

**FLEYDO ENGLISH SCHOOL**

A2 Reading Challenge

# The Dog Who Found a Lost Boy

*A true story of a brave dog, a cold night, and a little boy who was found safe*

<b>Level</b>	A2 (Elementary)
<b>Age Group</b>	Teens (11-16)
<b>Topic</b>	True Stories
<b>Duration</b>	~15 minutes
<b>Vocabulary</b>	12 words
<b>Quiz</b>	5 questions

## Article

On a warm afternoon in April 2007, a three-year-old boy named Daniel went outside to play near his family's **property** in Queensland, Australia. The family lived on a large piece of land in the countryside, with fields and trees all around. Daniel loved playing outside with his best friend — a dog named Dasher. Dasher was a Blue Heeler, a strong and clever breed of dog that farmers in Australia often use to help with cattle. He had grey-blue fur, sharp eyes, and a very close **brave** heart. Daniel and Dasher were always together. They played in the garden, they sat on the porch, and they followed each other around the yard. But on this particular afternoon, something went wrong. Daniel wandered away from the house. He walked past the fence, past the trees, and into the **bush**. He did not know where he was going. He was only three.

### Where Is Daniel?

When Daniel's family noticed he was not in the garden, they called his name. There was no answer. They looked in the house, in the garage, behind the shed. He was not there. They looked at the field, at the road, at the trees. Nothing. Panic began to grow. A three-year-old child alone in the Australian **bush** was in real danger. There were snakes, spiders, and steep hills. The **temperature** was warm during the day, but at night it could drop below five degrees Celsius. Daniel was wearing only a thin T-shirt and shorts. His family immediately called the police. Within an hour, a large **search** operation began. Police officers, neighbours, and volunteers started walking through the **bush**, calling Daniel's name and looking behind every tree and rock.

### A Long, Cold Night

As the sun went down, the **search** continued. Torches lit up the dark **bush**. People shouted Daniel's name again and again. But there was no reply. The **temperature** dropped. The night was cold and quiet, and everyone was afraid. Daniel's mother could not stop crying. Where was her little boy? Was he hurt? Was he cold? Was he scared? What the family did not know was that Daniel was not completely alone. Dasher had followed him into the **bush**. When Daniel stopped walking and sat down on the ground, tired and confused, Dasher did not leave. The dog stayed right next to him. As the night got colder and colder, Dasher **curled up** against Daniel's small body and kept him warm with his own body heat. The boy put his arms around the dog and held on tight. Dasher did not move. He stayed there all night, like a warm, furry blanket.

### The Rescue Crew Arrives

The next morning, the **search** started again at first light. More than fifty people joined the **rescue** effort. There were police officers, firefighters, and members of the State Emergency Service. A helicopter flew over the **bush**, and trained dogs were brought in to follow Daniel's scent. The **crew** spread out across the area, walking slowly through thick grass and trees. Hours passed. Then, at around nine o'clock in the morning, one of the **search** teams heard

something. It was a sound coming from behind a group of trees, about two kilometres from Daniel's home. It was Dasher. The dog had heard people coming and started to **bark** loudly, again and again. The rescuers followed the sound and found them: Daniel was sitting on a small hill, wet and dirty, with Dasher right beside him. The boy was cold but alive. He was not hurt. He had survived the whole night in the **bush**, thanks to his dog.

## A Moment of Relief

When the rescuers picked Daniel up and wrapped him in a warm blanket, the boy's first words were about his dog. "Dasher stayed with me," he said quietly. The news was sent back to the family by radio. Daniel's mother fell to her knees and cried — but this time, they were tears of **relief**. Her son was safe. The paramedics checked Daniel carefully. He had some small scratches on his legs and arms, and his body **temperature** was low, but he was in good health. The doctors said that without Dasher's body heat, Daniel could have been in serious danger from the cold. A child that young, in those temperatures, without shelter or warm clothes, might not have survived the night. Dasher had saved his life by simply staying close and not leaving.

## What Makes Blue Heelers Special?

Blue Heelers, also called Australian Cattle Dogs, are one of the most loyal and hardworking dog breeds in the world. They were first bred in Australia in the 1800s to help farmers move cattle across large distances. They are extremely clever, very strong, and they form deep connections with their owners. A Blue Heeler does not just follow commands — it thinks, watches, and makes decisions. Farmers say these dogs can understand situations almost like humans. Dasher showed all of these qualities that night. He did not panic. He did not run home. He did not leave Daniel behind. Instead, he stayed calm and did the most important thing he could: he kept the boy warm and safe. Dog experts later said that Dasher's behaviour was a perfect example of the breed's protective nature. Blue Heelers see their family as their herd, and they will do anything to protect them.

## A Hero Gets a Prize

After the story became public, Dasher became famous across Australia. Newspapers wrote about him. Television stations showed his photo next to Daniel's. People sent letters and gifts for the dog. In 2007, the RSPCA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) gave Dasher a special award: the Australian Animal Hero Award. This prize is given to animals who do something extraordinary to help or save a human life. At the ceremony, Dasher sat calmly on the stage while people clapped and cheered. Daniel's father said in an interview, "That dog is part of our family. He always was. But after that night, he is something more. He is a hero." The story also helped raise awareness about keeping young children safe in rural Australia, where the **bush** can be dangerous.

## Why This Story Matters

Daniel's story had a happy ending because of a dog who did something very simple but very important: he stayed. Dasher did not do anything dramatic. He did not fight a wild animal. He did not run to get help. He just lay down next to a scared little boy and kept him warm through a long, dark, cold night. Sometimes, the bravest thing you can do is simply not leave. Today, Daniel is a young adult, and Dasher has passed away. But the family never forgot what happened that night in the Queensland **bush**. They still talk about the dog who did not go home, who did not give up, and who showed that love between a child and a pet can be the strongest force in the world. Dasher was not trained to be a **rescue** dog. He was just a family pet. But when it mattered most, he was exactly what Daniel needed: a warm, **brave**, loyal friend.

## Vocabulary

Word	Definition
<b>search</b>	to look carefully for someone or something that is lost
<b>rescue</b>	to save someone from a dangerous or difficult situation
<b>wander</b>	to walk slowly without knowing where you are going
<b>temperature</b>	how hot or cold something is, measured in degrees
<b>bark</b>	the loud sound a dog makes
<b>survive</b>	to continue to live after a dangerous situation
<b>property</b>	a piece of land and the buildings on it
<b>bush</b>	wild land with trees and plants, especially in Australia
<b>brave</b>	not afraid to do something dangerous or difficult
<b>crew</b>	a group of people who work together on a special job
<b>curled up</b>	sitting or lying with your body in a round shape to stay warm
<b>relief</b>	a happy feeling when something bad has ended or did not happen

## Comprehension Quiz

### 1. How old was Daniel when he got lost?

- A) Two years old
- B) Three years old
- C) Five years old
- D) Seven years old

### 2. What breed was Dasher?

- A) Golden Retriever
- B) German Shepherd
- C) Blue Heeler
- D) Border Collie

### 3. How did Dasher keep Daniel warm during the night?

- A) He brought Daniel a blanket
- B) He barked loudly all night
- C) He lay close to Daniel and shared his body heat
- D) He ran around Daniel in circles

### 4. What did Dasher do when the rescue crew came close?

- A) He ran away into the bush
- B) He fell asleep next to Daniel
- C) He started barking loudly to show where they were
- D) He carried Daniel on his back

### 5. What award did Dasher receive after saving Daniel?

- A) The Australian Animal Hero Award
- B) The RSPCA Animal Bravery Award
- C) The National Dog Prize
- D) The Queensland Rescue Medal

## Answer Key

#	Answer	Question
1	<b>B</b>	1. How old was Daniel when he got lost?
2	<b>C</b>	2. What breed was Dasher?
3	<b>C</b>	3. How did Dasher keep Daniel warm during the night?
4	<b>C</b>	4. What did Dasher do when the rescue crew came close?
5	<b>B</b>	5. What award did Dasher receive after saving Daniel?