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THE DOG WHO WAITED AT SHIBUYA

THE WALK TO THE GATE

In the 1920s, in TOKYO, the capital city of Japan, a professor named Hidesaburo Ueno taught FARMING at a university a ten-minute walk from his HOUSE. A cream-colored puppy had come to him from a farm in the cold north, and he named him Hachiko. Each morning the dog walked with him to the university GATE and saw him off. Each evening he was at the gate again. Anyone passing saw a man and his dog and thought nothing of it.

SPELL Spell: GATE

GATE

SPELL Spell: HOUSE

HOUSE

KNOWN What is the name of the capital city of Japan, where the professor and his dog lived?

TOKYO

KNOWN What did the professor teach at the university?

FARMING

OPEN What do you think the dog watched for while he waited near the gate?

Open response - use practitioner judgment

THE SHAPE OF A DAY

Hachiko was an Akita, a large, thick-coated BREED of dog. Dogs learn the shape of a day by doing the same things over and over. An action done at the same hour again and again becomes a HABIT, something the body does without being told. The walk to the gate was part of Hachiko's ROUTINE, the fixed order his days followed. In May 1925 the professor died suddenly at work. The dog began turning up at SHIBUYA STATION, a busy train station nearby, and he kept turning up.

SPELL Spell: STATION

STATION

SPELL Spell: BREED

BREED

KNOWN What is the word for an action done at the same hour again and again until the body does it without being told?

HABIT

KNOWN What is the word for the fixed order that Hachiko's days followed?

ROUTINE

KNOWN What is the name of the busy train station where the dog began turning up after the professor died?

SHIBUYA

OPEN Hachiko walked the same path at the same hour every day. What is something you do at the same time each day?

Open response - use practitioner judgment

NINE MORE YEARS

Hachiko came back to Shibuya Station for nine more years, until he died in 1935. Station workers and food sellers fed him. A newspaper story in 1932 made him known across Japan, and in 1934 a schoolbook told children he had met his master's train there every evening, which was not quite true. Many people called this loyalty. Others said a well-fed dog has a PLAIN reason to return to the same corner. While he was still alive, a BRONZE STATUE of him was raised outside the station.

SPELL Spell: BRONZE

BRONZE

SPELL Spell: PLAIN

PLAIN

KNOWN What do you call a figure of a person or an animal, shaped from metal or stone and set up in a public place?

STATUE

OPEN If you had been one of the food sellers near that station, what would you have offered the dog?

Open response - use practitioner judgment

MATH The first bronze statue of Hachiko went up in 1934. It was melted down during the war, and a new one was put up in 1948. How many years passed between the two statues?

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A MEETING PLACE

Your own dog, if you have one, probably does a smaller version of this, waiting by the DOOR minutes before you get home. That is anticipation, expecting something before it arrives because a pattern has been learned. The bronze Hachiko still stands outside Shibuya Station, and people now use it as a LANDMARK, a well-known SPOT where friends agree to meet. Crowds pass it every day, at the same place where the dog once waited by himself.

SPELL Spell: SPOT

SPOT

SPELL Spell: DOOR

DOOR

KNOWN What is the word for a famous place in a city that everyone knows and can find, like the bronze dog outside Shibuya Station?

LANDMARK

OPEN Which place near you would be a good one for friends to agree to meet?

Open response - use practitioner judgment