Unit 4/Week 1

Title: Because of Winn Dixie

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.4.1, RL.4.3, RL 4.4; RF.4.3, RF.4.4; W.4.2, W.4.4, W.4.9; SL.4.1, SL.4.2; L.4.1, L.4.2, L.4.3, L.4.4, L.4.5

Teacher Instructions

*Refer to the Introduction for further details.*

**Before Teaching**

1. Read the Big Ideas and Key Understandings and the Synopsis. Please do **not** read this to the students. This is a description for teachers, about the big ideas and key understanding that students should take away **after** completing this task.

Big Ideas and Key Understandings

Two people of very different ages may still have much in common and become friends.

Synopsis

Opal has just moved to a new town in a new state and has no friends yet. Through a series of comic mishaps inadvertently started by her very special dog, Winn-Dixie, opal meets Miss Franny, the town librarian. Opal realizes they have much in common and a friendship is ignited.

1. Read entire main selection text, keeping in mind the Big Ideas and Key Understandings.
2. Re-read the main selection text while noting the stopping points for the Text Dependent Questions and teaching Vocabulary.

**During Teaching**

1. Students read the entire main selection text independently.
2. Teacher reads the main selection text aloud with students following along. (Depending on how complex the text is and the amount of support needed by students, the teacher may choose to reverse the order of steps 1 and 2.)
3. Students and teacher re-read the text while stopping to respond to and discuss the questions and returning to the text. A variety of methods can be used to structure the reading and discussion (i.e.: whole class discussion, think-pair-share, independent written response, group work, etc.)

Text Dependent Questions

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| **Text Dependent Questions** | **Answers** |
| Why was Miss Franny so scared by Winn-Dixie? Why was she “acting all embarrassed?”  | Miss Franny thought Winn-Dixie was a bear. When she realized he was a dog, she was embarrassed because she thought Opal would think she was a “silly old lady, mistaking a dog for a bear.” |
| How did the Herman W. Block Memorial Library come to get its name?  | The library was a gift to Miss Franny from her wealthy father. When she was a little girl, “a very rich man” told her she could have “anything she [wanted]” for her birthday. So, Miss Franny asked for a library. She wanted a “little house full of nothing but books.” Herman W. Block was Miss Franny’s father.  |
| Opal says, “She looked sad and old and wrinkled.” What happened to cause Miss Franny to look this way?  | Students should realize that Miss Franny was thinking about friends and people who are no longer alive, and that she does not have any friends now: “All my friends, everyone I knew when I was young, they are all dead and gone.”  |
| What were Opal’s feelings when she realized how Miss Franny felt?  | Students should realize that Opal felt she and Miss Franny were both lonely: “It was the same way I felt . . . friendless . . .” |
| Earlier in the story, Opal says that Winn-Dixie “has a large heart, too.” What does Winn-Dixie do to show that he has a “large heart”?  | Students should see that Winn-Dixie was responding to Opal and Miss Franny feeling sad when he looked between them and showed Miss Franny his teeth: “Winn-Dixie raised his head off his paws and looked back and forth between me and Miss Franny. He sat up then and showed Miss Franny his teeth. ‘Well now, look at that,’ she said. ‘That dog is smiling at me.’” |
| Opal and Miss Franny have three very important things in common— what are these?  | 1. As noted above, both characters are lonely.
2. In the very first sentence of the passage, Opal says, “I spent a lot of time that summer at the Herman W. Block Memorial Library.” Therefore, it is a reasonable inference that Opal likes books. Similarly, Miss Franny said, “When I was a little girl I loved to read.” And when told that she could have anything she wanted for her birthday, she replied, “. . . I would most certainly love to have a library.”
3. Opal, of course, likes Winn-Dixie, and there is evidence that Miss Franny does as well: “’Well now look at that . . . ‘That dog is smiling at me.’” Also, “. . . she smiled back at Winn-Dixie.”
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Vocabulary

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|  | **KEY WORDS ESSENTIAL TO UNDERSTANDING**Words addressed with a question or task | **WORDS WORTH KNOWING** General teaching suggestions are provided in the Introduction  |
| **TEACHER PROVIDES DEFINITION** not enough contextual clues provided in the text | TremblingLarge HeartSighFancy | “appear prideful” |
| **STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING**sufficient context clues are provided in the text | EmbarrassedTalent, fine | HindExperienceProperlyConsisted, certainlyPeculiar, IntendsGrandCertain |

Culminating Task

* Re-Read, Think, Discuss, Write

*The title of this selection is “Because of Winn-Dixie”. Using your answers from the questions above and class discussion, explain why this is an appropriate title for the selection. Be sure to clearly cite evidence from the text for each part of your answer.*

Answer: A proficient answer should have at least two parts:

* Students should explain—using evidence from the text—how Winn-Dixie looking into the library was the cause of Miss Franny falling, which in turn led to the story about the bear and Opal’s realization that she and Miss Franny were both lonely.
* They should then relate how Winn-Dixie’s response to Miss Franny (“That dog is smiling at me”) endeared her to Winn-Dixie and led Opal to suggest that they could be friends.

In general, the answer should show a clear understanding of how this progression of events led to the three characters becoming friends. An answer pulling on more from the text would include that Winn-Dixie’s “talent” and “huge heart” were traits that made all this possible.

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**“Because of Winn-Dixie”**

1. Why was Miss Franny so scared by Winn-Dixie? Why was she “acting all embarrassed?”
2. How did the Herman W. Block Memorial Library come to get its name?
3. Opal says, “She looked sad and old and wrinkled.” What happened to cause Miss Franny to look this way?
4. What were Opal’s feelings when she realized how Miss Franny felt?
5. Earlier in the story, Opal says that Winn-Dixie “has a large heart, too.” What does Winn-Dixie do to show that he has a “large heart”?
6. Opal and Miss Franny have three very important things in common—what are these?