

# Character Development Lesson Plans for 6 Book Club Meetings

The following preview shows all of the Book Club Meetings for *Because of Winn-Dixie* by Kate DiCamillo

## 4 Part Lesson Plans

Discussion Questions by Chapter

Key Vocabulary by Chapter

Guided Reading Level

Specific Instructional Focus

Step by Step Guided Mini Lesson

**Book Club**

**Because of Winn-Dixie**  
By: Kate DiCamillo  
Grade Level: 4 / Guided Reading Level: R

**Meeting #2**  
**A Note About the Discussion Questions and Vocabulary**  
The discussion questions and new vocabulary words listed below are intended to guide the conversation. The questions are open-ended and do not have one right answer.

You might choose to introduce the new vocabulary words prior to assigning the reading. Or you might review them as a group after reading the selection. In either instance, remember to model problem solving strategies (context clues, picture clues). Depending on your students' needs, you may find that you need to discuss the meaning of other words within each of the chapters. The words listed below are only intended to be used as guide.

**Chapter 2 Discussion Questions:**

1. What do you learn about Opal from listening to her talk about Winn-Dixie on the way home? (answer: We learn how Opal got her name, about her father the preacher, moving to Naomi, FL - pg. 14)
2. How does Opal describe the preacher? What type of animal does she compare him to and why? (answer: The preacher is a good man but distracted, he is like a turtle who hides in his shell - pg. 16)

**Chapter 2 New Vocabulary:**

1. Missionary (pg. 13) - a person who is sent to a foreign country to do religious work
2. Exception (pg. 15) - someone or something that is different from the others
3. Twisted (pg. 18) - twisted together in an untidy way

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**Meeting #2 Continued**

- Explain that authors use indirect characterization more often than direct characterization.
- Explore indirect characterization by directing the students to page 50.
- Read the following aloud:  
"We could be friends," I said to Miss Franny. "I mean you and me and Winn-Dixie, we could all be friends."
- Explain that this part of the book indirectly **shows** us that Opal is lonely and is seeking friends. It also indirectly shows us that Opal is outgoing, because she is willing to ask someone to be her friend.
- Next, direct students to page 57.
- Read the following aloud:  
"She took her finger out of her mouth and looked at me. Her eyes were all big and round... She had her hair tied up in a ponytail with a pink ribbon."
- Explain that this part of the book directly **tells** us how Sweetie Pie Thomas looks. She has big round eyes and a ponytail with a pink ribbon.
- Tell students that there are many ways we can get to know characters. We just have to pay attention to the following:
  - what characters say / think / look like / do
  - what a character's effect is on others
- Discuss some of the things students learned about Opal in chapters 2-6.
- Determine if the information we learn about Opal is shared through direct or indirect characterization
- Add more details to Opal's character map.
- Pass out the **Characters Maps**.
- Explain that the next set of chapters will introduce them to a large cast of characters.
- Tell students that you would like them to select one of the characters and begin to create a character map for the new character.

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**Using Dialogue to Infer Character Traits**

**Meeting #3 Continued**

- Next, ask students to make an inference about Opal based on her conversation with Gloria Dump.
- Add the inferred character trait and dialogue evidence to the Character Map anchor chart.
- Ask students to read the rest of pages 65 and 66. Tell them to choose a piece of dialogue from the text that can be used to infer a personality trait.
- Invite students to share the piece of dialogue they chose. Focus on tone of voice, emotion and character interactions to infer character traits.
- If applicable, allow students to add information they've

**Take time to Reflect (2 minutes)**

- Distribute the student self-evaluation assessments.
- Ask students to reflect on the work they did in Book Club by completing the self-evaluation form.
- Collect the evaluation forms (the forms will be sent home on the last day of Book Club along with any notes from the teacher).

**Wrap Up the Book Club Meeting**

- Assign students to independently read **Chapters 12 - 16**.
- Determine as a group when the book club should meet again. Monitor students as they record the assignment on their book club calendar.
- Determine as a group when the book club should meet again. Monitor students as they record the assignment on their book club calendar.
- Remind students that they are responsible for the following:
  1. To track character development by noting dialogue with their Character Maps.
  2. Responding to chapters 12-16 using the Reading Response Board.

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## Character Map

## Reflection and Self-Evaluation

## Scheduling and Reader Responsibility

**Introduce Character Development**

**Meeting #1**  
**Introduce the Book and Set Expectations**

**Using Dialogue to Infer Character Traits**

**Meeting #2 Continued**

**Exploring Indirect and Direct Characterization**

**Meeting #3**  
**A Note About the Discussion Questions and Vocabulary**

**Understanding Character Relationships**

**Meeting #4**  
**A Note About the Discussion Questions and Vocabulary**

**Connecting with Characters**

**Meeting #5**  
**A Note About the Discussion Questions and Vocabulary**

## 6 Character Development Lesson Plans