

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
How to Use This Book	4
A Custom Resource – Keeping Novel Logs – Complete Lesson Plan	
Novel Information	7
Book Summary – About the Author – Make It a Text Set!	
Pre-Reading Activities	8
Judging a Book – Summer in Your Town	
Interactive Novel Logs	10
The Summaries of Its Parts – Major Minors – Because of the Title – Checking In on Theme – Choice Words – Crystal Ball	
Sections from <i>Because of Winn-Dixie</i>	
<i>Section I: Chapters 1–4</i>	16
Teacher Instructions – <i>Individual: “The Storyboard of How They Met”</i> – <i>Collaborative: “Finding a Friend”</i> – <i>Individual: “A Turtle in Its Shell”</i> – <i>Individual: “Different and Alike”</i> – <i>Individual: “Section I Log-In”</i>	
<i>Section II: Chapters 5–7</i>	22
Teacher Instructions – <i>Individual: “Setting the Tone”</i> – <i>Individual: “Infer the Information”</i> – <i>Collaborative: “What’s the Big Idea?”</i> – <i>Individual: “Section II Log-In”</i>	
<i>Section III: Chapters 8–11</i>	27
Teacher Instructions – <i>Collaborative: “So to Speak”</i> – <i>Individual: “How You Know”</i> – <i>Individual: “What the Storm Brings”</i> – <i>Individual: “Section III Log-In”</i>	
<i>Section IV: Chapters 12–15</i>	32
Teacher Instructions – <i>Collaborative: “Acting Her Age?”</i> – <i>Individual: “Character Close-Ups”</i> – <i>Individual: “The Big Old Tree”</i> – <i>Individual: “Section IV Log-In”</i>	
<i>Section V: Chapters 16 to 19</i>	38
Teacher Instructions – <i>Individual: “The Story of the War”</i> – <i>Individual: “Encyclopedia Entry”</i> – <i>Individual: “A Taste of Sorrow”</i> – <i>Individual: “Section V Log-In”</i>	
<i>Section VI: Chapters 20–23</i>	43
Teacher Instructions – <i>Individual: “Characteristic Reactions”</i> – <i>Individual: “Conflicting Feelings”</i> – <i>Individual: “Was This Foreshadowed?”</i> – <i>Collaborative: “Words of Wisdom”</i> – <i>Individual: “Section VI Log-In”</i>	
<i>Section VII: Chapters 24–26</i>	50
Teacher Instructions – <i>Individual: “Two Timelines”</i> – <i>Collaborative: “Acting Out”</i> – <i>Individual: “The End of the Story”</i> – <i>Individual: “Section VII Log-In”</i>	

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONT.)

Post-Reading Activities	56
Teacher Instructions – <i>Individual</i> : “Add It Up” – <i>Individual</i> : “All About Opal” – <i>Individual</i> : “Letter to Mama” – <i>Individual</i> : “A New Point of View” – <i>Individual</i> : “Considering Genre” – <i>Collaborative</i> : “Interview a Character” – <i>Collaborative</i> : “A Novel Poster” – <i>Persuasive Essay</i> : “An Elemental Choice” (Outline, Self-Editing Checklist, Peer-Editing Checklist) – <i>Comparison Essay</i> : “A Tale of Two Summers” (Outline, Self-Editing Checklist, Peer-Editing Checklist) – <i>Individual</i> : “A Persuasive Letter” – <i>Individual</i> : “My Book Rating”	
Words to Know	74
Teacher Instructions – Novel Vocabulary	
Answer Key	76

INTRODUCTION

Read through any curricular documents, and you will find that the work expected of students is expressed using such academic terminology as *describe*, *determine*, *develop*, *support* and *cite*. Requirements such as these cannot be met via the comprehension-question worksheets and culminating quizzes that have long been the staples of literature guides designed for classroom use. The primary objective of those traditional activities was to make sure that students were keeping track of what was happening in the section of the novel that they had just read. Very little rigour and synthesis was asked of students – and usually none until the entire novel was read.

From a teacher’s standpoint, this style of classroom analysis misses multiple opportunities to delve deeply into the details that make a specific piece of literature a classic; from a student’s standpoint, this way to reflect on literature is monotonous and inflexible, and it fails to nurture the momentum experienced when one is invested in a compelling work of art. That is why the guides in the *Rigorous Reading* series aim to do much more: they aim to transform the reading of a great novel into a journey of discovery for students.

Instead of merely asking students what happened in any given section, this resource asks questions that require closer reading and deeper analysis – questions such as, “Why did the author choose to include this information?” and “How does this information further the plot or offer more insight into the themes, characters, settings, etc.?” And instead of waiting until the end of the novel to put the pieces of the puzzle in place, students will learn to add to and alter their understanding of the novel as *they are reading it*. The various activities in this resource systematically prompt students to consider and appreciate the many ingredients the author has combined to form the novel as a whole.

A CUSTOM RESOURCE

This in-depth guide has been written specifically for Kate DiCamillo's *Because of Winn-Dixie*. The lessons and activities have been structured and scaffolded to maximise the experience of reading and teaching this novel.

To prepare your students for their reading of *Because of Winn-Dixie*, utilise the **novel information** and **pre-reading activities** included on pages 7–9 of this guide. Included in this section is information about the book and its author, along with activities designed to acclimate students to the themes and/or concepts present in the book they are about to read.

This resource provides activities that help foster comprehension and reinforce knowledge of literary elements as students read *Because of Winn-Dixie*. These **section activities** allow students the opportunity to process short sections of the novel individually, laying a strong foundation for their ability to engage more deeply with the chapters to come. For each section of the novel, students will complete individual and collaborative activities that encourage close reading, referencing textual evidence and drawing their own conclusions about the text.

Additionally, this resource provides students with another avenue through which they can reflect on recurring literary elements, while also connecting personally with the novel. Each student maintains his or her own **Interactive Novel Log**, using it as a way to consider and then reconsider various aspects of the novel.

Upon completion of the entire novel, students can synthesise their ideas about the novel by completing several individual and/or collaborative **post-reading activities** (pages 56–73). This section of the resource includes such larger assignments as group projects and essay assignments.

On pages 74–75, **vocabulary** lists are provided for each section of the novel, along with suggestions for ways to teach vocabulary during reading and after completing the novel.

At the end of this guide, an **answer key** is provided for activities that require specific answers.

Key Notes

For a description of Interactive Novel Logs and how to use them in your classroom, see page 5 of this guide.

An ideal way to use this resource would be to follow the complete lesson plan given on page 6 of this guide.

The use of multiple texts can help build and extend knowledge about a theme or topic. It can also illustrate the similarities and differences in how multiple authors approach similar content or how an individual author approaches multiple novels. See the bottom of page 7 for suggestions about using *Because of Winn-Dixie* as part of a text set.

When teaching other novels in your classroom, consider using the specific ideas and also the general approach presented in this resource. Ask students to mine small sections of a novel for clues to theme and characterisation. Examine the craft, structure and purpose of selected passages. Explore inferences and encourage connections.

This guide is designed for use in years 3–6. This levelling has been determined through the consideration of various educational metrics. However, teacher discretion should be used to determine if the novel and guide are appropriate for lower or higher years, as well.

How to Use This Book

KEEPING NOVEL LOGS

Great works of literature are complex texts, and complex texts are multi-layered. They enrich and reveal as they go along. Successful readers are those who “go along” with the novel, too. Interactive Novel Logs give students a place and a space to record their thoughts and observations as they journey through the book. After each section of the novel is read, students use their Interactive Novel Logs to track the introduction and development of such literary elements as plot, setting, theme, characterisation, craft and structure, while also choosing their own ways to connect the novel to their own life experiences.

Materials needed for each student:

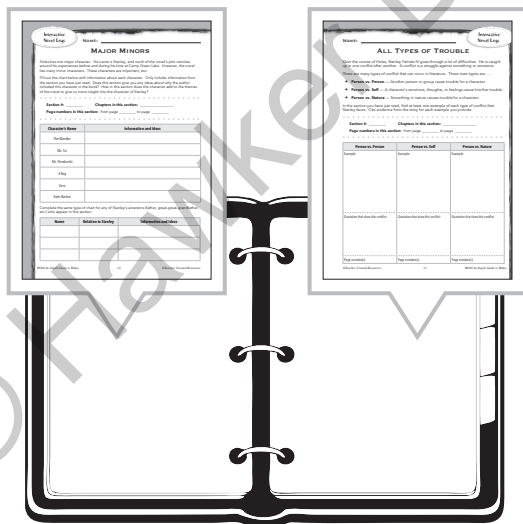
- ✦ a three-ring binder or presentation folder
- ✦ a blank sheet of plain paper with holes punched for title page
- ✦ two or three sheets of blank lined paper for Table of Contents
- ✦ several extra sheets of paper (both lined and plain) for student’s responses to the “Ideas for Your Interactive Log” prompts at the end of each section

Key Notes

One Interactive Novel Log can be kept for multiple novels, in which case a larger three-ring binder will be needed. If it will be used only for the activities included in this guide for *Because of Winn-Dixie*, a smaller binder or presentation folder will be adequate.

Assembling the Interactive Novel Log:

1. On the plain paper, allow students to design and decorate their own title page. Have them write “Interactive Novel Log” and “*Because of Winn-Dixie*” in the middle of the page. They should include their name and class at the bottom.
2. Add blank lined paper for the Table of Contents. Have students write “Table of Contents” at the top. They will add to this list as they create new pages.



3. Before reading each section of the novel, photocopy and distribute new copies of the Interactive Novel Log worksheets (pages 10–15). Directions for completing these activities can be found in the “Teacher Instructions” that begin Section I.
4. For the final activity in each section, photocopy and distribute the “Section Log-In” page for the section. Follow the directions given. Students select one or more of the four topics in the “Ideas for Your Interactive Log” section and create an Interactive Novel Log page that responds to that topic.

5. After the class has completed the entire novel and the post-reading activities, you may have students include the “My Book Rating” worksheet (page 73) as a final entry in their Interactive Novel Logs.

NOVEL INFORMATION

Book Summary

Because of Winn-Dixie is a Newbery Honour Award novel that tells the story of 10-year-old Opal, a girl with a lot of personality but not a lot of friends. She lost her mother at a young age, and she has just lost everything else familiar because her father moved her to the town of Naomi, Florida, so he could become the preacher for a local church.

Just when Opal feels like she will never make a single friend, Winn-Dixie comes into her life. A dog who smiles frequently and makes friends easily, Winn-Dixie is just what Opal needs. Because of her new pet, Opal meets and befriends a diverse group of people who are as interesting and as in need of something new as she is. Through this new-found community, Opal learns to accept the past and embrace the future.



About the Author

Born on 25 March 1964, Kate DiCamillo was ill for much of her childhood. As a result, she moved along with her mother and brother to the warmer weather of Florida when she was five. Her father did not come along with the family.

In her early 30s, DiCamillo began writing children's literature. Her first novel, *Because of Winn-Dixie*, was published in 2000. It was an immediate success, and it earned her a Newbery Honour Award. Two of her later novels – *The Tale of Despereaux* (2003) and *Flora and Ulysses* (2013) – were each awarded Newbery Medals. All three novels feature important animal characters.

Make It a Text Set!

The following novels can form ideal text sets with *Because of Winn-Dixie*. (**Note:** Vet books in advance to ensure they are appropriate for your students.)

Other Novels by Kate DiCamillo	Books by Other Authors
<i>The Tiger Rising</i> (2001)	<i>Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing</i> by Judy Blume
<i>The Tale of Despereaux</i> (2003)	<i>The One and Only Ivan</i> by Katherine Applegate
<i>Flora & Ulysses: The Illuminated Adventures</i> (2013)	<i>A Dog's Life</i> by Ann Martin