His Name Was Pete

By William Faulkner

His name was Pete. He was just a god, fifteen-months-old pointer, still almost a puppy even though he had spent one hunting season learning to be the dog he would have been in another two or three if he had lived that long.

But he was just a dog. He expected little of the world into which he came without past and nothing of immortality either; food (he didn’t care what nor how little just so it was given with affection – a touch of a hand, a voice he knew even if he could not understand and answer the words it spoke); the earth to run on; air to breathe, sun and rain in their seasons and the covied quail which were his heritage long before he knew the earth and felt the sun, whose scent he knew already from his staunch and faithful ancestry before he himself ever winded it. That was all he wanted. But it would have been enough to fill the eight or ten or twelve years of his natural life because twelve years are not very many and it doesn’t take much to fill them.

Yet short as twelve years are, he should normally have outlived four of the kind of motorcars which killed him – cars capable of climbing hills too fast to avoid a grown pointer dog. But Pete didn’t outlive the first of his four. He wasn’t chasing it; he had learned not to do that before he was allowed on highways. He was standing on the road waiting for his little mistress on the horse to catch up, to squire her safely home. He shouldn’t have been in the road. He paid no road tax, held no driver’s license, didn’t vote. Perhaps his trouble was that the motorcar which lived in the same yard he lived in had a horn and brakes on it and he thought they all did. To say that he didn’t see the car because the car was between him and the later afternoon sun is a bad excuse because that brings the question of vision into it and certainly no one unable with the sun at his back to see a grown pointer dog on a curveless two-lane highway would think of permitting himself to drive a car at all, let alone one without either horn or brakes because next time Pete might be a human child and killing human children with motorcars is against the law.

No, the driver was in a hurry: that was the reason. Perhaps he had several miles to go yet and was already late for supper. That was why he didn’t have time to slow or stop or drive around Pete. And since he didn’t have time to do that, naturally he didn’t have time to stop afterward; besides Pete was only a dog flung broken and crying into a roadside ditch and anyway the car had passed him by then and the sun was at Pete’s back now, so how could the driver be expected to hear him crying?
But Pete has forgiven him. In his year and a quarter of life he never had anything but kindness from human beings; he would rather give the other six or eight or ten of it rather than make one late for supper.

Dog Proves As Smart As Average Toddler

By Margaret Murno

A nine-year-old border collie with a 200-word “vocabulary” has provided scientific proof that dogs understand what their masters are saying, according to new research.

Knows Word Meanings

Rico knows the meaning of about 200 words and can infer and remember the meaning of new ones with the same ability as very young children, according to a report published in the journal *Science* yesterday.

Rico, who lives in Germany, can retrieve randomly chosen items from a collection of balls and toys. He understands requests to put toys in boxes and bring them to certain people.

He can also fetch, by name, objects that he has never seen before.

A month after seeing them just once, he still remembered and fetched the new objects on demand, reported Julia Fischer and her colleagues with the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology.

Make Inferences

The scientists say Rico’s abilities provide evidence that dogs are capable of a type of learning and inference that has long been considered the domain of humans.

“There are some things that some people believe are uniquely human, such as language and acquisition,” said Ms. Fischer. “Maybe it’s not so special after all.”

She said dogs appear to have innate and superior word-learning skills, which could help explain why they are such popular pets.
One of Canada’s leading dog experts is impressed.

“It doesn’t surprise me, but it’s wonderful someone actually set out and spent all the time to plug that stuff into [Rico’s] mind,” said Dr. Stanley Coren, a psychologist at the University of British Columbia who has written extensively about the intelligence of dogs.

**Comprehension**

**Directions** Answer these questions about the essay “His Name was Pete.”

1. Which word best describes the author’s tone throughout the essay?
   a. Superior
   b. Nostalgic
   c. Sarcastic
   d. Straightforward

2. What is the main idea of the third paragraph?
   a. Pete didn’t chase cars.
   b. Pete shouldn’t have been on the road.
   c. Running over children is illegal.
   d. There is no excuse for running over a dog.

3. In the fourth paragraph, the phrase “how could the driver” reveals the author’s
   a. Sympathy with the driver
   b. Anger at the driver
   c. Feelings about cars
   d. Impatience with Pete

4. The author’s two purposes in writing this essays were to
   a. Inform and entertain
   b. Inform and express feelings
   c. Persuade and express feelings
   d. Persuade and entertain
Directions Answer these questions about the article “Dog Proves As Smart As Average Toddler.”

5. The subheadings “Knows Word Meanings” and “Makes Inferences” are clues that the author’s primary purpose is to
   a. Inform or explain
   b. Persuade
   c. Entertain
   d. Express feelings

6. One way the author organizes the article is by comparing and contrasting
   a. Words and toys
   b. Dogs and children
   c. Scientists and research projects
   d. Pets and language acquisition

Directions Answer this question about both selections.

7. Which one of the following statements would likely be supported by both authors?
   a. Most dogs are not as smart as Rico.
   b. A dog should always be on a leash.
   c. Dogs can interact with people.
   d. Dogs are patient animals.

Written Response

Short Answer Write three or four sentences to answer the question.

8. What was Faulkner’s attitude toward the dog’s death in “His Name Was Pete”? Support your answer with details from the essay.

Extended Response Write two or three paragraphs to answer the question.

9. Compare and contrast the main ideas of “His Name Was Pete” and “Dog Proves As Smart As An Average Toddler.” Name one way in which the selections are alike and one way in which they are different. Support your answer with two details from each of the selections.