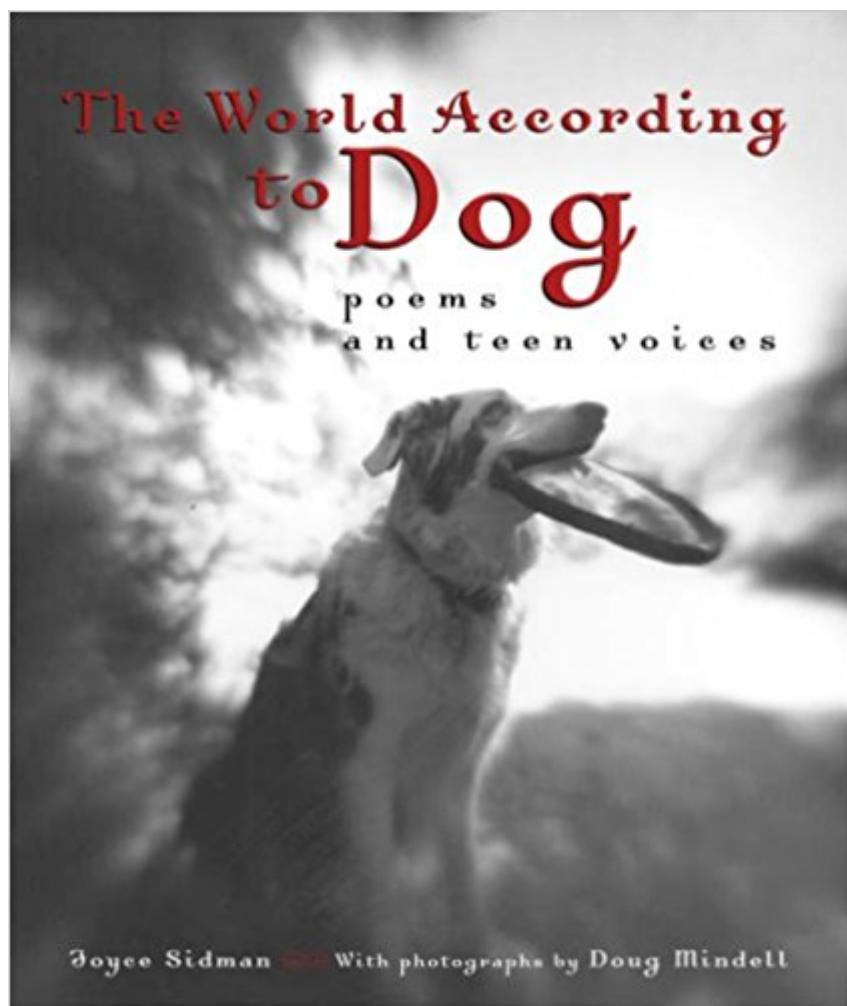


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# The World According To Dog: Poems And Teen Voices



## Synopsis

Illustrated with striking, blurred black-and-white photos, this collection muses on canine wisdom and charm. Booklist: Dog lovers will likely lap it up eagerly, budding writers will snuffle it with interest, and teens who combine the two tendencies might even roll ecstatically. Kirkus Reviews: Funny, comforting, and surprising, the words in this book explore our lives with dogs: dogs who befriend us, and dogs who annoy, perplex, and accept us. Teens speak for themselves in honest and forthright essays, and Joyce Sidman's insightful poems further express the bond between dog and teen.

## Book Information

Paperback: 71 pages

Publisher: Houghton Mifflin Company; Reprint edition (February 11, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0618283811

ISBN-13: 978-0618283811

Product Dimensions: 7.5 x 0.2 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.6 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,802,533 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #92 in Books > Reference > Writing, Research & Publishing Guides > Writing > Poetry #5136 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Poetry #5732 in Books > Children's Books > Animals > Dogs

Grade Level: 5 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Grade 6 Up-Sidman's poetic observations of beloved pets interspersed with short essays by teens are sure to engage dog fanciers. The poems, mostly blank verse with a scattering of haiku, are rueful, contemplative, and sensory as they comment on canine behavior indoors and out and on interaction with humans, other dogs, and the natural world: "-and I am trying to understand this/ecstasy of stink that has me/retching but made you/dive and roll, eyes closed in bliss-." The occasional pieces by young people recount special characteristics of the canines in their lives, sometimes with almost painful honesty. The finding of an abandoned puppy makes a positive change in more than one family. Another teen writes about the enduring spirit of a dog living with cancer. Small black-and-white photos of the featured animals accompany most of the essays. Mindell's larger photographs facing the poems are often in soft focus. Sometimes the blur is

poetically suggestive, and sometimes the indistinct image is confusing. Overall, though, the impressive variety of breeds is winning. Sidman sometimes gropes for fitting imagery, but the pacing and flow of her poetry are sure and her appreciation of her subject is astute. Many readers will chuckle or sigh in empathy, and some may well be inspired to express their own thoughts about the world of dog in writing or pictures. Margaret Bush, Simmons College, Boston Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Gr. 6-12. Illustrated with striking, blurred, black-and-white photos, this collection muses on canine wisdom and charm--what dogs can teach us; why they are lovable. Interspersed with Sidman's original poems are short essays from teens--personal, heartfelt prose about intense bonds with dogs that will resonate with other teen dog lovers. But it's the poetry and the evocative images that are the collection's real attractions. Sidman uses a variety of poetic forms--including haiku, free verse, and a poem for two voices--and often explores a dog's world through its own eyes. The selections are funny, adoring, exasperated, and most of all grateful to these "warm, furred planets" for their companionship and life lessons. Sidman is at her best when drawing comparisons between the dog world and her own. In "Dog in Bed," she writes, "This is how it is with love. / Once invited, / it steps in gently, / circles twice, / and takes up as much space / as you will give it." Even teens who prefer cats will appreciate Sidman's tight lines, sincere emotion, and clever humor as she pays homage to a creature she loves. Gillian Engberg Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

This is a lovely book of poetry and prose by owners of dogs. The various writers obviously love and appreciate the innate intelligence and loyalty of their canine companions. Someone said, and I believe it is true, nobody loves you like your dog.

Great book! Great service!

An excellent book, but what really make the book is the most excellent photograph on the dog cover. Who is that marvelous dog and when is it holding its next book signing?

What does the world look like according to a dog? It's all about noses, squirrels, stink, sleep, and love. The dogs of our worlds are not only the ones we turn to when we need love, but they are also our sources for laughter, philosophy, and for helping us feel as though our own lives have

meaning. The poems and short essays in this book represent the feelings of dog lovers and dog owners of all ages; yet, it is the words of young writers in the form of reflective essays that add the unique perspective to this book. Some highlights of the book include the advice poem, "Always Take a Dog," which reminds you how to have a better morning walk and "The Usual Spots," the title of which refers to the places in the home where the dog waits in the different seasons of the year. What will strike the reader first is the beauty of the book—the cover is inviting (making it okay to judge this book by its cover), and the high gloss, cleanly designed pages make each poem appear unique unto itself. The photographs on each page—some clear, some blurred, all black and white—are beautiful representations of the emotions of the poem; they were taken by Doug Mindell in response to the writing. Non-dog lovers may have a difficult time understanding the big deal given to moments like when a puppy nibbles on your toes, but the beautiful verse and descriptive word choice will not be unappreciated by anyone. Verses like, "I want to / gather you back / midair / that handful of puppy / you once were / keep you curled / in my palm," are sweet and sentimental, and they're sure to cause the reader to let out a little, "A[...]"

What do you get when you combine children and dogs? Yes, you get "awwww", but you get much more as well. You get a fresh upbeat perspective that shatters a jaded world. The excellent b&w photography by Doug Mindell greatly amplifies the warmth of this book.

What an enjoyable and unique tribute to dogs! The author's poems cover so many of the emotions we feel towards our beloved pets - amusement, affection, delight, and sometimes despair. Reading this book made me want to get out my camera and take even more photos of my little spoiled Chloe, all 60 pounds of her, and start writing down all the feelings bubbling up inside. Wonderful work by the photographer and touching contributions from teenage dog lovers complete the package.

This book was incredibly eloquent. The poetry that Joyce Sidman wrote makes all of my fellow dog-lovers teary-eyed: the poems really capture the essence of the bond between a dog and its owner. The essays are also unique and heartfelt. They really contradict the common stereotype of shallow and immature teenagers. The photographs complement the writing in a simple and touching way. I recommend this book to anyone!

This is a book of beautiful pictures. Ms. Sidman's word pictures of our best friends are celebrations of the human animal bond. The poetry is complemented by Doug Mindell's cool photos. The short

essays by teen-agers summarize (better than any "adult" could) why dogs occupy the most important of spaces in our lives. Buy this book. You're gonna love it!

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