

A shaggy dog story

Timmy sat on the back step and watched Ginger. The cat washed first one paw and then the other. Timmy sighed. He loved Ginger very much but he did so want a dog.

“You see, a dog will run after a ball or fetch a stick,” he told Ginger. “Cats don’t do that.”

He wondered if Ginger would fetch something. After all, he was a very special cat. Timmy picked up a twig and threw it down the garden. Ginger ignored it and began to wash the tip of his tail.

“Just as I thought!” Timmy said, sadly. “Dogs are different. You can take dogs for walks, and give them baths and teach them tricks.”

Ginger yawned to show that he thought dogs were boring.

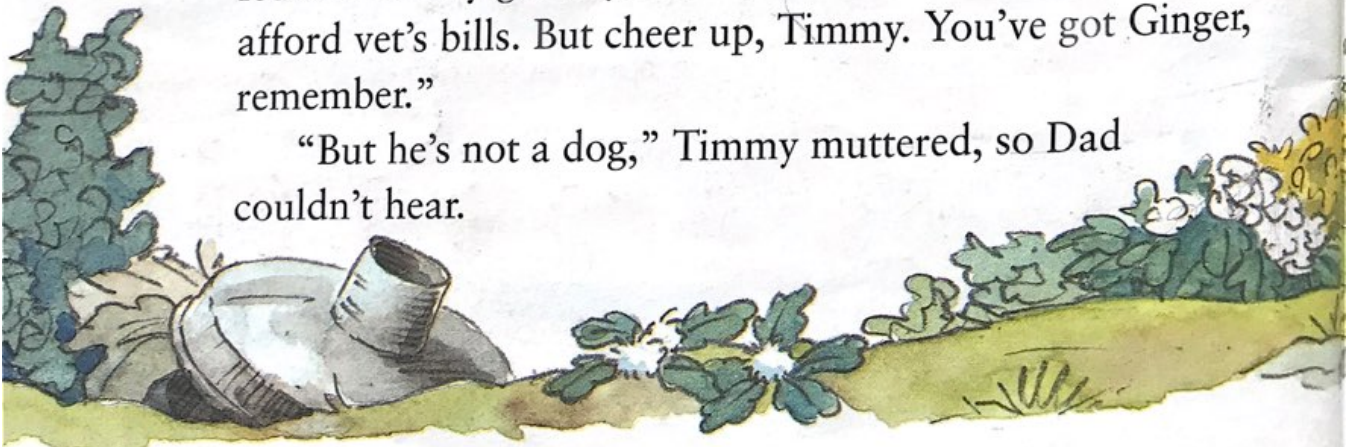
“It doesn’t have to be a big dog,” Timmy went on. “A little dog would do.”

He went into the kitchen where Dad was peeling some potatoes.

“Are you sure I can’t have a dog?” Timmy asked.

Dad smiled. “No, no, a thousand times no!” he said. “I’ve told you before, dogs cost money. They have to be fed and if they get ill you have to call in the vet. We can’t afford vet’s bills. But cheer up, Timmy. You’ve got Ginger, remember.”

“But he’s not a dog,” Timmy muttered, so Dad couldn’t hear.



- 1 Why did Timmy want a dog so much?
(Give all the reasons you can find.)
- 2 We can tell that Timmy has asked his father before for a dog.
Which words tell us this?
- 3 What were Dad's reasons for not letting Timmy have a dog?
- 4 Do you think the reasons Dad gave Timmy were good reasons
for not having a dog? Why?
- 5 How did Timmy feel at the end of the passage?
- 6 Why do you think Timmy's cat was called Ginger?
- 7 "When Timmy picked up a twig and threw it down the garden,
his cat ignored it."
What words could you use instead of "ignored"?

