



*A Kid's Best Friend* by Maya Ajmera and Alex Fisher. Charlesbridge, 2002.  
Genre: Nonfiction

**You will need:**

- Helen character card for each child
- “Old Friends, New Friends” activity supplies (page 2-3)

## A Kid's Best Friend

Host: **Helen**

Helen is Martha's best friend. She takes care of Martha by walking her and making sure she has plenty of alphabet soup! And Martha is Helen's best friend. She gives Helen advice and takes care of her in her own unique way. In *A Kid's Best Friend*, we meet kids and their four-legged, furry friends from all over the world.

Episode: **Martha Plays a Part (#102)**

Helen is really nervous about performing in the school play, but with practice—and a little help from Martha—Helen is the star of the show! (Available free at [pbskids.org/martha/parentsteachers/bookclub/episodes.html](http://pbskids.org/martha/parentsteachers/bookclub/episodes.html) or purchase from iTunes®.)

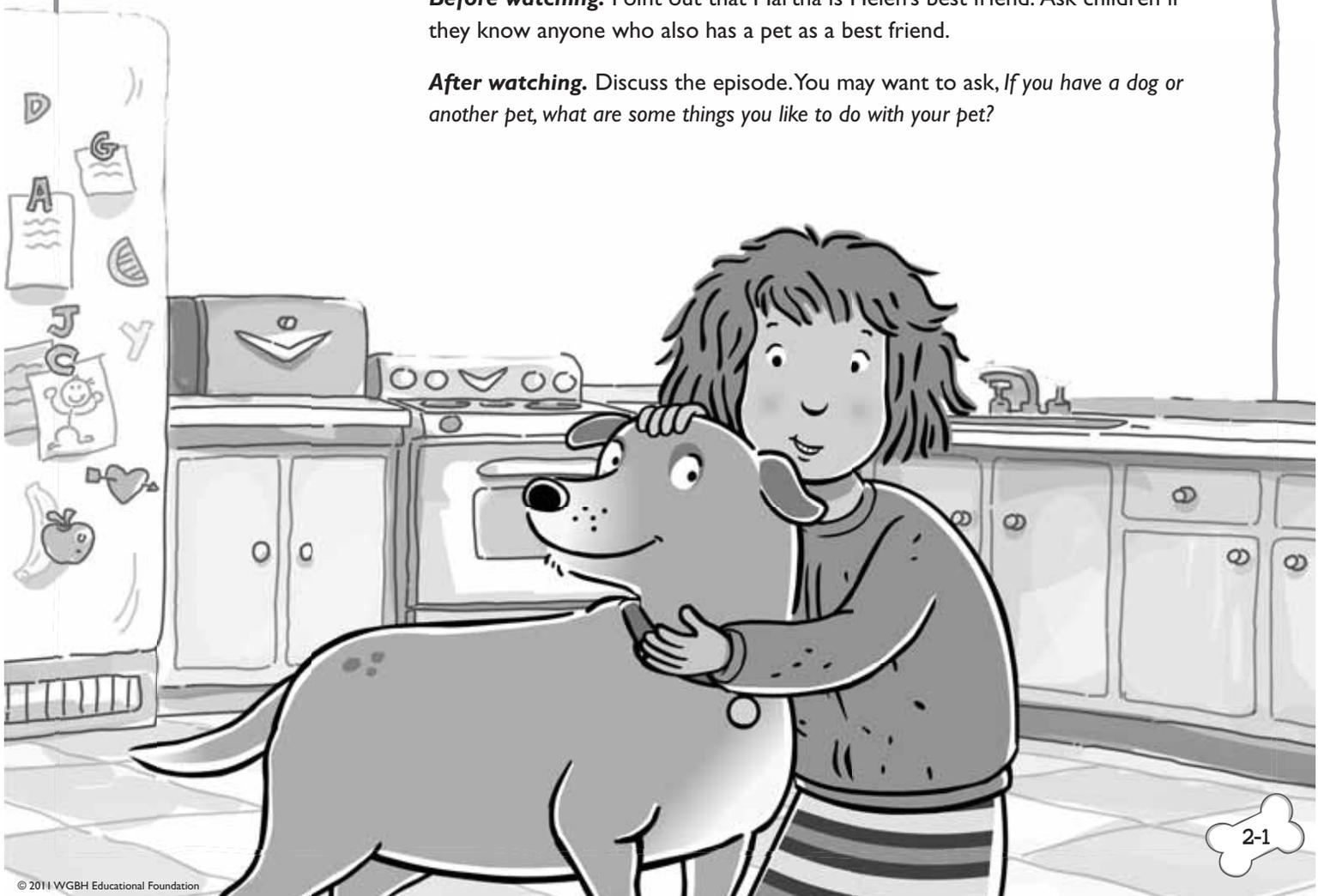
### Welcome

Sing the song *M-A-R-T-H-A* (see Supporting Materials) or use another warm-up activity of your choice.

### Watch the Episode

**Before watching.** Point out that Martha is Helen's best friend. Ask children if they know anyone who also has a pet as a best friend.

**After watching.** Discuss the episode. You may want to ask, *If you have a dog or another pet, what are some things you like to do with your pet?*



### Read the Book

**Before you read.** Show the cover of the book. Read aloud the title, the author, and the illustrator. Ask children to predict what the book might be about.

**As you read.** Encourage children to look closely at the photos and notice what is the same and what is different in each.

**After you read.** Review the photos by saying the name of the country where each child lives. If possible, use a map or globe to mark the location of each country.

### Do a Related Activity

Choose one or both of the “Old Friends, New Friends” activities on page 2-3. Adapt the activities as needed or substitute one of your own.

### Wrap Up

You may want to sing the friendship song “The More We Get Together” or “Martha is My Best Friend” to the same tune. (*Martha is my best friend, my best friend, my best friend. Martha is my best friend, woof, woof, woof.*) You can also substitute a wrap-up activity of your choice. You may want to distribute the “Hello, Doggy” handout for kids to take home, along with the Helen character card.



# Old Friends, New Friends

### You will need:

- Bone-shaped bracelet cut-outs
- Paper
- Pencils, markers, or crayons
- Scissors

### Option 1: Friendship Bracelet

Before the session, photocopy the Bone Bracelet template and cut out one for each child. (Cut along the dotted lines of the rectangle or, if time permits, along the lines of the design itself.) Distribute a paper bracelet to each child. Have children decorate and write friendship messages on their bracelets (or dictate their message to you). Encourage children to give their bracelets to friends or family members.

### You will need:

- “Hello, Doggy!” handout

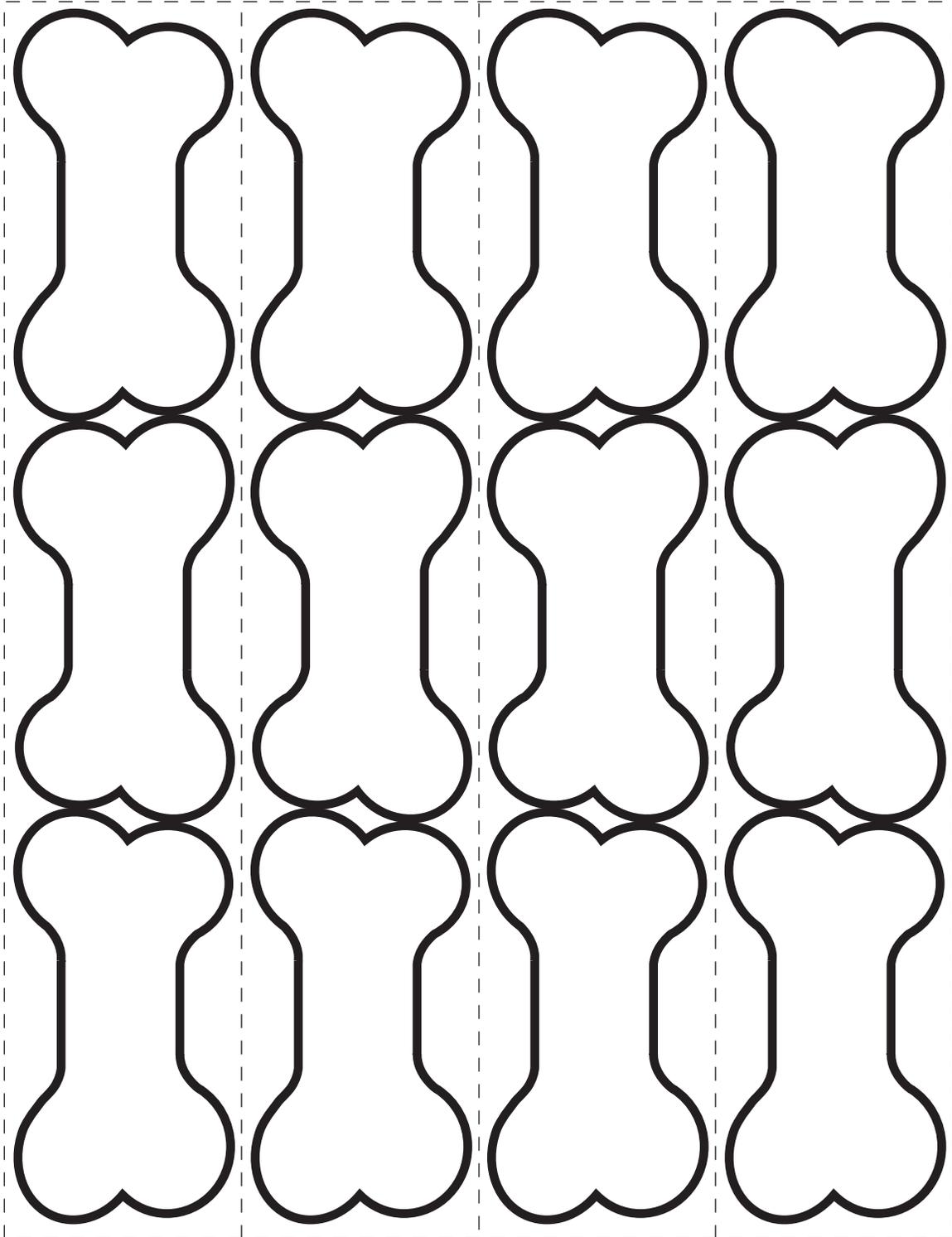
### Option 2: Hello, Doggy!

Distribute and introduce the “Hello, Doggy!” handout. Remind children that making friends with a dog you don’t know can be a little scary sometimes, but if you know just how to say “hi,” meeting a dog can be easy and fun. Ask kids for their input, then review the tips outlined on the handout.

Invite volunteers to role-play how to approach a new dog. (One child will play the dog, another will play the child who wishes to meet the dog. You will play the role of the dog’s owner.) If parents or caregivers are attending, invite them to take a turn playing one of the roles.



# Bone Bracelet



## Hello, Doggy!

Review with your children the safety tips below for meeting and greeting a new dog. You may also want to review general safety rules about not talking with strangers without being accompanied by a trusted adult.

- Before you approach a new dog, make sure the owner is there. If the dog is looking happy, eager, and friendly, ask, “May I pet your dog?”
- If the owner says “yes,” walk up to the dog quietly. Let the dog sniff the back of your hand. Dogs use their sense of smell to get to know someone.
- Stay calm and quiet as you pet the dog gently and say pleasant things, like “Good dog!” and “What a great puppy!”
- If you want, ask the owner if the dog has a special place where he or she likes to be stroked or scratched—such as behind the ears or under the chin.
- Some dogs do not feel comfortable with people they don’t know. If a dog looks nervous, upset, threatened, or angry, do not get close and do not try to pet it. Give him or her plenty of space. This will help the dog feel calmer and it will keep you safe.

For more fun and learning, visit the MARTHA SPEAKS Web site at [pbskids.org/martha](http://pbskids.org/martha). For more about dogs, cats, and all kinds of animals, visit ASPCA Kids at [www.aspca.org/aspcakids](http://www.aspca.org/aspcakids).

