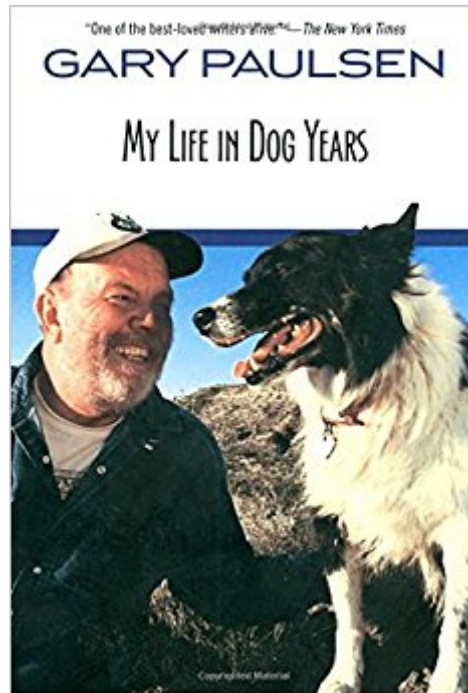




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# My Life In Dog Years



## Synopsis

Gary Paulsen has owned dozens of unforgettable and amazing dogs. In each chapter he tells of one special dog, among them Cookie, the sled dog who saved his life; Snowball, the puppy he owned as a boy in the Philippines; Ike, his mysterious hunting companion; Dirk, the grim protector; and his true friend Josh, a brilliant border collie.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 1150L (What's this?)

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[> Animals > Pets](#) #26 in [Books > Children's Books > Humor > General](#) #83 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies](#)

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Grade 4 Up?Paulsen reveals bits and pieces of his own life story through his experiences with eight of his dogs. After a heartfelt dedication to Cookie, the sled dog who saved his life, the author introduces readers first to Snowball, the puppy he acquired when he was seven years old and living in the Philippines, and then follows chronologically with profiles of other canine companions. He concludes with tales about Josh, the border collie with whom he currently shares a home. Paulsen is a master storyteller with a dry wit. His description of his dog Fred, whom he claimed was actually "nuclear in his capacity for destruction," and his account of his Great Dane Caesar, who was so petrified of trick-or-treaters that he would hide in the bedroom closet every Halloween with a housecoat over his eyes, are sure to elicit smiles. Paulsen can also make readers sigh when he relates how Snowball saved him from being bitten by a poisonous snake and how Cookie pulled him out of the water when he fell through the ice while trapping beaver. The statement, "Josh...is a

person. I do not think in my heart that he is a dog," gives youngsters a real sense of how the man looks at these animals. An attractive pen-and-ink sketch of the profiled animal opens each chapter. This well-written, readable reminiscence serves as a tribute to the dogs in one person's life, written by someone who considers them his best friends. ?Carol Kolb Phillips, The Library, East Brunswick, NJ Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

Gr. 5<sup>^</sup>-10. Paulsen's style has been smoother, but this honest, unpretentious celebration of dogs further entrenches his reputation as an author who is as successful at writing nonfiction as he is at writing novels. In roughly chronological chapters, he introduces eight memorable canines he has known and loved over the years. Some were pets, others he knew as trusted partners or protectors--from Snowball, the first, to Josh, who "if possible . . . is always with me." Although the chapters are linked by small details and references (often easy to recognize from his previous books), each can stand alone, with several, including a wildly funny one devoted to an adopted Great Dane named Caesar, promising good read-aloud material. Paulsen differentiates his canine friends beautifully, as only a keen observer and lover of dogs can. At the same time, he presents an intimate glimpse of himself, a lonely child of alcoholic parents, who drew strength and solace from his four-legged companions and a love of the great outdoors. Poignant but never saccharine, honest, and open, these engaging canine character studies are guaranteed to charm animal lovers and Paulsen's fans, especially those who know *Woodson* (1990) or *Father Water, Mother Woods* (1994). There's something to please at every turn of the page. Stephanie Zvirin --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

This is such a great book. I am a substitute teacher and one day the fifth grade class was doing a lot of quiet independent work, so I picked up this book from the teacher's desk . It's not a long book so I was able to get through a lot of it. Each chapter is a story about one of the author's dogs throughout his life, whether he owned the dog or maybe just had a short encounter with one. I immediately scanned it into my cart to buy for my son. I am not a dog lover by any means and this book made me want to run out and get one. It is so heartwarming and real. - great book for all ages!

Gary Paulsen is one of our most talented fiction writers of today. You get riveted from the very first page of every book he has written. This is especially true with his *Hatchet* book and all the other books that follow Brian's story of living and surviving alone in the wilderness of Minnesota and Canada. His "Life in Dog Years" recaptures his relationships with the dogs in his life. I can relate to

his love of dogs (and all animals) their different personalities and how they each came into Gary's life and what role they played. Highly recommended.

My ten year old daughter wanted a book about dogs: this one is perfect. Humorous, insightful, short stories into the lives of a few dogs in Paulsens life. Perfect book for her.

If you've read Paulsen's chronicles of his training for and first running of the Iditarod (Winterdance), you know this man tells it all, even if it makes him look stupid or crazy. But, man, what an adventurous life and terrific story-teller, with heart-breakingly beautiful prose. The best thing about this book is that I can't keep this book on my shelf! I teach 6th grade and every year at least 10-15 kids check this book out from my little classroom library. I usually just have to get one kid to read it, then he'll tell his buddies, and then it's passed around like a hot potato. This is my third copy in 4 years--they wear it out! Great for reluctant readers, especially boys.

If you have ever loved a dog, or known someone who truly has, this is the book to buy and read. No author connects more with his dogs, or enjoys and celebrates them more, than Gary Paulsen. We have bought six or seven copies of this book to give as gifts over the years. And many of the gift recipients went out and bought copies of this book for their dog-loving friends. The old bromide about "you will laugh...you will cry", is a pretty safe prediction here. I defy you to not connect with your feelings about all the loved animals of your past after you read My Life in Dog Years.

If you love dogs, you'll love this book. Many of us long time dog owners will find these stories remarkably similar to their own dogs. I've read every Gary Paulsen book ever published and I am amazed at how he can use a small amount of words to depict large action and scenery where other writers would use too many words. And, yes, dogs can smile!

My life in dog years is one of the best books that I have ever read. Every story in this book is a true story. Every story is like a gift and one that you will think about, years later. It will have a profound effect on the reader. I found this book impossible to put down. As a matter of fact, I bought at least 15 books of My Life in Dog Years, for gifts and just to give out to special people. The first story is dedicated to his dog Cookie, who saved his life. Every story in this book is amazing. It is easy reading. It has been 5 years since I read this book and it is still my favorite book. This book will take you to heaven and back. What more can I say about this fantastic book?

Gary Paulsen's writing is always a pleasure to read. (If you happen to be reading out loud, it's a particular treat - try it.) This book is no different, even though it's not a story but a string of autobiographical vignettes. It was every bit as good to read as our favorite Gary Paulsen novel (so far), Hatchet - though quite a different experience. The author's insights into dogs, people, and other animals, combined with his pretty unique life experiences, make for an interesting, sometimes side-splitting funny, and very worthwhile read. Two adults and one 12-year-old enjoyed this book.

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