**![C:\Users\cmh\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\C084MTB8\MC900100742[1].wmf]()One School, One Book**

**Because of Winn-Dixie**

**By**

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One School, One Book is a voluntary project that hopes to give families an opportunity to share the love of reading interesting books. Follow the calendar on the reverse side for nightly chapter reading. *If you are unable to join in reading the book along with the rest of the school, please consider the book a gift that can be enjoyed at another time.*

**What you need to know:**

Families need to know that *Because of Winn Dixie* is a gentle character story. In simple, sentimental language, India, a ten year old girl, learns not to judge others on first impressions, and to make friends by opening herself up to others. Within the story, positive messages are presented and lessons are learned. The story also has some sad issues: a mother that has left her child and another character’s brother died, but the book deals with them in a manner that children can understand and have compassion. The main character is a young girl who learns, through the loyalty of her dog, that life is full of surprises and we grow through our experiences.

**Discussion Starters:**

* Families can talk about being a new kid, moving, first impressions.
* How do Opal's opinions of the new people in her life change through the course of the story?
* Families can talk about pets. Why do you think it's easier for Opal to befriend a dog than other people?
* How does Opal’s friendship with Winn-Dixie change her other relationships?
* If you have a pet, do you consider it to be a friend?
* Discuss the meaning of tolerance and friendship.
* Discuss the difficulties of alcoholism.
* Discuss feelings about people with disabilities such as blindness and mental retardation.
* Discuss fears such as thunderstorms and darkness.

**Possible extension activities:**

* Visit a pet store, the elderly, or the library.
* Take your pet for a walk or give your pet a bath.
* Participate in the school wide service collection for KPETS, a volunteer service dog organization. (more information coming home soon)
* Make a top ten list: about a special family member, about a friend or pet.
* Send a picture of your child with their pet dog to share with classmates.
* Plant a tree.
* Decorate a special bottle to put accomplishment notes in instead of mistakes or worries.
* Have a picnic and serve egg salad sandwiches, pickles, and punch. Try making rock candy.
* Watch the movie and compare the two versions.

**Above all, the goal of this project is to bring families together to enjoy a good book. Let’s hope this can continue to be a yearly tradition at Cornwall Elementary.**