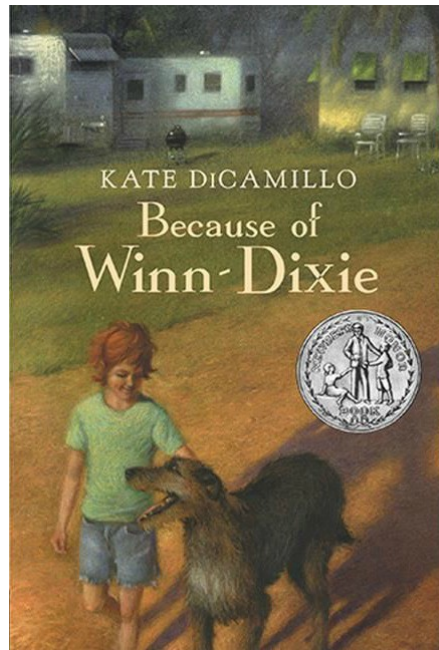


Because of Winn-Dixie



By

Kate DiCamillo

A Novel Study
by Joel Michel Reed

Because of Winn-Dixie

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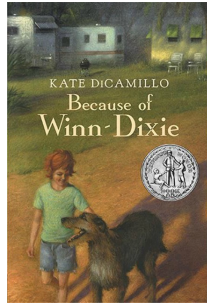


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About the author: Joel Reed has over 50 published novel studies and is the co-author of three novels. For more information on his work and literature, please visit the websites www.reedpublications.org and www.novelstudies.org.

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Suggestions and Expectations

This curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on several chapters of **Because of Winn-Dixie** and is comprised of five of the following different activities:

- Before You Read
- Vocabulary Building
- Comprehension Questions
- Language Activities
- Extension Activities

Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)

Many of the activities in this unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the *Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5*, makes reference to

- a) determining the meaning of words and phrases. . . including figurative language;
- b) explaining how a series of chapters fits together to provide the overall structure;
- c) compare and contrast two characters;
- d) determine how characters . . . respond to challenges;
- e) drawing inferences from the text;
- f) determining a theme of a story . . . **and many others.**

A principal expectation of the unit is that students will develop their skills in reading, writing, listening and oral communication, as well as in reasoning and critical thinking. Students will also be expected to provide clear answers to questions and well-constructed explanations. It is critical as well that students be able to relate events and the feelings of characters to their own lives and experiences and describe their own interpretation of a particular passage.

A strength of the unit is that students can work on the activities at their own pace. Every activity need not be completed by all students. A **portfolio cover** is included (p.7) so that students may organize their work and keep it all in one place. A **Student Checklist** is also included (p.6) so that a record of completed work may be recorded.

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List of Skills

Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words / phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homonyms
3. Identifying / creating *alliteration*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identify *foreshadowing*.
6. Identify *personification*
7. Listing compound words
8. Identify/create *similes*
9. Identifying parts of speech
10. Identifying syllables

Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Complete Five W's Chart
4. Identify *cliffhangers*
5. Identify the climax of the novel.

Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Relating personal experiences

Creative and Critical Thinking

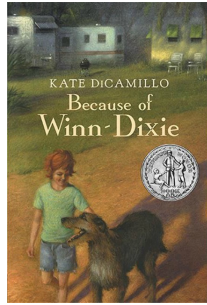
1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Conduct an interview
5. Write a description of personal feelings
6. Write a book review
7. Complete an Observation Sheet
8. Complete a KWS Chart

Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Create an Information Card
4. Design a cover for the novel
5. Create a comic strip

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Synopsis

When ten-year-old India Opal Buloni moves to Naomi, Florida, with her father, she doesn't know what to expect – least of all that she'll adopt Winn-Dixie, a dog she names after the supermarket where they meet. With such an unusually friendly dog at her side, Opal soon finds herself making more than a few unusual friends. And soon, Opal and her father realize – with a little help from Winn-Dixie, of course – that while they've both tasted a bit of melancholy in their lives, they still have a whole lot to be thankful for. (Publisher – Candlewick Press)

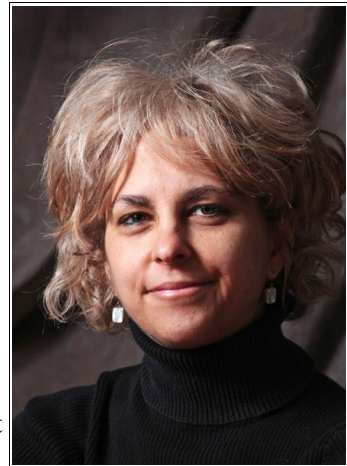
A complete synopsis and other helpful reviews can be found on the following website:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Because_of_winn_dixie

Author Biography

Kate DiCamillo

Katrina Elizabeth "Kate" DiCamillo (born March 25, 1964) Born in Philadelphia, DiCamillo suffered from chronic pneumonia. At age five, she moved to Clermont, Florida for her health (warmer climate) with her mother and her older brother Curt DiCamillo, who would become a noted architectural historian. Her mother was a teacher. Her father remained in Pennsylvania to sell his orthodontic practice and never rejoined the family in Florida.

DiCamillo earned her college degree in English at the University of Florida in 1987 and worked in Florida after graduation. At age 30 she moved to Minneapolis and began working at a book warehouse. That job inspired her to write for children and allowed her to meet a sales representative for Candlewick Press, resulting in submission of a draft that would become *Because of Winn-Dixie*.

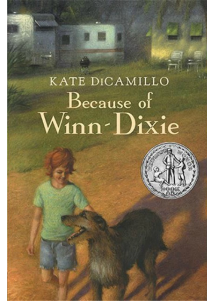


Her 2003 novel *The Tale of Despereaux* was inspired by a friend's son, Luke Bailey, who asked her to write about an unlikely hero with "exceptionally large ears".

(Courtesy of Wikipedia) - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kate_DiCamillo

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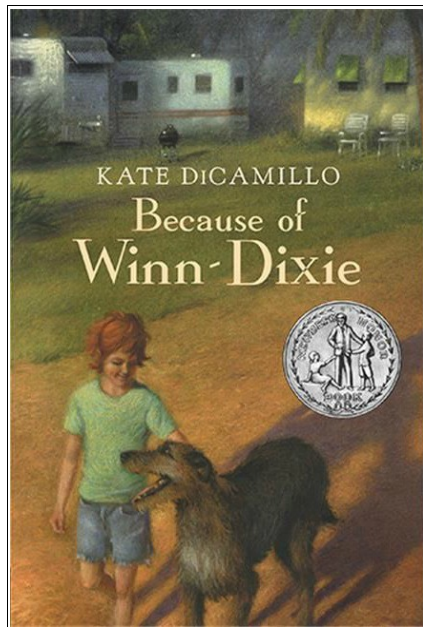


Student Checklist

Student Name: _____

Assignment	Grade/Level	Comments

Because of Winn-Dixie

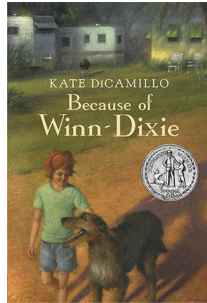


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Name: _____

Because of Winn-Dixie

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Chapters 1-4



Before you read the chapter:

Write a brief summary about what you believe *Because of Winn-Dixie* will be about.



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

reminded	concerned	preacher	talking
manners	scratched	running	burned

1. And then the dog came _____ around the corner. He was a big dog. And Ugly.
2. The dog leaned over him, real _____, and licked his face. "Please," said the manager. "Somebody call the pound."
3. "Sit," I told him when we got to my trailer. He sat right down. He had good _____. "Stay here," I told him. "I'll be right back."
4. Sometimes he _____ me of a turtle hiding inside its shell, in there thinking about things and not ever sticking his head out into the world.
5. He put down his pencil and _____ Winn-Dixie behind his ears.

6. I've got the _____, of course. But I don't have a mama. I mean I have one, but I don't know where she is. She left when I was three years old.
7. I've been _____ to him and he agreed with me that, since I'm ten years old, you should tell me ten things about my mama. Just ten things, that's all.
8. "Five," he said. "She couldn't cook. She _____ everything, including water. She had a hard time opening a can of beans.

Questions



1. Briefly describe the setting of chapter one.

2. How did Opal come up with the name Winn-Dixie?

3. Describe Winn-Dixie's appearance when he first met Opal.

4. Why did Opal refer to her father as 'The Preacher'?

5. What was Opal's special request to her father in regards to her mother?



Language Activity

A. Many authors enjoy using **alliteration** – a literary device where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. Here's an example of an alliteration: “. . . screaming, shrieking, shouting, screeching about something scary.”

Using your imagination, create your own examples of **alliteration** from the following topics. Each example must contain a minimum of three words.

The sound of a dog barking	
The strumming of a guitar	
The sound of a car engine	

B. A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from Chapter One is “. . . *But I don't have a mama. I mean I have one, but I don't know where she is. She left when I was three years old. I can't hardly remember her. And I bet you don't remember your mama much either. So we're almost like orphans.*”

What two things are being compared in this example?

--	--

Invent your own **similes** comparing the following items with something from your own imagination:

a) A dog shaking water from his coat.

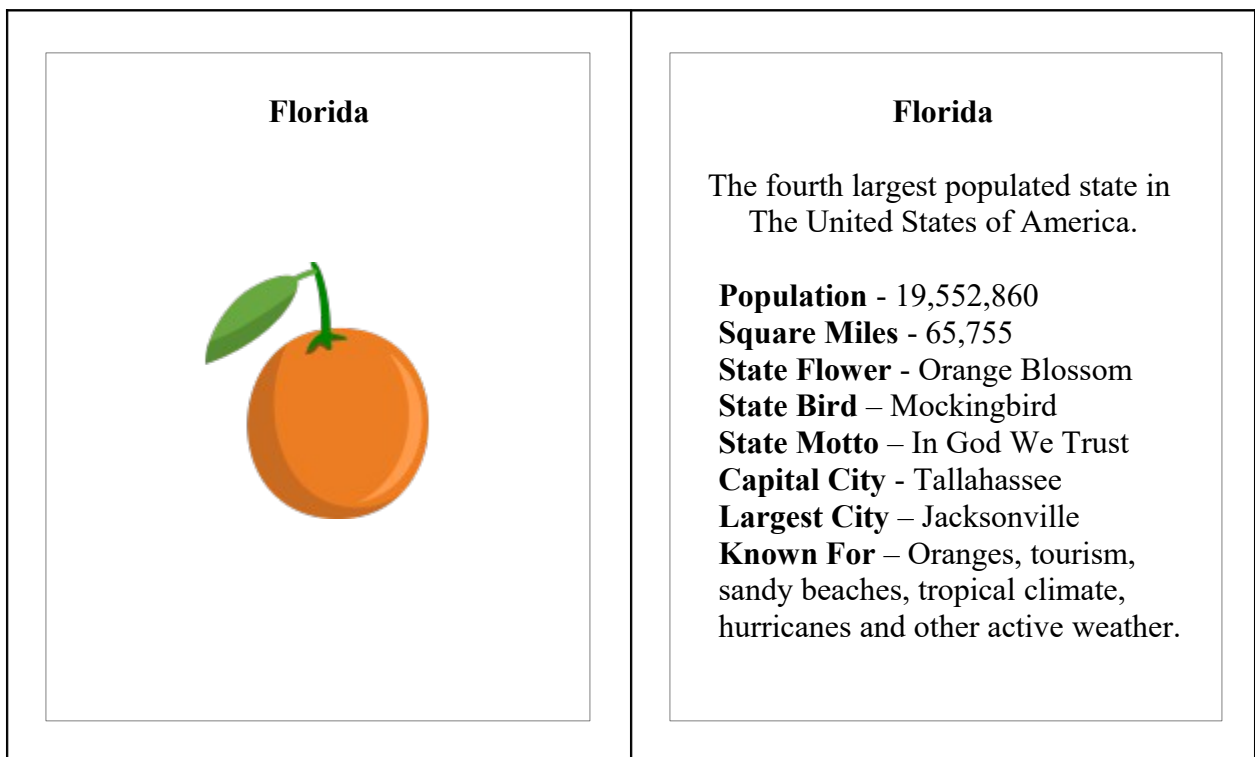
b) Something from your own imagination.

C. Florida, Known For More Than Just Oranges!

With a population of nearly 20,000,000 people and an agricultural industry that brings in billions of dollars every year, Florida is one of the most beautiful and colorful places to live in the United States of America!

Your task is to make it possible for your classroom colleagues to become more familiar with another state, province or territory from a country of your own choosing. The goal is to create a card that closely resembles a sports card (i.e. baseball, football, hockey...) The front of the card will feature an appropriate picture (or drawing) and the back should have at least five fascinating facts about the state or province you have researched.

You may complete this assignment as individuals, or in small groups.



Front of Card

Back of Card