

# Because of Winn Dixie by Kate DiCamillo

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**Chapters 1 to 4**

**A. Vocabulary**

*Make sure you understand the meaning of these words before you start to read. Use a dictionary if necessary.*

concerned      skidded      cereal      missionary      exception      fortunate  
wrinkled      insulted      relieved      nudge      constellations      memorized

**B. Read Chapters 1 to 4.**

**C. Understanding the Novel**

*Answer the following questions in complete sentences.  
You may refer to the novel if necessary.*

1. How did Opal find Winn Dixie?
2. Describe the appearance of Winn Dixie when Opal first saw him?
3. How did Opal persuade her father to let her keep Winn Dixie?
4. What had happened to Opal's mother?
5. Why did Opal ask her father to tell her ten things about her mother?

**D. Thinking About the Novel**

*These questions ask for your ideas and opinions. Therefore there are no incorrect answers. You must, however give reasons for your answers.*

1. Opal acted on the spur of the moment when she said the stray dog was hers. What does the phrase on the spur of the moment mean?

Have you ever acted on the spur of the moment? Explain.  
What was the result of your action?

2. Opal had recently moved to Naomi, Florida and felt lonely. What advice would you give her about making friends and adjusting to living in a new location?

## Chapters 5 to 8

## True or False

*Read each statement, then decide whether it is True or False.*

1. Winn Dixie hated being left alone. \_\_\_\_\_
2. The Open Arms Baptist Church used to be a store. \_\_\_\_\_
3. The preacher said that Winn Dixie could not come into the church even when he howled outside. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Winn Dixie caught a mouse and gave it to the preacher. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Opal was lonely in Naomi. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Miss Franny Block thought Winn Dixie was a cougar. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Miss Franny had been frightened by a bear when she was younger. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Everyone in Naomi used to tease Miss Franny about the bear. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Amanda Wilkinson wanted to be friends with Opal. \_\_\_\_\_
10. Miss Franny allowed Winn Dixie in the library. \_\_\_\_\_
11. Opal needed a collar and leash for Winn Dixie. \_\_\_\_\_
12. The name of the parrot was Georgina. \_\_\_\_\_
13. The parrot liked Winn Dixie. \_\_\_\_\_
14. Opal paid for the collar and leash from her allowance. \_\_\_\_\_
15. Opal worked in *Gertrude's Pets* to pay for the collar and leash. \_\_\_\_\_
16. Sweetie Pie Thomas wanted a kitten for a pet. \_\_\_\_\_
17. Sweetie Pie was five years old. \_\_\_\_\_
18. Opal began to feel less lonely. \_\_\_\_\_

## Grammar and Punctuation

### Activity Card 2

Adjectives are words that modify or describe nouns.

They give more information about the noun.

*Examples: the enormous dog      an interesting book*

Two or more adjectives can be used, but they should be separated by a comma.

*Examples: The dirty, smelly dog      the happy little girl*

1. Think of one or two adjectives to describe each of these nouns:

friend      store      church      party      window

book      elephant      school      house      cat

2. Underline the adjectives in these sentences.

- a) Opal ran up the steep hill to the tall, green tree.
- b) Winn Dixie was the largest and dirtiest dog Opal had ever seen.
- c) Gloria Dump lived in an old, dilapidated house.
- d) The terrified dog hid under Gloria's wooden chair.
- e) Otis played old songs on his guitar.

3. Choose twenty nouns from the novel you just read, and then think of one or two adjectives to describe each one.

**Creative Writing  
Activity Card 5**

Pretend you are a book critic for a newspaper.

Write a review of *Because of Winn Dixie* for your book column.

Your review should include a *brief* outline of the plot and your comments on the characters and the plot.

You may also include suggestions for improving the novel

You can also say what age group and kind of reader would enjoy this novel.

You may also give your own opinion of the novel.

**Creative Writing  
Activity Card 6**

Opal and Winn Dixie made many friends in Naomi, Florida.

Write another chapter for the book.

You may include any of the characters from this novel, but can also introduce new ones.

You must use the same setting for the story.

Proofread your draft copy carefully. Read it to a classmate and ask how the story could be improved.

You do not have to take their advice, but do consider it.

## **Elements of the Novel**

### **Activity 8**

#### **Theme**

A novel is often written to interest and entertain the reader, but author's often have an overall theme that they express in the story.

This can be an idea or several ideas that they want the reader to consider while they are reading.

What do you think is the theme of *Because of Winn Dixie*?

Do you think this novel conveys that theme to the reader?  
How is this done?

## **Integrated Activities**

### **Activity 1**

Choose an event from the novel and work with a small group to dramatize it.

You should improvise the dialogue for this activity.

This means that although you might want to write down some ideas for your dramatization, you make up the dialogue as you perform.

Obviously this means that each performance will vary, but the overall idea will stay the same.

You can use simple props or costumes to add interest to you performance.

When you are satisfied with the completed improvisation, perform it for your class.