



READING GUIDE FOR TEACHERS & LIBRARIANS

Shaw's Story

by Tammy Sheedy

Picture book · Latest release · Themes: courage, caring for pets, hope

Shaw thought he had found his happily-ever-after when he was adopted into his new family. Then everything changed. When Shaw became seriously ill with feline infectious peritonitis (FIP), his brand-new life turned into a journey of veterinarians, medicine, determination and love — a fight his family never once considered giving up. Shaw's true story is a gentle way to talk with children about illness, hope and what it means to love, care for and protect our pets — even when it's hard.

BEFORE YOU READ

A note for grown-ups: this true story deals gently with a pet's serious illness. Preview it first and be ready to talk about feelings.

- Ask: What does it mean to be brave? Can someone be brave and scared at the same time?
- Talk about veterinarians: What does a vet do? Have you ever visited one with a pet?
- Set a caring tone: This is a true story about a kitten who got very sick — and about the family who never gave up on him.

TALK ABOUT IT

Discussion prompts for during and after reading.

- How does Shaw's life change when he is adopted? How does it change again when he gets sick?
- What do the veterinarians and Shaw's family do to help him? Which helpers would you like to thank?
- How do you think Shaw feels during his treatment? How do you think his family feels?
- What is hope? Where do you see hope in this story?
- Shaw's family never gave up. What are ways we can stick by someone — a pet or a person — who is having a hard time?
- How can we show love to someone who is sick, even when we can't fix the problem?

TRY THIS

Hands-on activities for classrooms and library story times.

- Get-well cards: Make a cheerful card for Shaw — or for a shelter animal waiting for a family — and decorate it with what makes you smile.
- Care chart: Make a class poster of 'Ways we care for our pets' — food, water, play, vet visits, gentle hands, and love.
- Vet clinic role-play: Set up a pretend vet office with stuffed animals. Practice being a kind veterinarian, a worried pet family, and a brave patient.
- Hope jar: Each student writes or draws one hopeful thought and adds it to a class jar to open on a hard day.
- Feelings rainbow: Draw a rainbow and label each color with a feeling from the story — scared, loved, brave, hopeful, happy.

Every pet has a story. Every story has a heart.