



# Lesson Plan Aid for Book Punch™ - Because of Winn-Dixie

Grade level 4  
Lexile Framework for Reading Measure 610L

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## Introduction to Book Punch™

Book Punch guides students through the steps of thinking and writing about well-known upper-elementary core literature. Students write paragraphs responding to interactive writing prompts. The program tutors students to develop ideas and organize their thinking about what they have read.

Each program in the Merit Book Punch collection focuses on one book title. Each contains 7 writing prompts, 600 supporting questions and 600 helpful tips to guide students through each step in the writing process. The program for each book title comprises three online interactive units as follows:

- Unit 1- Reading Check: Students write about important facts and/or events from the book to ensure that they have read it.
- Unit 2- Text-to-Self: Based on themes from the book, students write about their own experiences.
- Unit 3- Evidence and Inference: Students connect details with ideas in the book to infer a deeper meaning from what they have read.

Together, these units develop students' reading comprehension in complementary ways.

## Printables

Each Book Punch title includes 11 printable worksheets, a lesson plan aid, and the Book Punch™ Series Manual with detailed instructions for implementation. To view and print included documents, self-learners and teachers click the course name in My Learning Center; tutors and parents click the Programs link in My Learning Center and then click the Book Punch title.

## Reading Check – unit 1

The Reading Check unit evaluates students' paragraphs using a key point check to determine if the student has read the book. See the Reading Check writing prompt below and the list of questions that accompany it, the answers to which should be included in a satisfactory paragraph.

### Reading Check Topic

In the story, Opal makes some unusual friends when she and her father move to a new town. Write a paragraph about some of Opal's new friends. Be specific and include examples from the text in your paragraph.

1. Opal's first new friend is a dog she adopts. Where does she find him and what is he doing there?
2. Whom does Opal meet at the library? What does she look like, and what job does she have?
3. Opal makes a friend of the man behind the counter at the pet shop. What does he do to make the animals happy?
4. Opal befriends a woman who has a yard like a jungle. At the end of the story, what event do they plan to bring the new friends together? Where will the event take place?

## **Text-to-Self – unit 2**

Text-to-Self writing prompts help to enrich students' reading experience. Students write paragraphs that help them relate their own experiences to what they have read in the book. See the topics listed below.

### **Text-to-Self Topic 1**

In the story, Opal says that everything that happened to her that summer was because of Winn-Dixie, the dog she found at the supermarket. Think about a person or pet that had an effect on your life. Write about a person or pet that influenced your life in some way.

*(This topic is recommended for students who have read through Chapter 1.)*

### **Text-to-Self Topic 2**

In the story, the preacher, Opal's father, tells her ten things about her mother. Think about someone who is important to you. Think about the most important things you know about that person. Write about the things you would tell someone about this person.

*(This topic is recommended for students who have read through Chapter 4.)*

### **Text-to-Self Topic 3**

In the story, Opal comes to accept the fact that her mother is not going to return. She is able to let go and go on with her life. Think about a situation in which you had to learn to accept something you weren't happy about. Write about a time when you had to accept something and move on.

*(This topic is recommended for students who have read the entire book.)*

**Evidence and Inference – unit 3**

See the writing prompts below and the accompanying list of questions, the answers to which should be included in a satisfactory paragraph. Help students determine whether they have recognized (inferred) the ideas in the book from the details (evidence) given.

**Evidence and Inference Topic 1**

A gentle, friendly animal can be a source of strength and a good listener for a lonely child. In the story, we discover a lot about Opal and her situation as she talks to her dog Winn-Dixie. Write a paragraph describing Opal's life at the time the story takes place.

*(This topic is recommended for students who have read through Chapter 3.)*

1. How old is Opal at the time the story takes place? Why might her age be important to the story?
2. What does Opal's father do for a living and what is their relationship like?
3. Why does Opal have neither mother nor friends?
4. What does Opal imagine Winn-Dixie wants her to do?

**Evidence and Inference Topic 2**

A decision based on necessity can lead to a more complicated situation than planned. In the story, Opal gets a job at a pet store. Her first morning on the job is complicated. Write a paragraph describing the first morning Opal works at the pet shop.

*(This topic is recommended for students who have read through Chapter 12.)*

1. Why does Opal want a job at the pet store?
2. When Opal and Winn-Dixie arrive at the pet store early in the morning, what do they hear and see?
3. What happens when Gertrude squawks, "Dog!"?
4. Describe Otis's and Opal's actions during the events that occur after Gertrude squawks, "Dog!" and how they take care of the situation.

**Evidence and Inference Topic 3**

Often, when something terrible happens, people are so upset they tend to blame themselves. In the story, Opal can't find Winn-Dixie. Write a paragraph about what happens when Winn-Dixie can't be found.

*(This topic is recommended for students who have read through Chapter 25.)*

1. What does Opal think caused Winn-Dixie to run away?
2. Why does Opal feel responsible for Winn-Dixie's disappearance?
3. What does Opal think may have happened to Winn-Dixie?
4. How does Opal react when her father tells her they need to stop looking for Winn-Dixie?

## Curriculum Integration

See the Book Punch™ Series Manual. The Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary section and the Beyond the Program section provide detailed instructions for implementing vocabulary, character and pre-writing lessons. The Book Punch™ Series Manual includes printable worksheets for these lessons.

### Vocabulary

See the Vocabulary Exploration worksheet in the Book Punch™ Series Manual. Thematic words from Because of Winn-Dixie that can be explored include:

VOCABULARY	DEFINITION
acceptance	The act of willingly being with another
abandonment	Leaving something or someone
alcoholism	A sickness caused by drinking too much alcohol
divorce	A legal end to a marriage
friendship	The state of being with someone whom you like
loss	Something that has been taken or cannot be found
love	Great and warm affection

Vocabulary particular to the time and setting of Because of Winn-Dixie include:

VOCABULARY	DEFINITION
constellation	A group of stars that form a pattern
croak	A deep and harsh sound
holler	To shout or cry out
hymn	A song of praise
installment plan	A method for setting something up
lozenge	A small candy that contains medicine
pathological	Unreasonable, extreme
potluck	A meal where the guests all bring food to share
preacher	A person who publicly encourages something
sermon	A speech with religious purposes
stray	To move away from a group or home
theme	A reoccurring idea

The Word Search Puzzle and Crossword Puzzle worksheets that are included contain many of the words above. They can be used to reinforce the vocabulary in the book.

### Character Exploration

See the Character Exploration worksheet and the Compare and Contrast worksheet in the Book Punch™ Series Manual. Here are suggested character exploration prompts for classroom discussion:

Imagine that Opal is your friend in real life. Write words and phrases that would help you describe her to someone who doesn't know her. (What does Opal look like? What kind of personality does she have? What does she like to do?) Why did you choose this character?

Compare and contrast Opal with Amanda or another character in the book.

### *Group Work and Discussion – Pre-writing*

See the Brainstorming worksheet in the Book Punch™ Series Manual. Here is a suggested topic for classroom discussion:

In the story, Opal searches for Winn-Dixie, who disappears during a thunderstorm. As she searches, she thinks about the things she knows about Winn-Dixie and how she will look for him. Write a paragraph describing the things Opal knows about Winn-Dixie and how she will search for him.

*(This topic is recommended for students who have read through Chapter 24.)*

### *Additional Writing Prompts*

See the Independent Follow-up worksheet in the Book Punch™ Series Manual. Using the context of Because of Winn-Dixie, and the Independent Follow-up worksheet, students may continue the writing process after publishing their paragraphs from Book Punch. Here are two additional topics students can write about:

In the story, Opal goes to the Winn-Dixie grocery store to buy a few groceries and comes home with a dog. Quite a surprising turn of events! Think about a time an ordinary task or event led to a surprise ending. Write about a time an ordinary event became extraordinary.

*(This topic is recommended for students who have read through Chapter 1.)*

In the story, we discover that Otis really loves to play his guitar. He loves to be able to play for people. Think about something you really love doing. Write about the thing you love to do.

*(This topic is recommended for students who have read through Chapter 19.)*

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See the Book Punch™ Series Manual for printable worksheets.