

Selecting a book for your reading program is an important decision. To help you select the right book for your young readers and your community, we are providing the following context related to potentially sensitive content to help make a well-informed decision. As always, we encourage and recommend that book selections come after a full read of the book by multiple decision-makers or stakeholders.

Because of Winn-Dixie
by Kate DiCamillo

Read This Book to Discover...

The charming and now timeless story of a lonely girl in Naomi, Florida who adopts a dog and nurtures friendships with an eclectic assortment of adults. Opal (and the reader) acquire insight and wisdom from each of the adults, and Opal is able to understand and appreciate her peers in the town, too. While missing her absent mother, she learns to love and feel loved. All ‘because of Winn-Dixie!’ You’ll also discover Kate DiCamillo’s award-winning, matchless storytelling and prose.

What to Watch Out For...

Two or three adult themes hover in the background of this book. We never meet Opal’s mother, but through her father we learn that she struggled with alcoholism – one reason she left the family. Opal learns that gentle Otis, who plays guitar and manages the pet store, was once arrested and thrown in jail for resisting and assaulting the police officer who told him to stop busking on the street. The mysterious Gloria Dump, who feeds Winn-Dixie peanut butter sandwiches, has a beautiful tree in her background. She calls it a ‘mistake tree’ and it is decorated with the whisky and wine bottles she used to consume.

