



**4<sup>TH</sup>**  
**GRADE**  
**VOLUME 4.1**

# **Book Club Teacher's Guide**

*Shoeshine Girl*  
*Because of Winn-Dixie*  
*How to Steal a Dog*

For pairing with  
*C. I. A. Unit of Study—Realistic Fiction, Shiloh 4.1*

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***Shoeshine Girl*, by Clyde Robert Bulla – Lexile 330, 84 pages**

I love using this simple text with upper elementary students because the story is written for their age group, despite its low quantitative level. I recommend placing your students who are reading below grade level in this text. You might also place students who have little reading stamina in this text.

***Shoeshine Girl* Text Complexity**

QUALITATIVE MEASURES	QUANTITATIVE MEASURES
<p><b>Levels of Meaning</b> The text offers multiple levels of meaning and nuances of abstract concepts related to right and wrong. The author’s purpose is implicitly stated through themes that highlight a variety of perspectives on a complex issue. The different themes related to right and wrong include the growth of a character over time and her struggles with stealing, lying, manipulation, and more. These high-level themes will allow fourth-grade students to identify with the main character.</p> <p><b>Structure</b> Overall, the narrative uses a fairly simple, explicit, and conventional story structure.</p> <p><b>Language Conventionality and Clarity</b> Clyde Robert Bulla uses language that is literal and clear.</p> <p><b>Knowledge Demands</b> This text provides several complex and sophisticated themes. The characters look at issues of right and wrong from a variety of perspectives, causing the reader to challenge his or her own perspective. Background knowledge about what a shoeshine stand is and why people would use one may be helpful. Also, general background knowledge about how people define their moral codes is needed.</p>	<p>The Lexile level for <i>Shoeshine Girl</i> is 330, based on word frequency and sentence length. This is below the range of the complexity band for 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> grade according to the Common Core State Standards.</p>
	<p><b>READER TASK CONSIDERATIONS</b></p> <p>These should be determined locally with reference to motivation, knowledge, and experiences as well as to purpose and the complexity of the tasks assigned and the questions posed.</p>

***Because of Winn-Dixie*, by Kate DiCamillo – Lexile 610, 182 pages**

This is a beautifully written story that has received the Newbery Honor. I recommend placing your students who are on grade level in this text. Students will need considerable reading stamina to tackle the length of this text. Note that the pages in this book are small and the text is double-spaced.

***Because of Winn-Dixie* Text Complexity**

QUALITATIVE MEASURES	QUANTITATIVE MEASURES
<p><b>Levels of Meaning</b> The text offers multiple levels of meaning and nuances of abstract concepts related to right and wrong. The author’s purpose is implicitly stated through themes that highlight a variety of perspectives on a complex issue.</p> <p><b>Structure</b> Overall, the narrative uses a fairly simple, explicit, and conventional story structure. Challenges emerge when characters share their background stories and talk about events that occurred in the past.</p> <p><b>Language Conventionality and Clarity</b> Kate DiCamillo uses language that is fairly literal and clear.</p> <p><b>Knowledge Demands</b> This text provides several complex and sophisticated themes. The characters look at issues of right and wrong from a variety of perspectives, causing the reader to challenge his or her own perspective. General background knowledge about how people define their moral codes is needed.</p>	<p>The Lexile level for <i>Because of Winn-Dixie</i> is 610, based on word frequency and sentence length. This is in the middle range of the complexity band for 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> grade according to the Common Core State Standards.</p>
	<p><b>READER TASK CONSIDERATIONS</b></p> <p>These should be determined locally with reference to motivation, knowledge, and experiences as well as to purpose and the complexity of the tasks assigned and the questions posed.</p>

***How to Steal a Dog*, by Barbara O'Connor – Lexile 700, 170 pages**

This book is the closest pairing to *Shiloh* in terms of the topic. Therefore, you may be surprised at how many of your students are able to access this high-level text simply because of the background knowledge built during their experience reading *Shiloh*. I recommend placing students who are on or above grade level in this engaging text. Students will need a high level of stamina for this text and may need to take the book home for nightly reading to keep up with book club assignments.

***How to Steal a Dog* Text Complexity**

QUALITATIVE MEASURES	QUANTITATIVE MEASURES
<b>Levels of Meaning</b> The text offers multiple levels of meaning and nuances of abstract concepts related to right and wrong. The author's purpose is implicitly stated through themes that highlight a variety of perspectives on a complex issue.	The Lexile level for <i>How to Steal a Dog</i> is 700, based on word frequency and sentence length. This is in the high range of the complexity band for 2 <sup>nd</sup> –3 <sup>rd</sup> grade according to the Common Core State Standards.
<b>Structure</b> Overall, the narrative uses a fairly simple, explicit, and conventional story structure.	<b>READER TASK CONSIDERATIONS</b>
<b>Language Conventionality and Clarity</b> Barbara O'Connor uses language that is fairly literal and clear. Challenges emerge through use of dialect and an unconventional use of grammar in dialogue.	These should be determined locally with reference to motivation, knowledge, and experiences as well as to purpose and the complexity of the tasks assigned and the questions posed.
<b>Knowledge Demands</b> This text provides several complex and sophisticated themes. The characters look at issues of right and wrong from a variety of perspectives, causing the reader to challenge his or her own perspective. General knowledge about homelessness is essential to relate to the text. Also, general background knowledge about how people define their moral codes is needed.	

## DAYS 2–3, CHARACTER LIST

**In this lesson...**you will remind students that good readers pay attention to important characters and infer character traits. You will remind them that good readers keep track of characters as a way to monitor comprehension. Students will be asked to read and keep track of important characters. While clues about the setting may be revealed, wait to note this information until day 4.

### Learning Targets:

Read closely to monitor comprehension (RL 1)

- Infer character traits
- Visualize

Show understanding of story elements (RL 3)

- Character traits

Gather and categorize information through note taking (W 8)

### Connect:

*We have been learning...*

...that good readers use the blurb to help them predict what will happen in the book.

Today, you are all going to begin reading quadrant 1 of your book club books. When you read quadrant 1 you will be focused on collecting critical information in the text. You will each be gathering information about the characters, setting, problem, and important events in your book. These are the critical story elements that help us get a story in our heads.

### Teach:

*Today I am going to remind you...*

...that good readers use comprehension strategies to identify important characters and infer character traits. You are each going to make a character list in your book club notebook as you read your assigned pages for both today and tomorrow. Your character list will be a tool that you will use while reading this book; it will help you improve your comprehension when you are confused.

You each made a character list when we read the book *Shiloh*. Please turn to the character list for *Shiloh*. Notice how you wrote the name of each important character and information about him or her on the list.

## Guided Practice—Work Time:

Now turn to page 8 in your book club notebooks. Today as you read, you will stop each time a new character is named in the text and add this name to the character list. Then you will read to find information about this character, and add that information to the list.

You will each be reading and completing your character list independently. If you need help, first go to your assigned partner to get help. If you are still stuck, sign up for a conference, and I will come and coach you and your partner in order to quickly help you get back on track.

You will have 35 minutes to work. Then you will meet your partners in the meeting area to review your work, make additions or changes, and then participate in a whole-class share-out.

(Assign each group their pages to read and dismiss students for independent work. Conduct conferences with partnerships as necessary.)

**Students will have two days to complete the following chapters:**

*Shoeshine Girl*—Chapters 1–2

*Because of Winn-Dixie*—Chapters 1–2

*How to Steal a Dog*—Chapter 1

## Share-out:

(At the beginning of the share-out time, give students 5 minutes to compare notes and receive help from their partners. Then move into a quick, whole-class discussion.)

Discuss: Why do good readers keep track of important characters as they read? How did doing this help you or challenge you as a reader today?

## Link:

*Today and every day when you read...*

...I want you to think about what you know about important characters in order to make a character list for monitoring comprehension.



## Character List

CHARACTER	DETAILS
Sarah Ida	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 10 1/2 years old</li><li>• likes plain things</li><li>• doesn't want to be at Aunt Claudia's</li><li>• needs money</li></ul>
Aunt Claudia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• doesn't have a car</li><li>• lives in an old house</li></ul>
Sarah's father	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• travels for work</li><li>• worries about Sarah</li></ul>
Sarah's mother	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• is not well (sick?)</li><li>• worries about Sarah</li></ul>
Rossi Wigginhorn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 10 years old</li><li>• Aunt Claudia's neighbor</li><li>• likes to read</li></ul>

## Character List

CHARACTER	DETAILS
India Opal Buloni	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• goes by Opal</li><li>• loves Winn-Dixie</li><li>• a good, quiet kid</li></ul>
The preacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Opal's dad</li><li>• spends his time preaching and thinking</li></ul>
Winn-Dixie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• stray dog</li><li>• big &amp; ugly</li><li>• skinny &amp; patchy</li></ul>

# Character List

CHARACTER	DETAILS
Luanne Godfrey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Georgina's best friend</li><li>• Nosy</li></ul>
Daddy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• left the family with very little money</li></ul>
Toby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Georgina's younger brother</li></ul>
Georgina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• wants things to be like they were before</li><li>• feels sorry for herself</li></ul>
Mama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• works two jobs</li><li>• tired</li><li>• sad</li></ul>

## DAYS 9–10, QUADRANT 1 BOOK CLUB MEETINGS

### Book Club Meeting 1

**In this book club meeting...**students will be responding to questions about the characters, setting, problems, and main events revealed in quadrant 1 of their book club books. Students will use the charts in their book club notebooks to aid their discussion. Students will also share their predictions about what they think will happen next in the story. Throughout the discussion, students should each share and respond to thinking.

#### Learning Targets:

Summarize the text (RL 2)

Show understanding of story elements (RL 3)

- Character
- Setting
- Plot

Prepare for collaboration with others (SL 1)

Express ideas and respond to others' ideas clearly and persuasively (SL 1)

Apply and use key vocabulary (L 6)

#### Connect:

*We have been learning...*

...that good readers read slowly at the beginning of a book in order to make sure they understand all the story elements, including character, setting, and plot. At the end of quadrant 1 they stop and write a retell summary as a way of monitoring their comprehension.

## **Teach:**

*Today I am going to remind you...*

...that good readers discuss their thinking about a book with others in order to synthesize their thinking and evaluate the thinking of others.

When we meet together in book clubs, the expectations will be that you each

1. Bring your book and book club notebook to the meeting, with all assignments completed;
2. Come prepared to respond to questions and to share your thinking about the book with the group;
3. Participate by both sharing with and listening to group members;
4. Respond to another student's thinking before sharing your own; and
5. Use polite language and mannerisms with everyone in the group.

When you respond to another person's thinking, please use one of our response stems:

- I agree with you because...
- I disagree with you because...

## Opening discussion questions:

(Have 2–3 students share their responses to each of these questions. Ask a student to respond to another student before sharing his or her own thinking. As you move through the series of questions, make sure each student gets a turn to talk.)



### ***Shoeshine Girl***

*Open up to the character list on page 8 of your book club notebooks.*

Discuss: Good readers empathize with characters while reading. Which character do you empathize with, and why?

*Open up to the setting clues list on page 10 of your book club notebooks.*

Discuss: Sarah Ida is a long way from home, living in a city much smaller than her own. Her parents have sent her away because they don't trust her choice of friends. How do you think Sarah Ida feels about living at Aunt Claudia's for the summer?

*Open up to the problems list on page 11 of your book club notebooks.*

Discuss: What do you think Sarah Ida will do to solve her problem?



### ***Because of Winn-Dixie***

*Open up to the character list on page 8 of your book club notebooks.*

Discuss: Good readers empathize with characters while reading. Which character do you empathize with, and why?

*Open up to the setting clues list on page 10 of your book club notebooks.*

Discuss: Opal is the only child living in an "adults only" trailer park. How might this contribute to her loneliness?

*Open up to the problems list on page 11 of your book club notebooks.*

Discuss: What do you think Opal will do to solve the problem of \_\_\_\_\_?



### ***How to Steal a Dog***

*Open up to the character list on page 8 of your book club notebooks.*

Discuss: Good readers empathize with characters while reading. Which character do you empathize with, and why?

*Open up to the setting clues list on page 10 of your book club notebooks.*

Discuss: What can you conclude about Georgina's circumstance?

*Open up to the problems list on page 11 of your book club notebooks.*

Discuss: What do you think Georgina will do to solve the problem?

**Time for questions:**

Do any of you have any questions at this point in the story that you would like the group to answer or help you with?

(Allow time for students to ask their questions, if any. Encourage group members to respond to the questions. Step in to answer questions only when group members are unable to.)

**Share-out:**

Now you are each going to have an opportunity to share the prediction you prepared on page 19 of your book club notebook. Please turn to your prediction now.

(Allow each student a chance to share his or her prediction-writing stem. Ask a student to respond to another student before sharing his or her own thinking.)



# Book Club Meeting 1

Be prepared to talk about:

- Character
- Setting
- Problem
- Main Events

Be prepared to share a prediction about what will happen in the book.

Be ready to listen and respond to the members of your group!

When the book said that Sarah Ida was going  
to get a job,

I made a prediction. I think Sarah will learn how  
hard you have to work for money  
because having a job isn't easy.





# Book Club Meeting 1

Be prepared to talk about:

- Character
- Setting
- Problem
- Main Events

Be prepared to share a prediction about what will happen in the book.

Be ready to listen and respond to the members of your group!

*When the book said* that Opal was lonely even  
though she had Winn-Dixie,

*I made a prediction. I think* Opal will try to be  
friends with the other kids at the church  
*because* she doesn't want to be lonely  
anymore.



# Book Club Meeting 1

Be prepared to talk about:

- Character
- Setting
- Problem
- Main Events

Be prepared to share a prediction about what will happen in the book.

Be ready to listen and respond to the members of your group!

When the book said "I couldn't believe everything  
turned out so good,"

I made a prediction. I think Something bad will  
happen and they won't be able to move  
into the house  
because \_\_\_\_\_

it seems too good to be true

## Vocabulary Words Learned While Reading *Shiloh*

Sacrifice	Compassion	Disappointment
Mistreated	Responsible	Promise
Belonging	Loyal	Shame
Pride	Tense	Honest
Dishonest	Nerve	Blame
Accountable	Determined	Secret vs. Lie

## Vocabulary Words Learned While Reading *Shiloh*

Sacrifice	Compassion	Disappointment
Mistreated	Responsible	Promise
Belonging	Loyal	Shame
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Accountable	Determined	Secret vs. Lie