

# CAESAR THE WAR DOG

STEPHEN DANDO-COLLINS



## TEACHERS' RESOURCES

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CAESAR THE WAR DOG  
Teachers' resources

# CONTENTS

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Synopsis	3
3.	About the author	4
4.	Author's inspiration	4
5.	Pre-reading: background notes	5
6.	Themes, motifs and symbols	8
7.	Comprehension and analysis	11
8.	Worksheets	16

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

At the kennels, Caesar the chocolate labrador doesn't look special. But Corporal Ben Fulton sees something different – an intelligent dog whose curiosity will make him an excellent sniffer dog in the Australian Army.

On operations in Afghanistan with Ben, Caesar proves his worth, finding hidden explosives and saving the lives of the soldiers. Then, during a Taliban ambush, Caesar is separated from his master. Ben and his best mate, Charlie, are seriously wounded and evacuated to hospital.

But where is Caesar? From their home in Australia, Ben and his family search for clues that might reveal whether their beloved dog is still alive and surviving Afghanistan's bitter winter cold and capture by the Taliban.

It will be a long road home, and Caesar will face many hardships along the way, but for this brave and loyal dog, anything is possible.

*Caesar the War Dog* is based on the true story of Australian military dog Sarbi and her experiences in Afghanistan, combined with the factual experiences of Endal, the devoted British dog who cared for his wheelchair-bound ex-serviceman master and became the most decorated dog in history, and Cairo the American Special Forces dog.

# 2. SYNOPSIS

At first meeting, with his nose puffed up by bee stings, Caesar the labrador retriever looks the least likely animal to become a war dog. Plucked from training kennels by the Australian Army's Corporal Ben Fulton because of the intense curiosity he shows – a quality that makes for a good sniffer dog – Caesar becomes a member of an elite Special Forces unit.

Ben's nine-year-old son, Josh, is mourning the death of Ben's last dog, who helped him through the loss of his mother to breast cancer, and Josh does not welcome Caesar when Ben takes him home.

Caesar excels in Special Operations training before going to Afghanistan with Ben. On operations, Caesar proves his worth, finding hidden explosives. Then, on an operation that goes wrong, during a Taliban ambush Caesar is separated from his master. Ben is seriously wounded along with Ben's best mate, Charlie, who saves Ben's life.

As Ben and Charlie are evacuated to hospital, the wounded Caesar is taken in by ten-year-old Afghan boy Haji, who cares for him. Haji tries to convince his father to let him keep Caesar if he proves to be a good guard dog. But Caesar is a labrador retriever; he rarely barks, and is friendly to strangers – not the best qualities for a guard dog.

The Taliban's Commander Baradar pays a covert visit to the compound of Haji's family, to press them into helping the insurgents, and recognises Caesar as an Australian Army dog by his military collar. Baradar takes Caesar away, and puts the cruel, animal-hating Abdul in charge of him. Baradar plans to send Caesar back to Australian troops, wearing a vest packed with explosives, which Baradar will use to kill Western soldiers.

But Caesar escapes, digging his way from a compound, and sets off to find Ben. On the road, he is befriended by brothers Ibrahim and Ahmad, Afghan acrobats and jugglers who travel around entertaining soldiers in coalition and Afghan military bases. They train Caesar to take part in their act.

After months of performing at various bases, Caesar is seen by an American Rangers sergeant, who remembers that the Australian Army is still looking for their missing service dog. The sergeant takes charge of Caesar, and after 14 months' separation, Caesar has a joyous reunion with Ben, who is still recovering from his wounds.

They return home to Australia, and while Ben has his final operation, Charlie, now confined to a wheelchair, comes to stay. When Charlie trains Caesar to help him with everyday tasks, Ben sees a possible new role for Caesar as Charlie's care dog.

### 3. ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stephen Dando-Collins is an Australian author of 26 books, many of them published around the world in various languages. Most of his books are about soldiers and war, from the legions of ancient Rome to American soldiers in the 19th century and Australian Diggers in the First World War. His book *Pasteur's Gambit*, about Australia's rabbit plague in the 1880s, was shortlisted for the science prize in the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards and won the 2009 Queensland Premier's Science Award. *Crack Hardy*, his most personal history, about his great uncles during the Great War, has been widely acclaimed – *The Sydney Morning Herald*, for example, described it as 'a fine and important book'.

*Caesar the War Dog* is Stephen's second children's novel. The first, *Chance in a Million*, published 14 years ago, was made into the movie *Paws*. That was also about a dog – one that could use a computer! Stephen plans to write more books for young readers.

### 4. AUTHOR'S INSPIRATION

Stephen Dando-Collins was inspired to write *Caesar the War Dog* after learning the true story of Sarbi the labrador, the Australian Army explosive detection dog that went missing after a battle in Afghanistan, ended up as a prisoner of the Taliban, and was reunited with her handler 14 months later. As Stephen wondered what might have happened to the dog during those missing months, the plot and characters for *Caesar the War Dog* quickly formed in his mind.

When Stephen was a teenager, he had a labrador retriever of his own named Zeberdy – a dog he loved dearly. One day, Zeberdy came home with his nose all puffed up after being stung by bees, and that was the inspiration for Caesar's first meeting with Ben.

Stephen was also fascinated by the true stories of Endal and Cairo. Endal, another faithful labrador, was a British service dog who cared for a wheelchair-bound ex-serviceman and was able to perform hundreds of tasks for his master based just on hand signals. Endal's story gave Stephen the idea of having the Fulton family give Caesar to Charlie Grover VC towards the end of the book. And Cairo, the US Navy SEALs' Malinois Belgian shepherd, who took part in the operation to find terrorist leader Osama bin Laden, was the inspiration for Caesar's Special Forces training.

## 5. PRE-READING: BACKGROUND NOTES

### EXPLOSIVE DETECTION DOGS (EDDs) AND SERVICE DOGS

The Australian Imperial Force used dogs during the First World War, primarily to carry messages. There has been a long line of sniffer dogs used by the Australian Army to track the enemy during the Korean War (1950–53) and, later, in the Vietnam War. In 1981, the current explosive detection dog program was introduced by the army's Royal Australian Engineer Corps.

In 2005, Australian EDDs were sent to Afghanistan for the first time to join Australian Army operations there as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). A number of Australian EDDs have served in Afghanistan since then. Several have been killed or wounded while carrying out their dangerous but life-saving duties.

The fictional Caesar in this book is based on several real dogs of modern times – Sarbi, Endal and Cairo – and their exploits.

### **SARBI**

Sarbi is a black female labrador serving with the Australian Army. She began the EDD training program in June 2005 and graduated from the 19-week training course with Corporal D, joining the Australian Army's top-secret Incident Response Regiment (IRR) – now the Special Operations Engineer Regiment (SOER) – whose main job was to counter terrorist threats.

In April 2007, Sarbi and Corporal D were sent to Afghanistan for a seven-month deployment. They primarily worked with Australian engineers who were part of the ISAF reconstruction team in Uruzgan Province, locating IEDs and saving many lives. In June 2008, Sarbi and Corporal D returned to Afghanistan for their second tour of duty there. This time they went to work with Australian SAS and commando units that were part of Special Operations Task Group 7. On 2 September that year, Sarbi and Corporal D were members of a joint Australia–American Special Forces operation launched from a remote forward operating base 100 kilometres northeast of Tarin Kowt. The operation went terribly wrong when five Humvees carrying Australian, American and Afghan troops were ambushed by a much larger Taliban force. In the ensuing battle, Corporal D was seriously wounded and became separated from Sarbi, who was also injured. It was during the last stages of the battle that Sarbi went missing on the battlefield. And so began the saga of Sarbi's months lost in Taliban territory.

After being 'missing in action' for thirteen months, Sarbi was wrangled back into her friendly hands by a US Special Forces soldier. A month later, Sarbi and Corporal D were reunited at Tarin Kowt in front of the Australian Prime Minister and the commanding US general in Afghanistan.

At the time of writing, Sarbi is still serving in the Australian Army. She is the most decorated dog in the history of the Australian military.

### **ENDAL**

Endal was a sandy-coloured male labrador who was trained by the UK charity Canine Partners. Initially thought to be of no use because of his poor health, Endal went on to qualify as a service dog and, in the late 1990s, was partnered with Allen Parton, a former

Chief Petty Officer with Britain's Royal Navy.

Parton had sustained serious injuries during the Gulf War, and was thereafter confined to a wheelchair. Initially, he couldn't speak, so he taught Endal more than 100 commands using hand signals. Endal could even put Parton's cash card in ATMs and take out the money. Endal was so clever he could pull the plug out of the bath if Parton was to become unconscious, to prevent his master from accidentally drowning, before going to find help.

In 2009, Endal suffered a stroke and had to be put down. During his lifetime, Endal became famous in Britain, receiving much media coverage and many awards for his dedicated and loyal service to his master.

## **CAIRO**

Cairo is a long-nosed Belgian Malinois shepherd that was trained as an EDD for service with the United States Navy SEALs (Sea, Air and Land teams), a unit within the US Special Operations Command. In 2011, Cairo was part of SEAL Team 6, which landed by helicopter in a compound in Afghanistan to deal with Osama bin Laden, the leader of the terrorist organisation Al Qaeda. Cairo's job was to go in first to locate explosives in the compound. Cairo and all members of his team returned safely from the successful mission.

Because he and his unit are top secret, little more is known about Cairo. It is known that he was trained for insertion by helicopter and by parachute, strapped to his handler, just as Caesar is in the book. And it is also known that Cairo later met US President Barack Obama, when the SEALs were presented with the Presidential Unit Citation for the bin Laden operation.

## **AUSTRALIAN MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN**

In 2001, the Australian Government sent SAS troops to participate in operations with US, British and other coalition forces in Afghanistan, following Al Qaeda attacks in America. Although those Australian troops were withdrawn in 2002, Australia resumed its military involvement in Afghanistan as part of ISAF in 2005. By 2012, Australia had 1500 troops in Afghanistan, the largest military presence of any foreign nation other than members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Most of these Australian troops have either been involved in reconstruction programs, rebuilding destroyed or run-down infrastructure in Afghanistan, or the training of the Afghan National Army. Three hundred members of the Australian contingent have been SAS operators and commandos from the Royal Australian Regiment, involved in special operations against the Taliban and other anti-government militias.

## **SAS**

The original Special Air Service was created by the British Army during the Second World War for special operations behind enemy lines, with the motto 'Who Dares Wins'. In 1957, the Australian Army created its own Special Air Service Regiment (SASR), commonly referred to as the Australian SAS, two years after the New Zealand Army founded its Special Air Service.

Australia's SAS is considered by many to be the finest Special Forces unit in the world, and its members help train the Special Forces of other countries, including those of the United States of America. Operating all over the world, the unit has received numerous awards,

including the prize US Presidential Unit Citation for exceptional service. The Australian SAS Regiment's extremely tough selection course is only open to serving members of the Australian military, with very few soldiers who begin the course completing it.

The Australian SAS is based at Swanbourne Barracks in Perth, Western Australia. A top-secret unit, its men are often involved in covert anti-terrorist work, so their names and faces cannot be revealed. The only exceptions to this rule are SAS members who receive the Victoria Cross. The unit is divided into three squadrons, with one squadron always on anti-terrorist duty and the others deployed on specific missions.

The primary role of the SAS in wars such as that in Afghanistan is to provide information about enemy movements and operations. They generally do this by mounting secret patrols in enemy territory for a week or more at a time, being inserted by helicopter, parachute, submarine, small boat or special long-range patrol vehicle, depending on the location. Usually, but not always, working in teams of six 'operators' including a signaller, they will observe and report, or will seek to capture enemy leaders. Sometimes, they will call in air attacks on enemy targets they locate, or in support of other units under enemy attack.

## THE TALIBAN

The Taliban is an armed political movement that originated in southeast Afghanistan and is confined to Afghan tribes that speak the Pashto language. By 1996, the Taliban had gained control of much of Afghanistan by force, after which they permitted terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda to set up training camps in Afghanistan. In late 2001, foreign coalition troops joined Afghan Northern Alliance forces in driving Taliban and Al Qaeda fighters out of Afghanistan, after which an elected Afghan Government was established in the country's capital, Kabul.

Since then, Taliban forces, reinforced by other anti-ISAF militias and extremist Muslim fighters from many countries, and operating from mountainous regions of eastern Afghanistan and western Pakistan, have waged a fierce insurgent war against the Afghan Government and ISAF forces. In 2011, secret talks were initiated between Taliban leaders, the Afghan Government and the US Government to seek a peaceful solution to the war. ISAF troops, including those from Australia, are currently scheduled to pull out of Afghanistan by late 2014, after which the Afghan Government will be solely responsible for security in Afghanistan.

## PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

- **Pre-reading questions:**
  - What do you think a sniffer dog's job is?
  - Who are the Taliban?
  - What do you think Afghanistan is like?
  - What do you think an Australian soldier's life is like in Afghanistan?
  - Why do you think the author wrote the book?
  - Do you think the book is more meaningful because it's inspired by the stories of real war dogs and soldiers?
- **Geography:** Complete Geography Worksheet
- **Compare and contrast:** Investigate different breeds of dog and their characteristics, including: poodle, labrador retriever, Belgian shepherd, German shepherd, and others. Which breed/s do you think would make a good EDD or service dog? Why/why not?

## 4. THEMES

### PREJUDICE

*Caesar the War Dog* deals with themes of prejudice in a variety of ways.

- In Chapter 1, the manager of Huntingdon Kennels is prejudiced against Caesar because he loves to dig, which is not a quality the manager usually associates with labradors, and not a quality the manager thinks will make Caesar a focused explosive detection dog (EDD). Yet, it turns out that this passion for digging will make Caesar one of the finest of all EDDs, and will equip him to make a courageous escape when he's a prisoner of the Taliban. And, as Ben Fulton recognises, Caesar's digging habit reflects his dog's highly developed curiosity, which, as Ben knows from experience, is a key quality for the army's best explosive detection dogs. In a way, Caesar was an ugly duckling.
- In Afghanistan, Haji's big brother Nasir is prejudiced against Haji because he is the youngest child of the family, and Nasir is jealous of their parents' affection for Haji, something which is common to many families around the world, and which many Australian readers may recognise from their own experience. Haji strives to deal with this prejudice by attempting to prove he can train Caesar as a family guard dog, and so contribute to the family even though he is the youngest member.
- In Afghanistan, too, the members of the Taliban are prejudiced against females, who they believe should not receive an education as boys do. Haji's sister Meena was in fact named by the author after a courageous young Afghan woman who campaigned for the rights of women and girls in her country, and was assassinated by the Taliban for it. As the book points out, not all Afghan men think this way – Haji's father wants his daughters to receive a good education.
- The Taliban are also prejudiced against Westerners and Western ways. In Chapter 7, the reader sees how this prejudice leads the Taliban to destroy a new school for Afghan children, simply because it was built by Westerners, depriving their own children of modern educational facilities.

### CONFLICTING PERSPECTIVES

Tied to themes of prejudice, the novel explores the existence of conflicting perspectives and the reasons behind them. An obvious example of this is the differing opinions on the war in Afghanistan. While the coalition forces and the Taliban are opposed, both think they are in the right. And while the reader is positioned to agree with the dominant Western perspective, the author presents the reader with both ways of thinking. For example:

- Josh at first believes that Ben has done the wrong thing by having their dog, Dodger, euthanised or 'put down'. Ben and Charlie, however, teach him that it was in fact the right and compassionate thing to do after Dodger had a stroke.
- Consider the differing views of Ben and Charlie, Taliban Commander Baradar and Mohammad Haidari.
- The difference between the Western and the Afghan attitude towards dogs.



## COURAGE, STRENGTH & LOYALTY

Many of the characters in this book show that strength of character and courage shine in more ways than one.

- In Chapter 3, Charlie teaches Josh that sacrifice and compassion are also forms of courage. He tells Josh, who is resentful towards his dad for putting down his former EDD, Dodger, after the dog suffers a stroke, that Ben's actions were the compassionate thing to do. Josh learns that it would have been selfish to keep Dodger alive because doing so would have involved Dodger suffering a great deal of pain.
- The work of Australian soldiers in Afghanistan requires great bravery, as they live and work in constant danger. This is particularly evident during the battle in Chapter 10 when coalition troops are ambushed by Taliban forces. Ben, Charlie and the rest of the troops display an outstanding show of courage, often putting themselves in harm's way to save a fellow soldier.
  - In Chapter 8, when Charlie is knocked out by an RPG blast, Ben and Caesar expose themselves to enemy fire while dragging Charlie to safety.
  - Charlie saves Ben's life during the ambush by Taliban fighters in Chapter 10.
- Caesar shows great courage during his adventures in Afghanistan.
  - He helps to drag Charlie to safety after he is knocked out by an RPG blast.
  - He escapes his Taliban captors.
- Caesar is an incredibly loyal dog, who never falters in his determination to find Ben and return home.
- Old friends Ben and Charlie are intensely loyal to one another. Charlie risks his own life trying to save Ben during a battle in Afghanistan, from which he suffers the loss of his legs. In turn, Ben demonstrates gratitude, generosity of spirit and self-sacrifice by offering to give Caesar to Charlie to act as Charlie's care dog and companion.

### QUOTES:

- 'Little did the brothers know why Caesar had so eagerly passed among the American audience members. His nostrils filling with familiar scents of soap, shaving cream, freshly washed uniforms and a Western diet, and hearing English spoken, Caesar had been looking for Ben.' (p. 245)
- 'Caesar never stopped looking for Ben. At every military camp the troupe visited, he always sought Ben in the audience.' (p. 251)

## TRUST & FRIENDSHIP

Trust is an important part of any healthy, functioning relationship. At the beginning of the novel, there is a lot of focus on the importance of Ben and Caesar gaining one another's trust in order to work effectively as an EDD team.

- The various activities during the EDD training course at Holsworthy Barracks work on building the trust between dog and handler. Ben and Caesar's relationship flourishes during this time, as they learn to read each other's behaviour and

respond accordingly. They enjoy each other's company and grow to care for one another deeply.

- As soldiers put their lives in each other's hands every day, they have to learn to trust one another.

#### QUOTES:

- 'wherever Ben went, Caesar was happy to go' (p. 70)
- 'such a strong bond had formed between dog and handler that Caesar would go anywhere, would put up with just about anything, as long as he was with Ben' (p. 71)
- 'When Caesar snuggled up against him and put his head on Ben's chest, Ben pulled him in close, to share body warmth.' (p. 91)
- Ben tells Amanda Ritchie that: 'Caesar was like my brother, and in other ways like my child. It's hard to explain. Without him, I feel like I'm missing my right arm.' (p. 193)

### GRIEF/COPING WITH LOSS

We learn that people cope with loss in different ways. We first meet the Fulton family after they have lost the children's mother and Ben's wife, Marie, to breast cancer eight months prior. Their loss is compounded by the death of Ben's former service dog, Dodger, after he suffers a stroke and has to be put down.

- Consider the juxtaposition of Josh and Maddie's reactions upon meeting Caesar for the first time.

#### QUOTES:

- Nan Fulton explains to Ben that he has to wait for Josh to overcome his grief and resentment over Dodger's death. She advises him that he can't make Josh like Caesar: 'You can't order your son to love someone, Ben. Josh will warm to Caesar eventually. Just let him be' (p.37).

### HOPE

Ben, the Fulton family and their supporters never give up on trying to find Caesar. In fact, Caesar's rescue is a result of a joint effort on the part of many people.

- Amanda Ritchie is a rich source of information. As a news journalist specialising on the war in Afghanistan, she has many sources of information. She keeps Ben up to date with any news she discovers about Caesar while he is missing.
- Warren Hodges, Ben's local Member of Parliament, helps Ben.
- Major General Michael Jones tries to track down Caesar.
- The American sergeant remembers that an Australian sniffer dog is still missing and takes the initiative to identify Caesar.

## SACRIFICE

It's easy to be selfish and only think of ourselves. One of the major lessons to come out of this book is that people of courage and compassion sacrifice their own needs and desires to help others. And sacrifice can have a price – the loss of someone we love, the loss of independence, even the loss of one's own life.

- This is first raised through Charlie when he tries to make Josh see that Ben made a personal sacrifice to have Dodger put out of his misery.
- Nan Fulton's self-sacrifice is unsung. After the death of Ben's wife, Nan moves into the Fulton house to look after Josh and Maddie while Ben is away on military missions, sacrificing much of her independence to act as full-time caretaker to her grandchildren.
- Charlie demonstrates that he is prepared to sacrifice his life for his mates during the Taliban ambush in Afghanistan.
- Ben also shows that he can put the needs of others before his own by offering to give Caesar to Charlie only months after Ben and Caesar are reunited. Josh and Maddie learn the value of self-sacrifice by agreeing to allow Caesar to become Charlie's care dog.

## SAVING LIVES

While this is a book about soldiers and war, it has an underlying theme of saving and preserving lives, not taking them.

- Never once do we actually see anyone killed. It is implied in the battle scenes, but not described, stressed or glorified.
- Ben and Caesar's primary role is to locate bombs, to save the lives of soldiers and civilians.
- Charlie and Ben receive medals, not for inflicting casualties on the enemy, but for saving the lives of their comrades.

# 5. COMPREHENSION AND ANALYSIS

## CHAPTER 1

- Why did Ben go to Huntingdon Kennels?
- What was Ben's first impression of Caesar?
- Why did the manager of the kennels think Caesar would make a bad sniffer dog?
- Why did Ben think Caesar would make a good sniffer dog?

## CHAPTER 2

- Why can't Josh or Maddie tell their friends about their dad's job?
- Why has the past year been hard for the Fulton family?
- Why does Ben call his mum the 'glue' of the family?
- How does Ben expect Josh to react upon meeting Caesar?
- Why does Josh take an immediate disliking to Caesar? Do you think his reaction is understandable?
- How does Caesar prove that he is an obedient dog?

## CHAPTER 3

- Why does the first week of the EDD training course focus on obedience training?
- What were some of the other goals of the training exercises on the course?
- Why was putting Dodger down the courageous thing to do?

## CHAPTER 4

- What does a dog's 'signature' refer to? Give some examples.
- What does Ben learn during this phase of the EDD training course?
- How do you think Ben feels about Josh's relationship with Caesar?
- Is Caesar's digging habit a good or a bad thing for an army sniffer dog?
- What does Ben and Caesar's day at the beach tell you about their relationship?

## CHAPTER 5

- What does Ben and Caesar's success in the final phase of their insertion training reveal about their relationship?

## CHAPTER 6

This is a lengthier chapter, so discussion can be split into two parts.

### *Sydney*

- Why do you think Ben doesn't immediately tell his children that he is being sent away on assignment?
- How would you describe the children's reaction to Ben's news? Put yourself in their shoes – how would *you* feel?
- What feelings do you think Ben has during this conversation?
- For what reasons does Ben believe that the army's work in Afghanistan is worthwhile?
- Do you think Josh's attitude towards Caesar has changed?
- ✓ **Worksheet:** Creative Writing Task 1.

## Afghanistan

- Is the landscape different to that of Sydney? If so, how?
- Why is it difficult to capture Taliban fighters?
- What is Ben and Caesar's primary task in Afghanistan?
- Why does Ben take Caesar to the bazaar?
- Why do you think it's important to familiarise an EDD with a foreign environment before sending it out on operations?
- What is the difference between Afghan and Australian attitudes towards dogs?

## CHAPTER 7

- What evidence is given that Caesar is loyal to Ben?
  - Why do you think the young soldier and Ben have differing perspectives?
  - Why do you think the Taliban destroyed the new school?
  - What differences are there in the landscape between Sydney and Uruzgan Province?
  - How did Ben know that the driver had been in contact with explosives?
  - Why is Josh upset during his Skype call with Ben? How does Ben feel about this?
- ✓ **Worksheet:** Creative Writing Task 2.

## CHAPTER 8

- What is the codename for Ben and Caesar's special ops mission, and what is its aim?
  - Why does the team have to come up with a plan B?
  - Why do you think the team watches the kal for such a long period of time?
  - What do Ben and Caesar do that displays their bravery?
  - What explanation does the headman of the kal give the Special Forces team? Do you believe him?
- ✓ **Worksheet:** Creative Writing Task 3.

## CHAPTER 9

- Why do the coalition forces want to seek and capture as many Taliban insurgents as possible before winter?
- How does Ben know that Caesar is on to something at the kal?
- What does an increase in Taliban radio chatter indicate to Charlie?

## CHAPTER 10

- What tactics to the Taliban attackers employ when they ambush Ben and Caesar's convoy?
- What do Charlie and Sergeant Hazard disagree on when the convoy first comes under attack?
- What acts of bravery are displayed in this chapter, and by whom?

## CHAPTER 11

- What does Caesar do when he is unable to keep up with the last Humvee?
- How does Caesar find his way back to the gates of FOB Python? What happens when he gets there?

## CHAPTER 12

- How does Major General Jones react to the news that Caesar is missing?
- Why does Caesar approach Meena and Haji?
- How does Mohammad Haidari know that Caesar is not an Afghan dog?
- Why does he think Caesar would not make a good guard dog?
- What does Haji plan to do with Caesar, against his father's wishes?

## CHAPTER 13

- What does Ben ask Josh to do, and why?
- How was Haji's secret discovered?
- What makes Haji's father change his mind about keeping Caesar?

## CHAPTER 14

- What information has Josh discovered about Caesar's movements in Afghanistan?
- Has Josh's attitude towards Caesar changed?
- What is the purpose of Commander Baradar's visit to Haji's kal?
- What is Haji's father's attitude towards the war?
- Why does Haji's father offer Caesar to Commander Baradar?

## CHAPTER 15

- Why does Ben meet with Amanda Ritchie?
- How does Ben view his relationship with Caesar?
- What does wintertime mean for Taliban operations?
- What is Commander Baradar's plan for Caesar?

## CHAPTER 16

- What news does Amanda have for Ben?
- What dilemma does Commander Baradar's offer pose for Ben and the Australian Army?
- What is different about Charlie from his last visit to the Fulton household?
- How do you think Charlie feels about his battle wounds and what they mean for his future? Give reasons.
- What is Soapy like in comparison to Caesar?
- Why is the death of Commander Baradar's father bad news for Ben and Caesar?
- ✓ **Worksheet:** Creative Writing Task 4.

## CHAPTER 17

- After receiving news of his father's death, what is Commander Baradar's new plan for Caesar?
- How does Caesar escape?
- Why does Abdul lie about who dug the tunnel?

## CHAPTER 18

- Why does Caesar approach the two Afghan men?
- Why do the two brothers decide to keep Caesar?

## CHAPTER 19

- What are some of the adjustments Charlie has had to make since his injuries?
- What medals do Charlie and Ben receive, and why?
- How does Sergeant Tim McHenry work out that Caesar is the missing Australian Special Forces dog?

## CHAPTER 20

- What does Ben reveal he is concerned about when he talks to Amanda?
- Why were the cameraman forbidden to show the faces of Ben or Sergeant Tim McHenry to the public?
- Why can't Caesar return home straightaway with Ben?
- What tricks does Caesar learn to do with Charlie?
- What act of generosity do the Fulton family make, and why?

## CHAPTER 21

- What medals does the Australian Army award Caesar?
- Do you think the ending is a happy one, and why?
- ✓ **Worksheet:** Creative Writing Task 5.

CAESAR THE WAR DOG  
WORKSHEET

## GEOGRAPHY

Using an atlas, see if you can locate the following places:

- Afghanistan
- Uruzgan Province
- Tarin Kowt
- Sydney

Then, using reference books and/or the internet, research the following topics and enter your answers in the table below.

Topic	Sydney	Uruzgan Province
Country		
Land area		
Population		
Language		
Climate		
Flora/Fauna		
Industry		



CAESAR THE WAR DOG  
WORKSHEET

## VOCABULARY MIX & MATCH

Match the word to the correct definition.

Word	Definition
Anzacs	An Australian light armoured vehicle
ASLAV	A military helicopter used as a gunship as well as a cargo and troop carrier
Asset	Enemy fighters
Black Hawk	Intelligence information
Bushmaster	A homemade bomb
Clicks	Soldiers of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps
Diggers	Can mean a war dog or a human spy behind enemy lines
Extraction	A four-engine, propeller-driven military transport aircraft
Hercules	A guerrilla fighter who doesn't use regular military uniform or tactics
Hostiles	The secret landing of troops behind enemy lines
IED	Nickname for soldiers
Insertion	The pickup of troops from hostile territory by air, land or sea
Insurgent	Australian-made troop-carrying vehicle
Intel	Kilometres

## CREATIVE WRITING TASKS

Choose a creative writing task from the options below, or work through them in order as you read the relevant chapters.

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### TASK 1: Writing a play (Chapter 6)

Imagine you have just been told that your father is being deployed to Afghanistan on a secret mission for the Australian Army. You are told that he is leaving the next morning. Write a scene from a play, including the setting and the dialogue or conversation between you and your father.

*Extension activity:* In pairs, act out your scene for the class.

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### TASK 2: Writing a letter (Chapter 7)

Imagine you are an Australian soldier who has just arrived in Afghanistan for the first time. You are in a Bushmaster on your way to your first mission. Write a letter home to your family, describing your thoughts and feelings.

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### TASK 3: Writing a poem (Chapter 8)

Imagine you are an Afghan farmer. Write a poem that reflects your life and your surroundings. For example, you could write a poem about the look and smell of the countryside that you farm, the animals you tend and how the war has affected you.

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### TASK 4: Writing a news article (Chapter 16)

Imagine you are the reporter Amanda Ritchie preparing to interview Ben and his family. Write an outline for the news article that you plan to write, including the heading for your article and ideas for the layout and pictures. Also include a list of questions that you plan to ask Ben and his family, and the reasons for asking them.

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### TASK 5: Writing a factual report (Chapter 21)

Imagine that you are an EDD handler. You and your dog have just returned from a top-secret mission to save lives in another country. Write a report to your commanding officer. Start by naming and describing your dog, then what your mission was, then write of the difficulties you and your dog faced and how the two of you overcame them, finishing up with the outcome of the mission.