

Be a Perfect Person in Just Three Days

By Stephen Manes



A Teaching Guide

by Margaret Whisnant

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Objective Tests with Answer Keys Thinking and Writing Prompts

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Chapter 1 Pages 9-16

Write the **letter** of the correct answer the blank before each question.

- _____ 1. Milo Crinkley wanted to be (A) an astronaut, (B) taller, (C) perfect.
- _____ 2. Milo was in the library looking for (A) a good scary monster story, (B) a book about baseball, (C) some ideas for building a tree house.
- _____ 3. How did Milo find **Be a Perfect Person in Just Three Days**? (A) He asked the librarian for help. (B) It fell off the top shelf and hit him on the head. (C) It was on the shelf beside his favorite mystery book.
- _____ 4. In his picture, Dr. K. Pinkerton Silverfish looked (A) perfect, (B) unhappy, (C) messy.



- _____ 5. According to Dr. K. Pinkerton Silverfish, the very first lesson toward perfection was (A) hard work succeeds, (B) only a few can be perfect, (C) things are not always what they seem.
- _____ 6. In order to become perfect, it was essential that Milo (A) follow orders, (B) think positively, (C) read several books about being perfect.
- _____ 7. How much was Milo to read each day in the book? (A) three pages, (B) one chapter, (C) one page.
- _____ 8. What did Milo do that he was told not to do? He (A) read the last page of the book, (B) took the book home with him, (C) read the whole book.
- _____ 9. Milo wanted to be perfect because (A) he didn't like the way he looked, (B) he was always getting into dumb accidents, (C) his parents thought his sister was perfect, and he was a little jealous.
- _____ 10. Milo decided that being perfect would (A) not be as difficult as he thought, (B) take less time than Dr. Silverfish said, (C) come in handy in ways he hadn't thought of before.

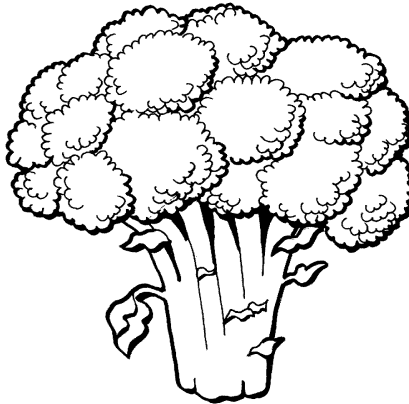
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Chapter 2 Pages 17-27

Write either **Yes** or **No** in the blank before each question.

- _____ 1. Did Milo imagine that, when he was perfect, he would be able to correct the teacher in front of the class and never be wrong?
- _____ 2. Did Milo's parents and his sister correct him at dinner?
- _____ 3. Was Milo able to find out what the "K" stood for in Dr. Silverfish's name?
- _____ 4. Did Dr. Silverfish's biography say he owned the world's second largest collection of unusual toothpicks?
- _____ 5. Did the book instruct Milo to put a stalk of broccoli on a string and wear it around his neck until he went to bed?



- _____ 6. Did Milo think the picture of Dr. Silverfish might be smirking at him?
- _____ 7. Did Milo's mother ask a lot of questions about why he wanted a stalk of broccoli?
- _____ 8. Did Milo read ahead to find out how wearing broccoli could help make him perfect?
- _____ 9. Did Milo think that part of the secret of being perfect might be keeping people like Dr. Silverfish from outsmarting him?
- _____ 10. In a dream, did Milo laugh so hard at all the imperfect people in the world that he fell out of bed?

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Chapter 3 Pages 28-37

Write either **True** or **False** in the blank before each statement.

- _____ 1. The next morning, Milo didn't fight with his sister or irritate his parents as he usually did.
- _____ 2. Milo thought the broccoli necklace was the dumbest looking thing he had ever seen.
- _____ 3. Milo told his parents he was playing a vegetable in a play.
- _____ 4. Milo's mother had planned to use the broccoli for the family's dinner.
- _____ 5. When he had to explain the stalk of broccoli to George, Milo was terrified.
- _____ 6. Whenever he was asked why he was wearing a stalk of broccoli around his neck, Milo gave his classmates and teachers the same explanation he had given his parents.



- _____ 7. The broccoli not only developed a pungent odor, it also started dropping little green flowers all over Milo's shirt.
- _____ 8. At dinner Milo tried to be as perfect as he possibly could.
- _____ 9. Milo's parents did not notice how politely he was behaving.
- _____ 10. Even though he wanted to be perfect, Milo found it impossible to ignore his sister.

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***Something to Think About. . .
Something to Write About. . .***

Milo Crinkley was looking for a good scary monster story when ***Be a Perfect Person in Just Three Days*** fell from the top shelf and hit him on the head.

- Many young people, as well as adults, like good scary monster stories. Why do you suppose this is so?
 - If a book jumped from the top shelf by itself and hit you on the head, what would you think about the incident?
-

In the photo on his book ***Be a Perfect Person in Just Three Days***, Dr. K. Pinkerton Silverfish, wore *baggy zebra-striped pants, a shirt with palm trees on it and two buttons missing, one mitten, a clown nose, a bow tie with only half a bow, and a dented hat with a feather sticking up on each side. . . and mustard was dribbling down his chin from the hot dog he was eating.*

Use the clues from Dr. Silverfish's photograph to choose the **two** words from the following list that you think would **best** describe his personality. Explain why you chose each word. You may use their definitions as part of your explanation.

prankster
wise
humorous

disorganized
jovial
mischievous

spirited
insane
serious

lackadaisical
boisterous
grumpy

silly
sloppy
happy

About Your Teaching Pack. . .

Objective Tests

The objective tests have multiple functions. In addition to their obvious application, they also serve as tools that can *improve **comprehension skills** by providing practice in understanding plot structure and recognizing important story elements.*

Rationale:

Focus on the Plot. . .

Whether they are aware of their ability or not, all good readers sense the **rhythm** of the **connected** events that compose the plot of a novel, and consequently **comprehend** the story. They are in tune with cause and effect, behavior and consequence, sequence—the heartbeat of the narrative.

This “plot rhythm” forms the framework for the objective tests. The chain of events that tell the story have been pulled from the novel and reformatted into a series of sequential questions, none of which require **interpretation**. They are intended to **draw student attention to the fact that something happened**, not to what the incident means. That comes later.

In addition to their testing function, teachers may use the pages to strengthen their students’ ability to **Summarize**: With only the questions as a guide, have students write a summary of the chapter. For a set of ten questions, limit the number of sentences they may write to seven or fewer. When they work with twenty or more questions, allow no more than twelve sentences.

Report the News: Ask your students to write a newspaper article based on the events identified in a set of questions and the *who, what, when, where, why* elements. Some information needed to complete this assignment may be located in previous chapters.

Twist the Plot: Choose one or two questions from each chapter and change its answer—true to false, no to yes, etc.—to demonstrate how changing a single (or several) events would (or would not) change the story. This process can be used to help students become proficient in distinguishing major plot movers from minor story details.

The Characters. . .

Too often, when they are asked to describe a story character’s personality, the only answer many students can muster is “nice.” This portion of the Novel Teaching Pack, coupled with related activities from **Something to Think About, Something to Write About**, is a smorgasbord of opportunities for those teachers who wish to eradicate “nice” from their students’ vocabularies!

Questions that identify a character’s personality and/or motivation are purposely and carefully included with the plot movers. Again, the questions do not require **interpretation**. They simply establish that someone did or said something—knowledge that is invaluable when character analysis is required.

Implied Meaning and Story Clues. . .

The objective tests include items that establish the existence of story components carrying **implied meaning**. **Story clues** that tantalize the reader with hints of future events also appear as question. At this point in the novel study, as before, **interpretation** is not the goal. **Awareness** of the **facts** is the target.

Developing/Improving Listening Skills. . .

Listening skills are rightfully included on every list of state competency requirements. Rather than always requiring students to answer test questions on a printed page, why not surprise them occasionally by doing the test orally and meeting competency goals at the same time?

Discussion Guide Capability. . .

The objective tests are helpful discussion guides. Use individual items on these pages to draw student attention to sequence, cause and effect, story clues (foreshadowing), character traits, recognizing and interpreting implied meanings, etc. These “thinking out loud” sessions are an **important building block** for the next learning phase.

Something to Think About. . .

Something to Write About. . .

In this section, students pack up what they already know about the novel and go exploring into its every nook and cranny. Some activities require the simplest interpretation or application, while others will challenge the most proficient thinkers. There is a high probability that young scholars, even reluctant ones, will label some of the selections as **fun**.

Rationale:

Guidelines. . .

Most of the items in this section are based on the skills presented in the ***Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Bloom's Taxonomy)***. There are two reasons for this choice. First, it mirrors the Novel Teaching Pack's primary purpose of building a variety of sophisticated thinking skills on a foundation of basic knowledge. Second, in following the taxonomy guidelines, activities that correlate with many state educational standards emerge automatically.

Levels of Difficulty. . .

A variety **difficulty levels** to accommodate the needs of individual students, including the gifted, is an integral part of this component. However, **all** items from this section are intended to **challenge** and **sharpen** thinking abilities.

Activities. . .

Something to Think About/Something to Write About includes activities that require students to choose and use precise, appropriate, and meaningful **vocabulary**. These exercises involve choosing a word or a group of words to describe a character's personality or behavior. The following example is from ***Because of Winn-Dixie***.

Opal comforted Winn-Dixie during thunderstorms, holding on to him tight so that he wouldn't run away. She decided that the best way to comfort Gloria was to read a book to her, loud enough to keep the ghosts away.

From the list of words below, all of which can correctly describe Opal's behavior, which *two* do you think are the best? Cite facts from the story and the words' definitions to support your choices.

<i>empathetic</i>	<i>compassionate</i>	<i>nurturing</i>	<i>warmhearted</i>
<i>sympathetic</i>	<i>loving</i>	<i>devoted</i>	<i>benevolent</i>
<i>unselfish</i>	<i>generous</i>	<i>thoughtful</i>	<i>considerate</i>

In each case students work with a given collection of terms, all of which can be correctly applied to the character(s) in question. However, the individual words have varying strengths of meaning. It is the student's task to analyze both the character's behavior and the words, make choices, and then cite events from the story to support his/her selection.

Options, options, and more options. . .

Something to Think About, Something to Write About gives teachers **pick-and-choose options** for

<i>individualizing assignments</i>	<i>homework</i>
<i>group work</i>	<i>short-term and long-term projects</i>
<i>whole class activities</i>	<i>differentiating assignments for two or more classes</i>
<i>capitalizing on student interest</i>	

Final Note

This Teaching Guide is designed for use as supplementary material that supports a total reading program. It is my goal to provide busy teachers with a classroom-ready, practical resource loaded with motivational and learning opportunities for their students. It is my hope that your purchase will prove to be a hard-working instructional component for years to come. Thanks for choosing one of my products for your classroom.



Margaret Whisnant, author