

TERRY FOX AND ME EDUCATORS' GUIDE

BY MARY BETH LEATHERDALE • ILLUSTRATED BY MILAN PAVLOVIĆ



ABOUT THE BOOK

Before Terry Fox became a national hero for running the Marathon of Hope with a prosthetic leg, he was just a regular kid. In fact, he barely made his elementary school basketball team — he was the smallest on the team! When Doug Alward met Terry at basketball tryouts, Doug didn't think much of him. But he still helped Terry practise and practise to earn a spot on the team. And it wasn't long before Doug and Terry were best friends. The qualities that have made Terry such an enduring hero — his strength, determination and loyalty — were apparent even then. He was also stubborn, sometimes quick to anger and always willing to share a laugh.

Over the years, the two friends supported each other, challenged each other and helped each other become better athletes and people. Doug was by Terry's side every step of the way: when Terry received a diagnosis of cancer in his leg, when he was learning to walk — then run — with a prosthetic leg and when he was training for the race of his life, the Marathon of Hope.

Written from Doug's perspective, this story shows that Terry Fox's legacy goes beyond the physical and individual accomplishments of an extraordinary athlete. It is also a celebration of the true value of friendship.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MARY BETH LEATHERDALE writes, edits and consults on books, magazines and digital resources for children and youth. She is the co-editor of *#NotYourPrincess: Voices of Native American Women* and author of *Stormy Seas: Stories of Young Boat Refugees*. Her books have garnered numerous accolades and awards, including the Norma Fleck Award for Canadian Children's Non-Fiction, and a nomination for the YALSA Excellence in Nonfiction for Young Adults Award (*#NotYourPrincess*), and the White Raven Award and Silver Birch Honour (*Stormy Seas*). Mary Beth has long been inspired by Terry Fox and his legacy. In writing this book, she gained a deeper understanding of the role Doug Alward played in Terry's life and accomplishments, and is honoured to call Doug a friend. Mary Beth lives in Toronto with her family.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

MILAN PAVLOVIĆ is an illustrator and graphic artist whose drawings, illustrations, paintings and comics have been published and exhibited internationally. Milan was born in Serbia where, after studies in applied arts and book design, he obtained a master's degree in illustration before moving to Toronto in 2010. Milan teaches at OCAD University and Seneca College. He has also illustrated many children's books, including *Seamus's Short Story*, *The Snuggly* and *Moon Wishes*. Since he was a child, Milan has loved to read, play the piano and draw. He gets easily inspired by his witty son and by nature. Milan lives with his family in Toronto.

This guide was created by the author Mary Beth Leatherdale. For more than 25 years, Mary Beth has been involved with researching, developing and writing resources for students and educators. She holds a master's degree in education from the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education (OISE).



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Look carefully at the front and back cover. Who are the people in the pictures? What clues do the pictures give you to the story? Who is “Me” in the title?
2. Who is narrator of this story? How can you tell? Why do you think the author chose to write the story this way?
3. The narrator opens the book by saying, “Every friendship starts somewhere.” Why do Terry and Doug become friends? What does it mean to be a good friend? How does a good friend act? Does that change based on the situation? Find examples of Terry and Doug acting as good friends.
4. What are some words that you would use to describe Terry’s personality? What are some words that you would use to describe Doug’s personality? Find passages from the story that support those characteristics. How are the friends different? How are they similar?
5. When Doug learns that Terry’s leg will be amputated, he says, “What can he do with only one leg?” Why might he feel that way? How does Doug’s thinking change? Find specific examples in words and pictures.
6. The author writes, “He says hearing my footsteps behind him makes him push harder. Seeing Terry in front of me makes me push harder, too.” What does this tell you about the friends? Find other examples in the story where the friends push each other to try harder.
7. The phrase “One step at a time” appears a number of times in the story. When does Terry say it? When does Doug? What do you learn about Doug when he says it?
8. Look carefully at the pictures of Terry and Doug. How do they change as the friends get older? How do they stay the same? What information and emotions do the pictures convey?

9. This story is told from Doug's perspective. If Terry was telling this story, do you think it would be different? If so, how?
10. Why do you think the author uses lists of words and phrases in the text? Find examples and discuss the effect. What do the lists convey?
11. Look carefully at the colors the illustrator uses throughout the story. What do the colors tell you about the mood and emotions of the characters? Talk about specific examples.
12. Look at the map of Canada showing the Marathon of Hope route. Why did it start on the east coast? Talk about the physical characteristics of the different regions of Canada. What challenges would Terry face on the cross-country run?
13. The story of the friendship between Terry and Doug is a true story. Terry Fox is a well-known Canadian hero. Did you learn anything about Terry in this story that you didn't know before? If so, how did it change the way you think about him?

ACTIVITIES

1. As a class, read the “Note from Darrell Fox.” He writes, “My brother Terry accomplished the impossible. But as Terry always said, he didn’t do it alone.” While Terry Fox became a well-known Canadian hero and was often interviewed on television and in the newspaper, few people know much about Doug and his role in the Marathon of Hope. Divide students into pairs. Ask them to prepare a short interview between a reporter and Doug Alward. What questions would you want to ask Doug? How would he answer them? When they’re ready, the pairs could present their interviews in front of their classmates or record them for later viewing.
2. Ask students to write a short letter to a friend about “Terry Fox and Me,” where “me” refers to themselves. Their letter could be about a fictional encounter with the Canadian hero or a description of how Terry has inspired them.
3. As a class, read the “Note from Doug Alward.” (You could also share the video “In Terry’s Words: Running Into the Heart of Canada” on terryfox.org.) Have a discussion about how Terry set small goals to accomplish his larger goals. Ask students to share one of their goals. Then have them make a list of the small goals they could set to achieve it.
4. Terry said, “Even if I don’t finish, we need others to continue. It’s got to keep going without me.” Discuss with students how Terry’s dream has become a reality. Today, three million kids participate in a Terry Fox School Run. Ask students to create a poster for a Terry Fox Run at their school or in their community. What picture and colours will have the biggest impact? What information will they need to include?
5. Many students and their families will have personal experiences with cancer. Give the students the opportunity to share their stories if they chose. As a class, talk about the impact Terry Fox and the Marathon of Hope has had on cancer research, with more than 800 million dollars raised in Terry’s name. Watch “Terry Fox, Anything’s Possible” (www.terryfox.org) and discuss how survival rates for those diagnosed with cancer have improved.