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**Sincerely,
Karen Haag**

Be the First Kid On The Block To Notice!

Students play two roles in literature circles. One - they bring questions about words and plot to the group to **get help** with understanding the text. But, two - they bring observations they noticed to **give help** to others so everyone understands the reading better. It's important to clarify the two roles for students.

Students identify unfamiliar words easily and bring them to the group for help. Words. Words. Words. They could ask forever! It's harder (but doable) to teach them to bring questions to their groups. Mostly, they bring plot questions at first; "I just don't get it." The group spends time clarifying the plot and that's good! We've spent the last couple months teaching them how to ask questions and get help from each other, not just the teacher, to find answers.

However, I also want them to go beyond the surface layer of the book and ask the deeper questions about theme, main idea, and author's purpose. But how do students bring questions about literary devices if they don't know how authors use these tools?

That's when I discovered some students do understand author's craft and can teach the others. Plus, I realized I needed a minilesson series on literary elements. So, now I say, "Remember you have 2 roles to play as you read and prepare for book club time today." The first is to find out what you don't understand, the "**wonderer**." Don't be shy about asking about words you can't figure out. Feel free to ask plot questions, too.

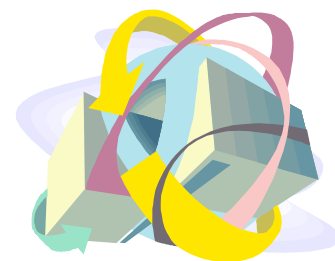
But the other role is as an observer – the "**noticer**." If you see a clue the author has planted that you think explains the theme of the book, the author's purpose, or any other literary element, bring that to the attention of others. You may come across a clue today that everyone else misses.

Your discussion will be so much richer if you write those clues in your daybook to bring to your discussion group. For example, "*Hey! Did you notice that on page 33, it says Gooney Bird Greene told everyone that they had stories in them? I think the author is trying to tell us that we have stories in us, too and we should write them down. Is that a theme? What do you think?*"

Or maybe readers catch a foreshadowing clue. "*In the fifth chapter of Esperanza Rising, I noticed that the mother had a slight cough. Do you think the author is foreshadowing that the mother is going to get really sick? What would that mean for Esperanza?*"

I found teaching students the 7 types of questions to write about in notice-wonder charts and talk about in reading group to be very helpful to the students!

Now, I have written a series on how to recognize literary devices: Be the First Kid on Your Block to Notice a Literary Element and Point It Out to Your Friends! I offer one lesson per element *and that probably will not be enough*. Find passages in the books your students are reading to analyze as well!



Notice! Lesson 1 - Metaphor

1. Make an overhead of the Winn Dixie passage (page 10). **COVER UP the DEJ part.** Ask students to follow the directions. Elicit the idea that the author compared father to a turtle. When an author compares one thing to another without the word *like* or *as*, he/she is using a metaphor. It's very helpful if the reader will stop and think about the characteristics of each component of the comparison. It's not so useful if the reader just misses it and keeps reading! (You might also point out that a simile is the same technique and is a specific type of metaphor. The author makes the comparison more obvious by using like or as.)
2. The author says that preacher pulls his old stupid turtle head back into his stupid turtle shell. She is comparing the father to a turtle using a technique called metaphor. The dictionary says a metaphor *is the application of a word or phrase to somebody or something that is not meant literally but to make a comparison.* The reader should think about all the characteristics of a turtle to understand how the author would like the father to be viewed.

Stop and think...

turtle	father
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hides inside his shell • retreats in safety of being by himself • doesn't hang around with other turtles 	loner? afraid?

NOTE: Passages are written as overheads – pages 10-21.

A reader might write the following entry in his double-entry journal...

notice	Wonder
The author compared the father to a turtle on page 29 saying that preacher wants to pull his head back inside.	Is the author saying that the father is a loner, or is he afraid?

3. Ask the students to begin a list of literary elements in their daybooks. The first one should be **metaphor**. Ask them to copy the sample double-entry journal as an example for metaphor. Adding a picture or definition to help them remember the meaning of the word is grounded in brain research as well and will help with long-term memory!
4. Point out that metaphors don't work if the author chooses to compare someone to something for which the reader has no understanding. For example, how effective would the metaphor be if the author said the father looked like he was going to retreat like a sloth? Most children (this is a children's book) would have more difficulty understanding sloth than turtle. It's important to consider the audience when writing and choosing metaphors!
5. Encourage the children to look for metaphors in their reading. If they find one they should stop and think how the author is helping them understand the person or thing described. Furthermore, if they notice a metaphor, bring it to the group for discussion. Analyze whether the metaphor works or not. Most likely the author will continue to use the metaphor throughout the story.

Notice! Lesson 2 - Simile

1. Make an overhead of the Winn Dixie passage (page 11). **COVER UP the DEJ part.** Ask students to follow the directions. Elicit the idea that the author compared the way the animals were behaving to the way the stone "behaves." When an author compares one thing to another using the word like or as, he/she is using a simile. It's very helpful if the reader will stop and think about the characteristics of each component of the comparison. It's not so useful if the reader just misses it and keeps reading! (You might also point out that a simile is a specific type of metaphor.)
2. The author says that preacher pulls *his old stupid turtle head back into his stupid turtle shell*. She is comparing the father to a turtle using a technique called simile. The dictionary says a simile *is a figure of speech that draws a comparison between two different things using like or as in white as a sheet*. The reader should think about the characteristics of stone to get a picture of how still the animals were sitting.

Stop and think...

animals like they had turned to stone	wooden, still, straight
---------------------------------------	-------------------------

3. **A reader might write the following entry in his double-entry journal:**

notice	wonder
they were all just sitting there on the floor like they had turned to stone, (page 80)	I wonder if the author means they were totally taken with the music. Everything was blocked out for them.

4. Ask the students to add **simile** to their list of literary elements in their

daybooks. Ask them to copy the sample double-entry journal as an example for metaphor. **Adding a picture or definition** to help them remember the meaning of the word is grounded in brain research as well and will help with long-term memory!

5. **Encourage the children to look for similes in their reading.** If they find one, they should stop and think how the author is helping them understand the person or thing described. Furthermore, if they notice a simile, bring it to the group for discussion.

Notice! Lesson 3 –Foreshadowing

1. Make an overhead of the Winn Dixie passage (page 12). **COVER UP the DEJ part.** Ask students to follow the directions. Elicit the idea that the author has given the reader a clue as to what will happen in the story. She takes great pains to make sure you see the clue: *and this is what amazed me most: The preacher laughed back.* A thoughtful reader may predict that Winn Dixie will be just the thing to bring father out of his shell. Father doesn't laugh at much and yet within a couple of days of living in the house, the dog gets preacher to laugh!
2. The author is using a skill called, "foreshadowing." The dictionary definition is: *to indicate or suggest something, usually something unpleasant, that is going to happen.* By reading the clue, the reader can predict what is about to happen in the story.
3. When reading a book or seeing a movie for the second time, the participant sees all the clues the author put there. The reader often misses them the first time through. Not at Irvin! Our readers notice and bring foreshadowing clues to the attention of their bookmates!

Stop and think...

preacher laughed!	up to this point in the story
Winn Dixie made preacher laugh	hasn't laughed yet serious all the time ignores Opal doesn't seem to enjoy life or those around him

A reader might write the following entry in his double-entry journal:

notice	wonder
Father is sad. The author writes on page 71 that Winn Dixie made preacher laugh.	I'm wondering if this is a foreshadowing clue. Is the dog going to be the thing that helps father find life is fun again? Maybe even start paying attention to Opal?

4. Ask the students to add to the literary elements page in their daybooks. Write **foreshadowing**. Ask them to copy the sample double-entry journal as an example for foreshadowing. Adding a picture or definition to help them remember the meaning of the word is grounded in brain research as well and will help with long-term memory!
5. Encourage the children to **look for foreshadowing** clues in their reading. If they find one they should stop and think how the author is helping them **predict** what might happen in the story.

Option: Another author's technique you might introduce is the **semi-colon**; when two ideas are linked so closely together, an author may indicate the pairing with a semi-colon. Look for other semi-colons in their reading.

Notice! Lesson 4 – Point of View

1. Make an overhead of the Winn Dixie passage (page 13). **COVER UP the DEJ part.** Ask students to follow the directions. Elicit the idea that the author has told the reader who is telling the story. The author, Kate DiCamilla, is writing the story. Authors either choose to tell the story as a narrator or as a character in the book. In this story, a young girl, India Opal Buloni will tell the story from her point of view.
2. It is important for readers to notice which character tells the story because the story will be told differently depending on who is telling it. For example, think a minute about how the story would be different if preacher was telling this story. Or, think about a book you are reading and how the people have different points of view.
3. The dictionary defines **point of view** as *somebody's particular way of thinking about or approaching a subject, as shaped by his or her own character, experience, mindset, and history*. Further, *it is the perspective on the events of the narrator or a character in the story*. The view of the world of a 10 year-old girl would certainly be different than the point of view of a 40-year old preacher!
4. The author could decide to be the narrator, not a character in the story, just someone telling the story. When the author chooses to tell the story from a narrator's point of view, she has not identified a character's perspective.

Connection: In fourth grade, students have to tell the story from their own point of view. A personal or imaginative narrative must be told using "I."

A reader might quote the following text in his double-entry journal:

notice	wonder
<p>"My name is India Opal Buloni, and last summer my daddy, the preacher, sent me to the store for a box of macaroni-and-cheese, some white rice, and two tomatoes and I came back with a dog." (page 7)</p>	<p>I noticed that the story is going to be told from the point of view of a young girl. I wonder why she is telling the story? Why would the author choose her as such an important and probably main character?</p>

5. Ask the students to add **point of view** to the literary elements page in their daybooks. Ask them to write a definition to help them remember the meaning of the word and draw a picture-symbol to help them remember "point of view."
6. Encourage the children to gather evidence and discuss whose point of view or perspective the story is written from. Also, be on the lookout to see whether the point of view changes in the story. Sometimes authors switch characters telling the story.

Option: Another technique to talk about is first lines or leads. Look at how Kate DiCamillo pulls the reader into the story with this first sentence. What makes it interesting? Collecting leads (possibly on a lead bulletin board) helps children see possibilities for their own writing.

Notice! Lesson 5 – Characterization

1. Make an overhead of the Winn Dixie passages (page 14-16). **Cover up the DEJ part.** Ask students to follow the directions.
2. Explain that authors give clues about characters in four ways... (1) telling what the author looks like, (2) telling how the character acts, (3) telling what the character says or thinks and (4) telling what others say or think about the character. A good reader pays attention to the clues, especially about the main character.
3. It is important for readers to understand the characters and how they react to one another. The characters actions and thoughts often help us figure out the theme and author's purpose. Sometimes the author has a character speak the theme! Ex: Shrek "It doesn't matter what you look like on the outside. It's the inside that counts."
4. The dictionary defines **characterization** as *the description or nature of a character; the way the author explains the characters*
5. Show each entry on the overhead and ask the class to think of words that would describe the character. Ask them to ask questions about their thoughts.
6. Show the class how a reader might quote the clues in his double-entry journal by showing the overhead, page 15.
7. Show the students that some people collect clues about characters (overhead, p.16). Most people keep **one page for each of the 4 categories** instead of trying to work in such small columns. At the end of the book, they are able to write an essay explaining the character and citing evidence from the book to back

up their theories. When they write, each paragraph should have...

- a main idea	In the beginning of the book, the preacher in Winn Dixie tries to work so that he doesn't have to think about how sad he is.
- evidence	He always works hard and rubs his nose when he's working. (p 15) He doesn't even want to have a dog and tells Opal, "No dogs." (p. 17) Opal complains that it's even hard for her to think of him as her daddy because he's always preaching or preparing to preach.
- explain	When preacher keeps working and working like this, he doesn't have a minute to even think about his wife leaving him.

7. Encourage the children to gather evidence and discuss how they would characterize the people in the story. Being familiar with the word **characterize** will help them on their EOGs as well!

Notice! Lesson 6 – Context Clues

1. Make an overhead of the Winn Dixie passage (page 17). Ask students to follow the directions.
2. Explain that authors give clues about words sometimes by defining the words in the reading. Sometimes when a reader cannot understand the word it will become clear if she keeps reading. This is called giving the reader **context clues**.

3. It is important for readers to understand how to use context clues because it's a pain to look up words we don't know. If we find a word we absolutely don't understand and it is important to the story, we have to look it up. But sometimes, the author takes pity on us and explains the word in the context. (Plus, getting good at figuring out context clues will help readers on the EOG.)
4. The dictionary defines **context clues** as *the words, phrases or passages that come before and after a particular word or passages and help to explain its full meaning.* (It's not a literary element really, but it is a technique authors use.)
5. In this case the difficult word is *pathological fear*. The author helps us understand it by writing, *"it's a fear that goes way beyond normal fears. It's a fear you can't be talked out of or reasoned out of."*

6. In our DEJs, we might write...

Notice	Wonder
I noticed on page 74 that the author says Winn Dixie has a pathological fear of thunderstorms... "it's a fear that goes way beyond normal fears.	The author told me the definition in the context as I read on. I wonder why he took the time to be very clear on this point?

7. Encourage the children to gather words and context clues and their wonderings about them. Let's set a goal for everyone to be able to use context clues!!!!
8. Reinforce that student need to be **writing page numbers** in the DEJs as well!

Notice! Lesson 7 – Author’s Style

1. Make an overhead of the Winn Dixie passage (page 18). **Cover up the DEJ part.** Ask students to follow the directions.
2. Explain that authors know the rules about English grammar. Sometimes they purposefully do not use them to show give the reader a better idea of a character or to make sure the reader notices a particular point. In this case, Opal probably speaks this way and the author wants you to know that. Opal probably would not say, *Winn Dixie and I got into a routine.* It’s too formal sounding for Opal. However, a princess probably would say, *My mother and I went shopping at Macy’s.* The difference is a matter of education and circumstance. Characters (as well as people) know when to use formal, Standard English and when it’s okay to be more informal.
3. It is important for readers to understand how to author’s purposefully break the rules. When the reader notices an author breaking the rules, the reader needs to stop and reflect a minute and ask, “Why?” There is a reason and the reader needs to figure it out.
4. The dictionary defines **style** as *a way of doing something to show a time period or attitude; the way something is written that makes it unique.*
5. **If the reader notices the incorrect grammar, she may write:**

Notice	Wonder
“Me and Winn-Dixie got into a daily routine...” (page 87)	I wonder if the author is trying to show us that Opal hasn’t learned yet how to say Winn Dixie and I. She’s young and she hasn’t had a lot of education yet.

6. Encourage the children to pay attention to how an author writes. Nothing is by mistake. Authors don’t make mistakes like writing incorrect grammar. Talk to one another about the author’s style.
7. Reinforce that student need to be **writing page numbers** in the DEJs as well!

Notice! Lesson 8 - Theme

1. Make an overhead of the Winn Dixie passage (page 19). **Cover up the DEJ part.** Ask students to follow the directions.
2. As readers move into the middle and end of the book, they should begin to look for lessons that the author is trying to share his/her opinions with them. Authors don’t spend 2 years writing books for no reason. By reading thoughtfully, students should be able to see what theme the author is trying to get across.
3. The dictionary defines **theme** as *a unique, unifying idea that is repeated.*
4. The idea of the theme being repeated is important! The reader needs to find several clues within the reading.
 - Authors narrate sometimes and tell their theme.
 - They have characters speak for them.
 - A series of events may hint at the theme.
 - How the story ends gives the reader a clue as well.

All of these clues must go together to provide a unifying theme.
5. Most students understand the theme of *Shrek* or other movies they’ve seen. Ask students to talk in pairs to decide the theme of a movie or a book you’re reading to the class by stating the theme and finding at least 3 pieces of evidence to support the theme.

6. **If the reader notices a theme clue, she may write:**

Notice	Wonder
Gloria says, "You can't always judge people by what they done." p. 96	I wonder if the author is hinting at the theme. The author talks about Opal not judging Otis but he may be telling her not to judge her mother either. Is the author saying, "People can change? Give people a chance?"

7. Encourage the children to look for a series of clues in the book they're reading. Just because they found this clue, for example --- and it is a good one --- they need to find more evidence before they can decide what the theme is. They need *several references* when reading a novel before theme can be determined.
8. It's a good idea to ask children to defend their themes in discussion. Then, older children should write what they think the theme is and support their thinking with *referenced* evidence by quoting the book at least 3 times and citing page numbers.

+++You may want to point out that I used brackets [] when quoting a passage and I have to add my own words to make it understandable. All authors do.

Notice! Lesson 9 – Personification

1. Make an overhead of the Winn Dixie passage (page 20). **Cover up the DEJ part.** Ask students to follow the directions.
2. Ask the students if the world can (literally) have an aching heart?

3. Explain that in order to convey just the right meaning to the reader, the author may sometimes ascribe human characteristics to an object. In this case, the author compares the world to a sad person, a person with an aching heart.
4. The dictionary defines **personification** as *giving human characteristics to an object or an idea.*
5. If the reader notices personification, she may think how the thing compared (in this case... the world) is like a human (in this case... a person with an aching heart). If a person has an aching heart – they are sad, so sad that her heart hurts. If the world is that sad, the author is saying that the people of the world are sad.

In her DEJ, the reader may write:

Notice	Wonder
Gloria says, "the whole world has an aching heart..." (p. 134)	Is the author saying everyone is sad in the world?

6. NOTE: Gloria says that *sometimes* she believes that all people are sad. Is this passage another hint at the theme by the author?
7. Ask students to read with their "personification lens." Ask students to collect passages where authors use personification as a literary element. It might be fun to collect them, let the students type them and post them on the wall after discussing what the students think the passage means. *Some* of your students will notice examples to bring you.

Notice! Lesson 10 – Symbolism

1. Make an overhead of the Winn Dixie passage (page 21). **Cover up the DEJ part.** Ask students to follow the directions.
2. Show the students a charm bracelet. Ask them what each symbol stands for and how they know.
3. Tell them that authors use “charms” as well --- called symbols.
 - circles and wheels = life (*Tuck Everlasting*, *Lion King* – the circle of life)
 - trees and plants = growth (*Winn Dixie*)
 - the sea = adventure (*Treasure Island* – boy goes to sea)
 - forests = evil (*Lord of the Rings*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Wizard of Oz*)
 - dawn and sunrise = good and hope (*Count Dracula*, horror stories)
 - candy = tempting but empty or worse (*Lion*, *Witch and the Wardrobe* – taffy, *Snow White* – apple)
 - strangers = evil (*Tuck Everlasting* – stranger in the yellow hat)
 - people living alone = suspicious (*Hansel and Gretel* – witch)



4. The dictionary defines **symbolism** as *representation of something concrete to equal something abstract; something real = idea.*
5. In this case, the author represents the idea of the tree growing and getting healthy with Opal growing and getting healthy and strong. The author talks about the tree and the reader is supposed to know that she’s talking about Opal, too.

In his DEJ, the reader may write:

Notice	Wonder
Opal talks to Gloria’s tree. p. 178	I wonder if the author uses the tree as a symbol. The tree is growing and getting healthier. You could say the tree is like Opal who also has just learned to stop being angry with her mother. She’s also growing and getting healthier and stronger.

6. You could talk about other ways we say 2 things at one time --- like jokes and puns.
7. Ask students to read with their “symbolism lens.” Ask students to collect passages where authors use symbols as a literary elements to share and discuss.

Notice! Lesson 1

Opal's father, called Preacher, tells Opal **ten** things about her mother in chapter four of *Because of Winn Dixie*. (Winn Dixie is Opal's dog.) Read on to see if you see anything different or unusual about how the author chooses to write about Opal's father. Do you notice the tool the author is using to help readers understand her father?

"Number ten," he said with a long sigh, "number ten is that your mother loved you. She loved you very much."

"But she left me," I told him.

"She left us," said the preacher softly. I could see him pulling his old turtle head back into his stupid turtle shell. "She packed her bags and left us, and she didn't leave one thing behind."

"Okay," I said. I got up off the couch. Winn Dixie hopped off, too. "Thank you for telling me, I said."

Notice	Wonder
The author compared the father to a turtle on page 29 saying that preacher wants to pull his head back inside.	Is the author saying that the father is a loner, or is he afraid?

Notice! Lesson 2

A friend of Opal's named Otis plays guitar in the pet shop. Read to see if you can discover the clue the author uses to explain the affect the music has on the animals.

I was about to call to Otis that we were there, but then I heard the music. It was the prettiest music I have ever heard in my life. I looked around to see where it was coming from, and that's when I noticed that all the rabbits were out of their cages. There were rabbits and hamsters and gerbils and mice and birds and lizards and snakes, and they were all just sitting there on the floor like they had turned to stone, and Otis was standing in the middle of them. He was playing a guitar...

Notice	Wonder
they were all just sitting there on the floor like they had turned to stone (page 80)	I wonder if the author means they were totally taken with the music. Everything was blocked out for them.

Notice! Lesson 3

The preacher continues to be a stern father who stays inside his turtle shell. In this scene Opal is going to bed. Father tells Winn Dixie he can get up on the bed. Do you notice the tool the author uses to help the reader get an idea about what might happen in the story?

Winn-Dixie looked at the preacher. He didn't smile at him, but he opened his mouth wide like he was laughing, like the preacher just told him the funniest joke in the world; and this is what amazed me most: The preacher laughed back. Winn-Dixie hopped up on the bed, and the preacher got up and turned out the light. I leaned over and kissed Winn-Dixie, too, right on the nose. He was already asleep and snoring. (p. 71)

Notice	Wonder
The author writes on page 71 that Winn Dixie made preacher laugh.	I'm wondering if this is a foreshadowing clue. Is the dog going to be the thing that helps father find life is fun again? Maybe even start paying attention to Opal?

Notice! Lesson 4

This is the very first sentence of *Because of Winn Dixie*.

Read to find out who is telling the story. How do you know?

My name is India Opal Buloni, and last summer my daddy, the preacher, sent me to the store for a box of macaroni-and-cheese, some white rice, and two tomatoes and I came back with a dog.

Notice	Wonder
"My name is India Opal Buloni, and last summer my daddy, the preacher, sent me to the store for a box of macaroni-and-cheese, some white rice, and two tomatoes and I came back with a dog." (page 7)	I noticed that the story is going to be told from the point of view of a young girl. I wonder why she is telling the story? Why would the author choose her as such an important and probably main character?

Notice! Lesson 5

The author gives clues to the reader about each of the characters and especially the main characters. He does that by (1) telling what the character **looks like**, (2) explaining how the character **acts**, (3) telling what the character **says or thinks**, and (4) telling what other people in the story **say about the character**.

Examples:

Looks and acts like: The preacher was sitting in the living room, working at the foldout table. He had papers spread all around him and he was rubbing his nose, which always means he is thinking. Hard. p. 15

After reading this description, what words could you use to describe the preacher?

What preacher says to Opal: "I found a dog," I told him. "And I want to keep him."

"No dogs," the preacher said. "We've talked about this before. You don't need a dog." p.17

After reading this dialogue, what words could you use to describe the preacher?

What Opal says about preacher: "Sometimes it's hard for me to think about him as my daddy, because he spends so much time preaching or getting ready to preach." p. 13

After reading this dialogue, what words could you use to describe the preacher?

You might write your double entry journal like this...

<p>The preacher was sitting in the living room, working at the foldout table. He had papers spread all around him and he was rubbing his nose, which always means he is thinking. Hard. p. 15</p>	<p>I think the author describes father as a hardworking man. He would rather work than play. Why is he working so hard? Is he poor?</p>
<p>"I found a dog," I told him. "And I want to keep him." "No dogs," the preacher said. "We've talked about this before. You don't need a dog." (p. 17)</p>	<p>Here's another example where preacher doesn't want mess with fun. I don't think he means, "You don't need a dog." I think he means, "I don't want a dog."</p>
<p>Opal says, "Sometimes it's hard for me to think about him as my daddy, because he spends so much time preaching or getting ready to preach." p. 13</p>	<p>Opal tells me her dad works all the time. I wonder why he works all the time?</p>

Some people collect evidence to help them with characterization like this...

Looks like	Acts	Says or thinks	What others say or think
	<p>The preacher was sitting in the living room, working at the foldout table. He had papers spread all around him and he was rubbing his nose, which always means he is thinking. Hard. p. 15</p>	<p>"I found a dog," I told him. "And I want to keep him." "No dogs," the preacher said. "We've talked about this before. You don't need a dog." (p. 17)</p>	<p>Opal says, "Sometimes it's hard for me to think about him as my daddy, because he spends so much time preaching or getting ready to preach." p. 13</p>

Notice! Lesson 6

Preacher worries about Winn Dixie because the dog is so afraid of thunderstorms. Read to see how the author helps the reader with words she may not know.

“Opal?” said the preacher. He was lying on his stomach, and Winn Dixie was sitting on top of him, panting and whining.

“Yes, sir,” I said.

“Do you know what a pathological fear is?”

“No sir” I told him.

The preacher raised a hand. He rubbed his nose. “Well,” he said after a minute, “it’s a fear that goes way beyond normal fears. It’s a fear you can’t be talked out of or reasoned out of.”

Notice	Wonder
I noticed on page 74 that the author says Winn Dixie has a pathological fear of thunderstorms...“a fear that goes way beyond normal fears.”	The author told me the definition in the context as I read on. I wonder why he took the time to be very clear on this point?

Notice! Lesson 7

In this passage, the author does not use correct grammar? Can you find where? Can you explain why he would not use English conventions?

Me and Winn-Dixie got into a daily routine where we would leave the trailer early in the morning and get down to Gertrude's Pets in time to hear Otis play his guitar music...

Notice	Wonder
"Me and Winn-Dixie got into a daily routine..." p. 87	I wonder if the author is trying to show us that Opal hasn't learned yet how to say Winn Dixie and I. She's young and she hasn't had a lot of education yet.

Notice! Lesson 8

Read to see what Gloria says to Opal. What lesson is she trying to teach?

“Did they make you do bad things?” [I asked].

“...Before I learned,” [said Gloria].

“Learned what?”

“Learned what is the most important thing.”

“What’s that?” I asked her.

“It’s different for everyone,” she said. “You find out on your own. But in the meantime, you got to remember, you can’t always judge people by the things they done. You got to judge them by what they are doing now. You judge Otis by the pretty music he plays and how kind he is to them animals because that’s all you know about him right now. All right?”

“Yes ma’am,” I said.

Notice	Wonder
Gloria says, “You can’t always judge people by what they done.” p. 96	I’m wondering if the author is hinting at the theme. The author talks about Opal not judging Otis but he may be telling her not to judge her mother either. Is the author saying, “People can change? Give people a chance?”

Notice! Lesson 9

Read to see how Gloria expresses herself in this passage. What does Gloria mean? Is there a name for this technique?

“Do you think everybody misses somebody like I miss my mama?” [Opal asks.]

“Mmmm-hmmm,” said Gloria. She closed her eyes. “I believe, sometimes, that the whole world has an aching heart.”

Notice	Wonder
Gloria says, “the whole world has an aching heart...” (p. 134)	Is the author saying <i>everyone</i> is sad in the world?

Notice! Lesson 10

Sometimes authors say one thing but mean two things. See if you can figure out what else the author is talking about in this selection --- besides the fact that Opal has a tree. In this scene, Opal just told the tree that she has figured out some things about her mother.

That's what I said that night underneath Gloria Dump's mistake tree. And after I was done saying it, I stood up staring at the sky, looking at the constellations and planets. And then I remembered my own tree, the one Gloria had helped me plant. I hadn't looked at it for a long time. I went crawling around on my hands and knees, searching for it. And when I found it, I was surprised at how much it had grown. It was still small. It still looked more like a plant than a tree. But the leaves and branches felt real strong and good and right.

Notice	Wonder
Opal talks to her tree. p. 178	I wonder if the author uses the tree as a symbol. The tree is growing and getting healthier. You could say the tree is like Opal who also has just learned to stop being angry with her mother. She's also growing and getting healthier and stronger.