

THE STORM: Dogs of the Drowned City Book 1  
by Dayna Lorentz  
Discussion & Teaching Guide  
with activities aligned to Common Core Standards

Chapter by chapter discussion questions

1. How does Shep's past as a fight dog haunt him? How do you think it affects the way he sees the world?
2. Why doesn't Shep understand what's happening as his family prepares for the storm? As a reader, what clues do you see to suggest that the family is leaving, even before they say goodbye?
3. How is Callie's personality different from Shep's? How do you think Shep feels about her so far?
4. Why do you think Shep references the Great Wolf so often? Can you think of anything in human cultures that's similar?
5. Even as Shep is trying to help the other dogs, he refers to the small ones negatively as "yappers." Is this fair? Do you think people make similar judgments about others?
6. The dogs argue in this chapter about whether it's their responsibility to rescue the others, or whether it's "every dog for himself." What would you do if you were Shep? Does a full rescue operation seem reasonable to you? Why or why not?
7. Frizzle loves to talk about fights and fighting, but Shep, who has a history as a fight dog, says, "I don't like to bark about it." Why do you think the two dogs are so different when it comes to this?
8. Shep starts to wonder in this chapter if Zeus was right, if it should be every dog for himself. Why do you think he's losing confidence? Would you feel the same way?
9. During times of trouble, people often say that disasters bring out the best and the worst in people. Based on the reactions of the different dogs in this story, is that true for dogs, too?
10. Now that the dogs have gotten into the pet store, do you think they'll be safe? What other problems might they encounter, and if you were Shep, how would you try to prepare for those problems?

11. When Shep says, "To these dogs, he was the Great Wolf," what do you think he means?
12. Why do you think Shep finally decides to share his past with Callie? Now that you know this story, how do you think it has affected Shep's actions and decisions throughout the book?
13. Given his history and his fear of lifeblood, why do you think Shep challenges Kaz to fight? Was it the right decision? Could you think of other alternatives?
14. How are Zeus and Shep alike? How are they different?
15. At the end of the book, the dogs "sensed that their world had been transformed, and they waited, eyes open and ears pricked, for whatever the dawn might bring." Even though the wild dogs are gone, the author makes it clear that the dogs' struggle isn't over. Given the situation, what challenges might you expect them to face in the next book?

Thinking and Writing: How is Shep’s understanding limited by his senses and experiences as a dog as the storm approaches in Chapter 2? What does the reader understand that Shep doesn’t, and how does this help to create suspense in the story? Use the graphic organizer below to brainstorm details for your writing.

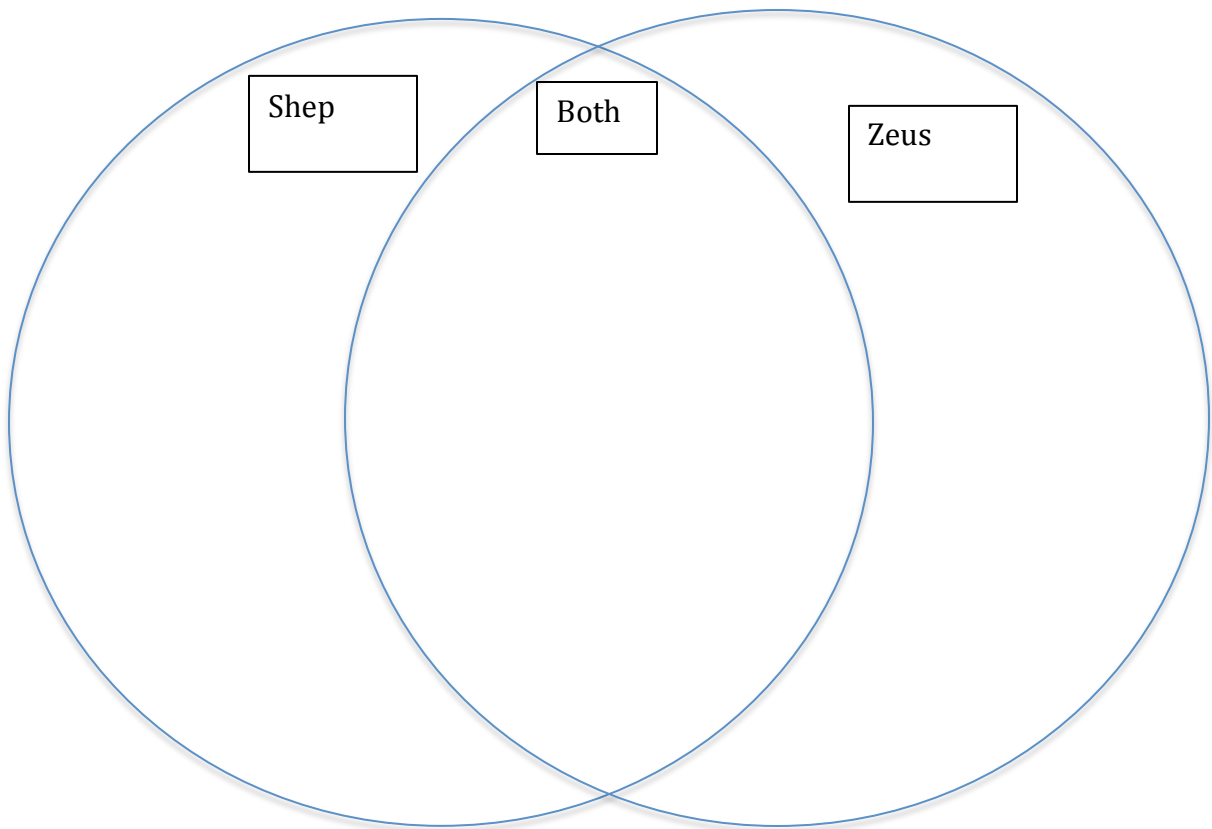
Shep uses his canine senses and experiences as a dog to make sense of what’s happening. How are his perceptions of details in this chapter different from what you recognize to be happening as a reader? Fill in the chart below, using the example as a model.

What happens	How Shep sees it	How I see it as a reader
The woman is watching the “light window”	No big deal – he doesn’t worry about that unless other dogs are “trying to get into his den though it”	She is watching weather reports on television, and severe weather is coming.
The woman fills extra bowls with food and water.		
The boy says something that includes “Go” and “Car”		
The boy says something to the man, and his voice is angry.		
The man spreads newspapers near the door before they leave.		

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.6](#) Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.1](#) Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.1](#) Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.1](#) Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.1](#) Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.1](#) Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

*Comparing characters:* Based on the details included in THE STORM, how are Shep and Zeus alike in their life experiences, their beliefs, and in the choices they make? How are they different?

Use the Venn diagram below to help organize your ideas and examples from the text.



Common Core Connections:

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.1](#) Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.1](#) Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.1](#) Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.1](#) Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.1](#) Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Nonfiction Connections: Write a persuasive letter to pet owners and emergency preparedness crews, explaining what you think should happen to pets when people need to evacuate an area due to severe weather. Use details and examples from THE STORM as well as information from the articles “Saving Pets from Another Katrina” and “Will Your Animal Companions Be Protected in a Disaster?” and to make your points and lay out what you think is a solid plan for pets in the case of an emergency.

Saving Pets from Another Katrina

<http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1629962,00.html>

Will Your Animal Companions Be Protected in a Disaster?”

<http://www.peta.org/living/companion-animals/animals-in-emergencies.aspx>

Common Core Connections:

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.9](#) Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.1](#) Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.1](#) Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
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For further reading:

“Katrina survivors upset over pets left behind” from NBC News

[http://www.nbcnews.com/id/9207628/ns/health-pet\\_health/t/katrina-survivors-upset-over-pets-left-behind/#.UXBc40A-I9Q](http://www.nbcnews.com/id/9207628/ns/health-pet_health/t/katrina-survivors-upset-over-pets-left-behind/#.UXBc40A-I9Q)

“7 Years After Katrina, New Orleans Is Overrun by Wild Dogs” from *The Atlantic*

<http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2012/08/7-years-after-katrina-new-orleans-is-overrun-by-wild-dogs/261530/>

“The Dogs of Hurricane Katrina” from *Modern Dog*

<http://www.moderndogmagazine.com/articles/dogs-hurricane-katrina/151>