

ARF! WINSTON'S ARFSOME REAL-LIFE FABLES

Why fables, you ask?

Because when animals act like humans, big Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) lessons become more relatable—and a whole lot more fun!

In *ARF! Winston's Real-life Fables*, our wise and witty narrator, Winston, shares ten hilarious and heartfelt tales that help kids navigate life's everyday challenges. Each story is packed with meaningful life lessons that support character growth, decision-making, and integrity.

You'll find SEL themes woven throughout, including the following and much more:

- Self-Awareness
- Empathy
- Relationship Skills
- Growth Mindset
- Conflict Resolution
- Leadership & Courage
- Perseverance
- Confidence Building
- Imagination & Creativity
- Understanding Emotions
- Communication
- Problem-Solving
- Responsibility
- Mindset Shift

From making new friends to handling big emotions, Winston's stories offer kids the tools they need. Feel free to download the teacher guides for each story and the coloring page that follows. I'd also be delighted to visit your classrooms to talk about writing, the power of imagination, and more. And if you're local, Winston would love to join the fun and give everyone a cheerful *High Paw! ARF!*

THE CHALLENGE OF CHANGE

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Coping with Change:** Change can feel scary or uncomfortable at first, but it often leads to growth and new opportunities.
- **Self-Awareness:** Recognizing emotions such as sadness, jealousy, or confusion is important.
- **Empathy:** Understanding that others (even pets!) have feelings too.
- **Relationship Skills:** Learning how to build new bonds and accept others into our lives.
- **Growth Mindset:** Life is always changing—embracing it helps us grow.

PRE-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some examples of change you've experienced?
2. How did those changes make you feel?
3. Have you ever had a new sibling, pet, or classmate join your family or school?
4. What are some positive things that can come from changes?

POST-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

5. How did Winston feel when Misha joined the family?
6. Why did Winston feel jealous or left out?
7. What helped Winston accept the change?
8. How did Winston's feelings change over time?
9. What lesson did Winston learn about love and change?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

GAME ACTIVITIES

- Emotion Charades: Students act out different emotions Winston felt (confused, happy, sad, jealous, proud), while others guess.
- Change Challenge Relay: Students act out scenarios involving change (new seat in class, new friend, new pet) and talk about what feelings might come with them.
- Balloon of Love Game: Blow up a balloon and pass it around. Each student adds a reason why love can grow like a balloon—just like Sugar explained to Winston.

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- Personal Reflection Journal: Write about a time you experienced change. How did it feel at first? What helped you feel better? What did you learn from it?
- Winston's Diary Entry: Pretend you're Winston writing in a diary. Describe how you felt the day Misha arrived and how things changed over time.
- Dear Winston Letters: Write a letter to Winston giving him advice about accepting change.

ART ACTIVITIES

- Feelings Collage: Create a collage with drawings or magazine clippings of emotions Winston experienced.
- Change Garden: Draw a garden where each plant represents a type of change (e.g., new sibling, new home, new grade). Write how each change can help you grow.
- Love Balloon Art: Draw a balloon and fill it with words that describe how love grows—just like Sugar explained to Winston.

STUDENT WORKSHEETS

PART 1: STORY CHECK-IN

1. Who is telling the story? What do we know about him?

2. What big change first happened in Winston's life?

3. What new change upset Winston the most?

4. Why did Winston feel sad when Misha arrived?

5. What lesson did Sugar teach Winston about love?

PART 2: VOCABULARY PAWS

Match the fun “Winston-words” with what they mean!

Winston-Word

- a. Bowwowers
- b. TDIC
- c. Sulked
- d. Lick-kiss

What it Means

- A. Not happy; pouting
- B. Puppy word for “wow!”
- C. Top Dog in Charge
- D. A puppy way to show love

PART 3: PAW-SONAL CONNECTION

1. Have you ever had a big change in your life, like moving, getting a sibling, or starting a new school? What was it?


2. How did you feel about the change at first?

3. Did anything or anyone help you feel better?

PART 4: WINSTON’S WORLD (OPTIONAL)

Draw Winston and Misha doing their jobs:

- Winston guarding the yard
- Misha catching bugs

 Use the space below or the back of this page!



COOP WARS

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Empathy: Understanding Reba's behavior came from her own experiences with bullying.
- Conflict Resolution: Winston chose not to retaliate, showing emotional regulation.
- Leadership & Courage: Standing up for others (Reba protects Winston later).
- Kindness & Inclusion: Offering friendship, even to someone who wronged you.

PRE-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Have you ever seen someone get picked on? How did it make you feel?
- What do you know about how animals behave in groups?
- What makes someone a good leader?
- Can someone who acts like a bully still be a good person inside?

POST-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why do you think Reba was bullying Winston?
- How did Winston handle the situation?
- What do you think would have happened if Winston barked or bit Reba?
- How did things change between Reba and Winston? What caused that change?
- What can we learn about friendship from this story?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

GAME ACTIVITIES

- **Flock or Foul (Sorting Game)**

Create cards with different behaviors (e.g., helping, teasing, sharing, gossiping). Students sort them into “Kindness” or “Bullying.” Discuss how each behavior affects others.

- **Role Reversal Skits**

In pairs, students act out a bullying scenario, then replay it with a positive solution. Encourage empathy and nonviolent responses like Winston’s.

- **Chicken Yard Obstacle Course**

Create a mini-course with cones or classroom items. One student plays “Winston” trying to complete the course while “Reba” tries to distract (non-physical). Reinforces staying calm under pressure.

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- **Winston’s Journal Entry** – Students write a journal entry from Winston’s point of view after the events of Coop Wars.

- **Dear Reba Letter** – Write a letter to Reba explaining how bullying hurts and inviting her to be part of a kindness club.

- **My TDIC Story** – Students write about a time they showed leadership or helped resolve a conflict.

ART ACTIVITIES

- **Design a Coop Peace Poster** – Students design posters to hang in the 'chicken yard' promoting kindness and inclusion.

- **Kindness Feathers** – Each student decorates a feather with a kind action or affirmation. Collectively create a large classroom 'Kindness Chicken'.

STUDENT WORKSHEETS

PART 1: STORY CHECK-IN

1. Who is Winston? What is his job at Apple Security?

2. What problem did Winston face in the chicken yard?

3. How did Reba treat Winston at first?

4. What did Winston notice about Reba that helped him understand her behavior?

5. How did the situation change by the end of the story?

PART 2: THINK ABOUT IT

6. Why do you think Reba was acting like a bully?

7. Do you think Winston made a good decision by not fighting back? Why or why not?

8. What could Reba have done instead of bullying Winston to fit in?

PART 3: LET'S TALK IT OUT

Imagine you are Winston. Reba just pecked your bottom! Write what you could say to her in a calm, respectful way.

PART 4: CREATIVE CORNER

Design a "Top Chicken in Charge" badge for Reba!

Think about what makes a good leader. Use colors, shapes, and maybe even feathers!

WINSTON'S WISE WORDS REFLECTION

What is one lesson you learned from Winston's story about dealing with bullies or helping others who are being bullied?



FETCHING SUCCESS

SEL KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Perseverance: Murray keeps trying despite embarrassment and failure.
- Growth Mindset: Mistakes are part of learning—quitting is the real failure.
- Empathy & Encouragement: Winston and Camden support Murray instead of mocking him.
- Confidence Building: Success through effort leads to self-confidence.
- Supportive Friendship: Friends cheer each other on and offer help when it's tough.

PRE-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Have you ever tried something and failed the first few times?
- What do you do when someone around you is struggling?
- How do you feel when someone encourages you?
- Why is it important to try again, even when things are hard?

POST-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why did Murray want to quit?
- How did Camden and Winston help him feel better?
- What would've happened if they hadn't encouraged Murray?
- Have you ever been like Camden, helping someone else learn?
- What does this story teach us about failing and trying again?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

GAME ACTIVITIES

- **Fail & Fetch Challenge**

Set up a fun game (like bean bag toss or ball bounce) where students are encouraged to try multiple times. Celebrate effort, not just success! Debrief: “How did it feel to keep trying?”

- **Encouragement Circle**

One student pretends to try something and 'fails.' Classmates take turns giving encouraging phrases (e.g., 'You've got this!'). Reinforce how encouragement makes a difference.

- **Act it Out!**

In small groups, students role-play a scene where one person is struggling and others help with encouragement.

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- **A Time I Kept Trying** – Students write about a personal experience when they didn't give up.

- **Letter to Murray** – Write a letter to Murray congratulating him on his success and giving advice about swimming.

- **What If I Quit?** – Creative writing prompt where students imagine a story where someone quits early—and how the ending might be different.

ART ACTIVITIES

- **“Success Path” Poster** – Create a step-by-step path of Murray learning to catch the ball with visuals.

- **Comic Strip** – Illustrate the story of Murray's attempts, showing his growth and ultimate success.

- **Growth Mindset Paw Prints** – Each student draws a paw print and writes one thing they've learned by trying again.

STUDENT WORKSHEETS

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Who is telling the story?

2. Why couldn't Winston and Murray go outside by themselves?

3. What did Winston do to get Camden's attention?

4. What happened the first time Murray tried to catch the ball?

5. How did Camden help Murray improve?

6. What lesson did Murray learn by the end of the story?

VOCABULARY PAWS

Match the made-up “dog words” with their real meanings.

Dog Word	Real Meaning
Howlever	
Woof is me	
Howllalujah	
Pawtastic	
What the woof?	

Write your answers here:

Howlever: ____

Woof is me: ____

Howllalujah: ____

Pawtastic: ____

What the woof?: ____

THINK & REFLECT

1. Have you ever tried something new and failed at first? What happened, and what did you do next?

2. Why is it important to keep trying, even when something is hard?

CREATIVE CORNER

Design a comic strip showing Winston helping Murray learn how to catch the ball. Use at least 3 panels and show the problem, the practice, and the success! (Draw in the space below or on the back of this page.)

WINSTON'S WISE WORDS RESPONSE

Winston says, "Failure is just another way to learn."

What does that mean to you? Write 2–3 sentences:



WHAT THE WOOF?

SEL KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Imagination & Creativity:** Kids learn to use their imaginations to create fun, exciting adventures.
- **Understanding Emotions:** Winston expresses boredom, confusion, fear, and joy—modeling emotional awareness.
- **Communication:** Expressing feelings through body language and sounds (Winston’s stares, whines).
- **Adaptability:** Trying something new even when it’s unfamiliar (like pretending to be a camel or unicorn).
- **Play & Joy:** Rediscovering the joy of screen-free playtime.

PRE-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What do you usually do when you're bored?
- Have you ever used your imagination to create a game or story?
- Why do you think imagination is important?
- How do you feel when someone makes fun of you?

POST-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why was Winston bored at the beginning of the story?
- How did the kids use their imaginations?
- Why did Winston get confused and scared?
- How did Soren and Willow make Winston feel better?
- What are some things Winston learned about imagination?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

GAME ACTIVITIES

- **Imagination Station**

Set up zones around the classroom (e.g., “The Jungle,” “Space,” “Underwater World”).

Students rotate, acting out scenarios in each zone using only their imagination and props like blankets or hats.

- **Woof or What? (Emotion Game)**

- One student acts out an emotion like Winston (bored, scared, excited), and the others guess. Reinforces identifying and expressing feelings.

- **Dragon or Unicorn Tag**

- “Unicorns” tag “dragons” who freeze until a “camel” (a student) gives them a treat (foam token) to unfreeze.

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- **“What If...” Story** – Students write a short story beginning with: “What if I woke up and I was a dragon/unicorn/camel?”

- **Letter to Winston** – Students write Winston a letter telling him about their favorite pretend game.

- **Bored to Pawtastic** – Students write or draw about a time they were bored but found a way to have fun.

ART ACTIVITIES

- **Build Your Imagination Fort** – Using paper, crayons, or 3D materials, students design a fort or imaginary play space.

- **Winston’s Costume Collection** – Students draw Winston dressed as a unicorn, camel, or dragon—maybe even climbing a tree!

- **Imagination Collage** – Cut out magazine images or use stickers to create a “World of Imagination” poster.

STUDENT WORKSHEETS

PART 1: STORY RECALL

1. Who is Winston, and what is his job?
2. Why was Winston bored at the beginning of the story?
3. What did Sugar ask Soren, Willow, and Winston to do?
4. Name two imaginary things Soren and Willow pretended Winston was.
5. What did Winston learn about imagination by the end of the story?

PART 2: VOCABULARY PAWS 🐾

Match the words to their definitions.

- A. Imagination
- B. Pawturbed
- C. TDIC
- D. Journey
- E. Whined

1. ____ A made-up story or idea created in your mind
2. ____ To complain in a high-pitched sound
3. ____ A trip from one place to another
4. ____ Winston's title that means he's the boss
5. ____ A fun dog way to say 'bothered'

PART 3: WINSTON'S IMAGINATION CORNER ✨

Winston used his imagination to become a camel and almost a unicorn. Now it's your turn!

Draw a picture of yourself as something totally made-up! It could be a flying superhero, a dragon vet, or a marshmallow explorer!



PART 4: "WHAT IF?" WRITING PROMPT

Use your imagination and write a short story (4–5 sentences) starting with:

“One rainy day, I imagined that...”



WINSTON FIGURES IT OUT

SEL KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Problem-Solving: Winston uses logic, observation, and process of elimination.
- Empathy: He notices and cares about Reba's distress, even though they don't speak the same language.
- Persistence: Winston doesn't give up when he can't figure it out right away or when Sugar doesn't understand.
- Seeking Help: He realizes when a situation is too big and gets help from someone who can solve it.
- Calm Thinking in Crisis: He stays calm and reasons through the clues instead of panicking.

PRE-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What do you do when you don't understand what someone is trying to tell you?
- Have you ever helped someone or an animal who was upset?
- Why is it important to stop and think before jumping to conclusions?
- How can you tell something is wrong if someone doesn't say it with words?

POST-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How did Winston figure out what was wrong with Reba?
- What clues helped Winston rule out other dangers?
- Why didn't the other hens react the same way Reba did?
- How did Winston get help from Sugar even though she didn't understand at first?
- What do you think Winston learned about problem-solving?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

GAME ACTIVITIES

- **Clue Tracker**

Set up a classroom mystery (e.g., missing pencil case). Give students visual or auditory clues. Let them practice observation, inference, and teamwork like Winston.

- **Emotion Charades**

Students act out emotions or 'clues' (like being worried, confused, or excited). Others guess what the character might need help with.

- **Chicken Yard Challenge**

Create a mini-obstacle course or puzzle “yard” where a partner has to use clues to find a hidden object—mimicking Winston’s search for Chick Six.

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- **My Detective Moment** – Students write about a time they had to figure something out or solve a problem.

- **Letter to Winston** – Write to Winston telling him how clever he was and asking how it felt to help Reba.

- **Problem-Solving Steps** – Students write a guide: “What to Do When You Don’t Know What’s Wrong.”

ART ACTIVITIES

- **Chick Rescue Map** – Students draw a map of Winston’s steps: from Reba to clues, to finding Chick Six.

- **Winston the Hero Poster** – Create award posters for Winston, celebrating his detective skills.

- **Problem Solver Badge** – Each student designs their own badge with symbols of courage, thinking, and kindness.

STUDENT WORKSHEETS

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Who is Winston, and what is his job on the Apple property?
2. Why was Reba so upset?
3. What clues helped Winston figure out what was wrong?
4. What did Winston do when he couldn't fix the problem himself?
5. How did Sugar help solve the problem?

Think Like Winston!

1. What's the problem?
2. Who is involved?
3. What are your clues?
4. What's your plan?
5. Who will you ask for help, if needed?

VOCABULARY MATCH-UP

Word	Meaning
Bawking	A. To stop something bad from happening
Nocturnal	B. Making a loud clucking noise
Disturbance	C. Only active at night
Defend	D. A problem that interrupts peace
Shudder	E. A shake caused by fear or cold

CREATIVE CORNER

Draw a comic strip of Winston solving the mystery of Chick Six! Include 3–4 boxes to show the beginning, middle, and end.

🍄 WINSTON'S WISE WORDS REFLECTION

Winston says: “Watch and understand the problem, make a plan, and go for help if you need it.”
Write about a time when you solved a problem just like Winston did.



DECISIONS, DECISIONS

SEL KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Decision-Making Skills:** Winston balances emotions and consequences to make a wise choice.
- **Peer Pressure:** Shows how it feels to be left out and the courage to say no.
- **Responsibility:** Winston considers how his actions affect Sugar and Babe.
- **Friendship & Respect:** Real friends honor your boundaries and support your choices.
- **Confidence & Integrity:** Doing what's right, even when it's hard or unpopular.

PRE-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Have you ever had to make a hard choice?
- What does it mean to do the right thing?
- Why might someone feel pressure to go along with a group?
- How do you know who your real friends are?

POST-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What decision did Winston have to make?
- What made that decision hard for him?
- How did his friends react when he chose not to go?
- What would have happened if Winston had chosen to sneak off?
- How did doing the right thing make Winston feel in the end?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

GAME ACTIVITIES

- **Paw or Pause?**

Students hear a series of silly or serious scenarios. They respond with a paw print if it's a good decision, or 'pause' if they'd stop and think first.

- **Four Pawsketeers Roleplay**

Groups of four act out a pack scene where one dog has to decide between right and wrong. Class reflects on whether the group showed true friendship.

- **Decision Dominoes**

Students draw cause-and-effect domino cards (e.g., 'You sneak out' → 'Your grown-ups get worried'). Build chains of choices and their consequences.

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- **My Toughest Decision** – Students write about a time they had to make a difficult choice and how it turned out.

- **All for One!** – Write about a time your friends supported you, or when you supported someone else.

- **Winston's What-If – Rewrite the ending:** What if Winston had snuck off with the pack?

ART ACTIVITIES

- **Design Your Pack Flag** – Students create a flag for the Four Pawsketeers (or their own friendship group).

- **Good Choices Badge** – Design a badge to give someone who made a strong, kind, or brave decision.

- **Comic Strip:** “Doing the Right Thing” – Draw Winston's big decision as a comic scene, including facial expressions, thoughts, and emotions.

STUDENT WORKSHEETS

STORY COMPREHENSION

1. Who is the narrator of the story?
2. What decision did Winston have to make?
3. Why couldn't Winston go to the park with the other dogs at first?
4. What did Hazel say that showed she was a good friend?
5. What happened at the end of the story?

VOCABULARY – MATCH THE WORDS!

Draw a line to match each word with its meaning.

Word	Meaning
Pawsketeers	A funny name Winston's pack chose
Pee-mail	A dog's way of sending messages
TDIC	Top Dog in Charge
Wonderfur	A silly way to say "wonderful"
Howllalujah	A dog's way to say "Hallelujah"

Make a Decision!

Winston had to make a tough decision. Have you ever had to choose between what you *wanted* and what was *right*? Write about a time you made a hard decision.

Pawesome Pack Poster

Draw a picture of Winston and the Four Pawsketeers in your yard or at the park. Add their names and what they're doing!

Discussion Time

Circle to show how you would feel if you were Winston:

 Happy  Worried  Confused  Proud

Why did you choose that feeling?



THE PROBLEM WITH MISHA

SEL KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Empathy: Understanding how others feel by walking (or pawing) in their shoes.
- Perspective-Taking: Misha learns how his actions affect others when the same is done to him.
- Self-Awareness: Recognizing your own behaviors and how they impact relationships.
- Conflict Resolution: Using calm conversation, reflection, and forgiveness.
- Friendship & Growth: Making amends and growing through respectful feedback.

PRE-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What are some ways people show good manners?
- How do you feel when someone interrupts or doesn't share?
- Why is it sometimes hard to notice when we are being rude?
- What do you think makes a good friend?

POST-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What were some of the rude things Misha did?
- Why didn't Winston and Dickens just yell at Misha?
- How did Misha learn what his behavior felt like to others?
- What happened after Misha understood how he made others feel?
- How can we kindly help someone realize they're being rude?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

GAME ACTIVITIES

- **“That’s How It Feels!” Roleplay**

Pairs act out one person being unknowingly rude (interrupting, talking over, blocking, etc.). Then reverse roles and reflect: How did it feel? What could be done differently?

- **“Rude or Respectful?” Sorting Game**

Create cards with behavior examples (e.g., “Takes turns listening” vs. “Grabs toys”). Students sort into 'Rude' or 'Respectful'.

- **Kitty-Canine Relay**

Teams pass a message (or toy) from one “pet” to another using polite turns. Bonus if someone 'interrupts' and team has to handle it calmly!

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- **When I Felt Ignored** – Write about a time you were left out, interrupted, or someone didn’t show manners.

- **Letter to Misha** – Write Misha a letter giving him advice on how to be a more thoughtful friend.

- **“What Would You Do If...”** – Finish the prompt: “What would you do if your friend always interrupted you while you were talking?”

ART ACTIVITIES

- **Good Manners Mural** – Students draw scenes of kindness, sharing, and respectful behavior.

- **Misha’s Makeover** – Students draw Misha before and after his behavior change—maybe in superhero gear as “Manners Misha”!

- **Paw Print Pledges** – Each student draws a paw print and writes a respectful action inside (e.g., “Wait my turn to speak”).

STUDENT WORKSHEETS

STORY COMPREHENSION

1. What problem did Winston have with Misha?

2. How did Misha act when Winston tried to talk to him?

3. What plan did Winston and Dickens come up with?

4. How did Misha feel when Dickens acted the same way he did?

5. What lesson did Misha learn at the end of the story?

VOCABULARY – MATCH THE WORDS!

Draw a line to match each word with its meaning.

Word

Meaning

TDIC

Top Dog in Charge

Pawturbed

A doggy way to say 'bothered'

Zoomies

When pets run around really fast

Grubby

Dirty or messy

Woofin arfsome

Really, really awesome

THINK ABOUT IT

Have you ever done something that seemed okay to you but hurt someone else's feelings? What happened?

DRAW IT OUT!

On another sheet of paper or on the back of this one, draw Winston and Misha playing zoomies together. Show how they are now good friends!

DISCUSSION TIME

Circle how you think Misha felt when he realized how he had acted:

 Embarrassed  Sorry  Sad  Surprised

What would you say to someone who was acting rude without realizing it?



GRUMBLES AND GRATITUDE

SEL KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Gratitude: Recognizing and appreciating what we already have.
- Perspective: Seeing our lives through the lens of others' experiences.
- Emotional Awareness: Understanding how moods can shape our worldview.
- Empathy: Feeling concern and compassion for others in need.
- Mindset Shift: Moving from grumbling to grateful thinking through self-reflection.

PRE-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Have you ever had a day where nothing felt right?
- What are some things that make you grumble or feel frustrated?
- What does it mean to be grateful?
- Why is it sometimes hard to see the good in your life?

POST-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why was Winston grumpy at the start of the story?
- What changed his attitude?
- How did seeing the homeless dog help Winston understand gratitude?
- What are some things Winston realized he had to be thankful for?
- What are some everyday things you're grateful for?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

GAME ACTIVITIES

- **“Grumble or Grateful?” Game**

Read everyday situations aloud. Students decide if it’s a moment to grumble or show gratitude. Then brainstorm how to flip a grumble into something grateful.

- **Gratitude Trail**

Create a “trail” around the classroom. At each stop, students write/draw something they’re thankful for. End at a big “Gratitude Garden” wall display.

- **Winston’s Mood Match**

Match feelings (grumpy, grateful, annoyed, proud) to parts of the story. Great for emotional literacy!

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- **Grateful Journal Entry** – Students write a short journal page from Winston’s perspective after seeing the homeless dog.

- **My Grrreat Life** – Write about three everyday things they’re grateful for and why.

- **Flip That Thought!** – Write one “grumble thought” and then flip it into a “gratitude thought” (e.g., “I hate veggies” → “I’m glad I have healthy food.”)

ART ACTIVITIES

- **Gratitude Tree** – Each student adds a leaf with something they’re thankful for.

- **Winston’s Thankful Tail** – Draw Winston’s tail with strips attached—each strip labeled with one of Winston’s blessings.

- **Mood Portraits** – Draw Winston with his grumpy face vs. his grateful face. Add thought bubbles!

STUDENT WORKSHEETS

1. WINSTON'S DAY – STORY SEQUENCING

Number the events in the order they happened (1–6):

- ☐ Winston saw Hazel running freely outside.
- ☐ Winston and Sugar found a homeless dog on the trail.
- ☐ Winston had dry dog food for breakfast.
- ☐ Sugar took Winston to the groomer.
- ☐ Sugar and Winston visited the shelter weeks later.
- ☐ Winston went for a walk on the trail.

2. VOCABULARY CHECK: MATCH THE WORD TO THE MEANING

Draw a line from the word to its meaning:

Grrreat	A doggy way of saying 'great'
Observation Window	A window Winston watches from
Pee-mail	Smells left by other dogs on walks
Groomer	A place where dogs get cleaned and cared for
Furever	A playful way to say 'forever' (used for adoptions)


3. WINSTON'S MOOD TRACKER


Write down how Winston feels during each part of the story:

Event	Winston's Mood
Eating dry dog food	
Going to the groomer	
Seeing Hazel outside	
Finding the homeless dog	
Coming back from the shelter	

4. REFLECTION QUESTIONS


A. What made Winston feel grumbly at the beginning of the story?

 _____

 _____

B. What helped Winston feel grateful at the end?

 _____

 _____

C. What are three things in your life that you're thankful for?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

5. CREATIVE CORNER: BARK YOUR BLESSINGS!

Draw a picture of Winston with some of the things he's grateful for (like Sugar, his pillow, his food, or his hedgehog).



HAPPY TO BE ME

SEL KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Self-Awareness: Recognizing your own strengths, preferences, and feelings.
- Self-Acceptance: Embracing what makes you unique, even when others are different.
- Comparison vs. Confidence: Understanding how comparing yourself to others can impact how you feel—and learning to shift your mindset.
- Empathy: Appreciating the talents of others without losing sight of your own.
- Positive Self-Talk: Using kind, encouraging thoughts to support ourselves on tough days.

PRE-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Have you ever felt like you weren't good at something others could do?
- What do you think makes a person special?
- What does it mean to be proud of yourself?
- How do you feel when someone compares you to others?

POST-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why did Winston start to feel bad about himself?
- What were some things Winston thought he couldn't do?
- What helped Winston feel better?
- What does Winston mean when he says, "The only dog I will compare myself to is... myself"?
- What makes you happy to be you?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

GAME ACTIVITIES

- **Strength Spotters**

Each student shares one strength. Others add observations about their talents using paw print cards.

- **Me-Chart Bingo**

Create bingo cards with traits and skills (e.g., 'kind to animals,' 'good at building'). Students find classmates who match.

- **“Be You!” Roleplay**

Act out situations where someone feels 'less than' and flip the script with a friend who encourages them with kind words.

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- **What Makes Me, Me** – Students write about 3 things they love about themselves and why.

- **Winston's Mirror Talk** – Write a pep talk Winston might give himself in the mirror next time he's feeling unsure.

- **Be Proud, Be You!** – Write a letter to someone (real or fictional) who needs help realizing how amazing they are.

ART ACTIVITIES

- **Winston's Mirror** – Draw Winston looking in a mirror and write positive words around the reflection.

- **“I Am” Self-Portraits** – Students draw themselves and fill the background with 'I am...' statements (e.g., 'I am brave').

- **Comparison Cloud / Confidence Sun** – Draw a gloomy cloud filled with comparison thoughts; next to it, a sun with confidence thoughts!

STUDENT WORKSHEETS

PART 1: LET'S REFLECT ON WINSTON'S STORY

1. What made Winston feel sad at the beginning of the story?

2. Who are the two dogs Winston compares himself to? What did he admire about them?

- Dog 1: _____ → What Winston admired:

- Dog 2: _____ → What Winston admired:


3. What is Winston's job? What makes him good at it?

PART 2: KNOW YOURSELF (LIKE WINSTON DID!)


4. What are YOU good at?

 _____

5. What do YOU like?

 _____

6. What do YOU find hard or challenging?

 _____

7. What makes YOU special or unique?

 _____

PART 3: PAWSITIVE THINKING

8. Why is it not helpful to compare ourselves to others all the time?





9. What lesson did Winston learn by the end of the story?





🧐 Bonus: Design Winston's "TDIC" Badge!

In the box below, design a badge for Winston that shows what makes him proud. Include symbols that represent his strengths like bravery, alertness, and loyalty.



TDIC Badge Design:



WAGGING TALES

SEL KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Honesty & Integrity:** Telling the truth builds trust—fibs, even small ones, can have consequences.
- **Trust & Accountability:** Others count on us to be truthful, especially in important moments.
- **Empathy:** Understanding why someone might tell a tall tale—and helping them feel accepted.
- **Self-Worth:** You don't need to exaggerate who you are to be liked or respected.
- **Repairing Relationships:** Apologizing, being honest, and growing from mistakes can restore trust.

PRE-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What do you think makes someone trustworthy?
- What's the difference between a silly story and a lie?
- Why do you think someone might tell a tall tale?
- How do you feel when someone tells you something that isn't true?

POST-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why did Duke tell tall tales?
- How did Winston feel when Duke told the fib about the snake?
- What was the result of Winston not believing Duke later?
- How did Duke repair the situation?
- How can we use our imagination without pretending something is real?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

GAME ACTIVITIES

- **Truth or Tale?**

Read short 'story cards.' Students decide if it's a true fact or a tall tale and explain their reasoning. Bonus: Students write their own 'truth' and 'tall tale' for classmates to guess!

- **Trust Tree Game**

Pass a ball around a circle. Each student shares something that builds or breaks trust. Add leaves with their ideas to a classroom 'Trust Tree.'

- **Tall Tale Theater**

Small groups act out funny tall tales—clearly labeled as pretend. Highlight storytelling fun vs. misleading fibs.

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- **“Why I Matter” Reflection** – Write about what makes you special—no exaggeration needed.

- **Duke’s Journal** – Write a journal entry from Duke’s point of view after he apologized to Winston.

- **Fib-Free Fun** – Write a fictional tall tale clearly labeled as pretend—add illustrations!

ART ACTIVITIES

- **Tall Tale Posters** – Create posters with silly, exaggerated scenes (e.g., Winston riding a rocket squirrel).

- **Trust Building Blocks** – Decorate a 'block' with something that builds trust. Stack to create a 'Trust Tower.'

- **Honest Paw Prints** – Decorate paw prints with words or drawings that show what it means to be honest and kind.

STUDENT WORKSHEETS

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Who is the narrator of the story?

2. What is a “tall tale”?

3. What were some of the tall tales Duke told?

4. Why did Winston start to doubt Duke?

5. What happened to Hazel, and who helped find her?

6. How did Duke feel the next day, and what did he do?

7. What lesson did Winston learn?

VOCABULARY PRACTICE

Match each word with its correct meaning.

- A. Fib
- B. Interloper
- C. Tall Tale
- D. Sulk
- E. Barbed Wire

1. ____ A made-up story that's hard to believe
2. ____ To be gloomy or pout silently
3. ____ A small lie
4. ____ Someone who goes where they're not welcome
5. ____ A type of wire with sharp points used for fencing

DISCUSSION: TALK IT OUT!

Circle one to discuss with a partner or group.

- Have you ever told a “tall tale” to impress someone?
- How can fibs affect your friendships?
- Why is it important to be yourself?

CREATIVE CORNER

Draw a scene from the story on a separate sheet or on the back of this sheet — Maybe Duke jumping through flaming hoops (in his imagination), Winston sulking after the snake fib, or the moment they rescued Hazel.

REFLECTION

Write a short paragraph answering this question:

Why is it important to be honest, even when you're trying to make friends?



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Winston's Confidence-Boosting Quote Card Set

Cut out and share these cards with students when they need a confidence boost or to celebrate their uniqueness!

“The only dog I will compare myself to is... myself.” – Winston

“Being different is what makes me pawsome!” – Winston

“You don’t have to be like anyone else to be amazing.” – Winston

“Tail high. Head high. Be proud of who you are.” – Winston

“I’m not made for creeks—I’m made for courage!” – Winston

“Even if you can’t jump far, you can leap into being you.” – Winston

“I don’t chase perfection. I chase squirrels—and self-love!” – Winston

“I’m not a guide dog. I’m a guard dog. And I love who I am.” – Winston

“You’re one of a kind, and that’s a mighty fine thing to be!” – Winston

“Just because it’s hard doesn’t mean you’re not strong.” – Winston

Winston's Award Stickers & Certificates

For use with Winston's adventures: Coop Wars, Fetching Success, and What the Woof?

Winston's Sticker Cutouts

 **TDIC in Training!**

 **I Never Gave Up!**

 **I Used My Imagination!**

 **Big Thinker Award!**

 **Paw-sitive Problem Solver!**

 **Top Friend in Charge!**

 **I Caught the Ball!**

 **Magical Imagination User!**

 **Brave Like Winston!**

 **Fetching Success Achieved!**

Winston's Certificates of Achievement

Certificate of Perseverance

Awarded to: _____

For showing determination and never giving up—just like Murray in *Fetching Success*!

🐾 Signed: _____ Date: _____

Certificate of Imagination

Awarded to: _____

For using creativity to make the world more magical—just like Soren, Willow, and Winston in *What the Woof?*

🐾 Signed: _____ Date: _____

Certificate of Kindness & Leadership

Awarded to: _____

For showing empathy and standing up for others—just like Winston in *Coop Wars*!

🐾 Signed: _____ Date: _____