Blind Dog Soots



John Parsons

Margaret Power

Nelson Literacy Directions

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CENGAGE Learning

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Reading Age: 8.4–8.7
Text Type: Narrative

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Written by John Parsons
Illustrated by Margaret Power

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Meet the Characters



The Narrator

The boy who tells the story about his dog.



Seth

The narrator's older brother.



Soots

A blind dog.

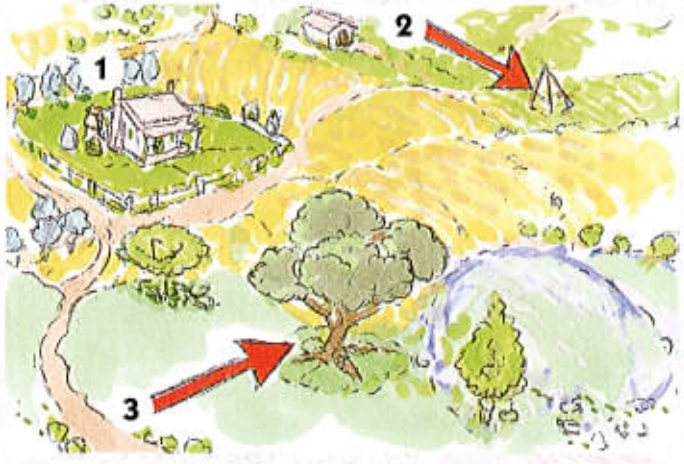
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Dear Reader

I have a little blind dog and it just so happens that his name is Soots. Even though he can't see, he is a brave dog and has plenty of adventures. He has an amazing memory to help him get around. He also uses his hearing and his sense of smell and touch to find his way. He's the inspiration for this story – I hope you enjoy it!

John Parsons
Author

Behind the House



1. The house
2. The old mine shaft
3. The way out

1 Prologue

In Nightingale, everything was connected to the coalmine.

Everybody had a parent who worked there. Everybody's house was owned by the mine. Everywhere you looked, there were mining trucks and machinery; and whatever you ran your finger over, there was a thin coating of coal dust. Everyone expected that when my brother, Seth, and I left school, we'd probably work at the coalmine, too.

It was natural, therefore, that our dog was called Soots. It also helped that his fur was as black as the coal that Nightingale depended on.

Soots had been our dog for about eleven years before Seth and I noticed something wrong. He started bumping into things and



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lost sight of the sticks we threw for him. Dr Valentine, the town's vet, told us that it was common for old dogs like Soots to slowly go blind.

That was sad. But Dr Valentine said if we kept looking after him and made sure we didn't change too much in the house, Soots would be just fine. Dr Valentine said dogs have an amazing sense of where they are, even if they can't see. Dogs keep a map of what they touch and smell in their heads.

At the time, we thought that was pretty amazing. Little did we know, our little blind dog, Soots, would one day save our lives.

2 A Dog In Trouble

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Soots was a terrier. That meant he loved to dig. Whenever he got his teeth into a big old bone from Mum's soup-pot, he never gnawed at it like other dogs. He used to trot away with the bone hanging from his jaws and bury it somewhere. In fact, I can't ever remember seeing Soots chew on a bone – he liked to hide his stash of takeaways in a secret place that no-one else knew about.

The other thing terriers love is chasing other animals – especially rabbits. And that's where our adventure started, on the first day of the summer holidays.