



Norah McClintock

Dooley Takes the Fall

a novel

Educator's Guide

Dooley Takes the Fall

Norah McClintock

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE BY CAROLINE PIGNAT



Red Deer Press

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Norah McClintock's novel *Dooley Takes the Fall* is appropriate for students aged 14 and up to use literature circles, guided reading, class novel study, or independent reading.

Part I divides the novel into fourteen sections. Each section contains: plot summaries, guiding questions for activities and discussions to be used before and after reading. The questions extend thinking and encourage prediction and inference as solve the mystery. Also included are *exploring the writing* activities that invite students to identify, understand, analyze, evaluate and create key parts of the writing process. The *exploring the writing* activities can be used at the end of each section or at the end of the novel.

Part II provides blackline masters for the underlined activities in Part I as well as end of novel activities.

Solving the Mystery

To solve the mystery, students are engaged in sorting, analyzing, evaluating and re-evaluating important information. Blackline masters "**Detective's Notes**" are provided in Part II to assist students as they manage their findings.

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Cross Curriculum Connections

Language Arts

- literary devices
 - subtle inferences
 - flashback
 - foil
 - back story
 - suspense
 - point of view
 - descriptive writing
 - vocabulary
 - fact vs. opinion

- creative writing
 - persuasive essays
 - reader responses
 - mystery writing

- story elements
 - plot
 - setting
 - conflict
 - character
 - development
 - motivation
 - compare and contrast
 - body language

Social Studies

- criminal law
- legal process for crime investigations
- young offenders
- rehabilitation

Arts

- reenact a scene
- interviews
- tableau
- corridor of voices

Themes

- Retribution
- Rehabilitation
- Forgiveness
- Power (bullying, peer pressure)
- Choice
- Responsibility
- Prejudice
- Trust

Plot Summary

Dooley already had enough on his plate when he sees a guy take a header off a bridge. The last thing he needs is another run in with police or another reason for his uncle to question Dooley's promise to stay on the straight and narrow. Their relationship is shaky enough. But as things progress and people learn that Dooley doesn't speak the whole truth, he move from witness to possible suspect. Additional murders, robberies, and Dooley's bad choices have even Dooley doubting his innocence. It's up to Dooley to solve this mystery and save himself.

Part I

LITERATURE CIRCLES / GUIDED READING

Cast of Characters

Ryan Dooley – 17 year-old main character
Dooley's Uncle – a retired cop who owns a dry cleaning store
Jeannie – Dooley's uncle's girlfriend
Lorraine – Dooley's mother
Mark Everley – the body
Mr. Rektor – the vice principal
Eddy Gillette – a previous acquaintance of Ryan's
Peter Landers – a friend of Mark, a scrapper
Winston Rhodes – good looking guy who's hanging with Beth
Esperanza – the Rhodes' maid
Beth – Mark's sister
Marcus Bracey – friend of Mark, like Rhodes, but quieter
Megan – girl at party, Landers' girlfriend
Alicia – a girl with Down's Syndrome who frequents the video store
Warren – a bullying victim of Landers and company
Detective Graff – homicide cop
Dr. Kingston – Dooley's current psychologist
Dr. Calvin – Dooley's psychologist from the detention centre
Kevin – supervisor at video store
Linelle – co-worker at video store
Al Szabo – Dooley's youth worker
Annette Girondin – Dooley's lawyer

What is a Mystery?

Discuss the following:

- What is a mystery?
- What elements does a mystery have that other genres don't?
- What is your favourite mystery (novel/movie/TVshow)?
- How does the author create suspense?
- What makes a good mystery?

Mystery Vocabulary

alibi — proof used by the accused to show he/she was not at the scene of the crime
clue — objects or facts that help solve the mystery
crime — breaking the law
deduce — using logical reasoning to come to a conclusion
detective — the one who investigates crimes
evidence — something used as proof in solving a case
hunch — a gut feeling or guess not proven by fact
motive — the reason someone does what they do
red herring — a clue or suspect that diverts attention from the real issue
suspect — someone suspected of a crime
victim — the one who is harmed or has suffered loss
witness — someone who saw what happened

Chapter One and Two

(pages 1-14)

Summary

Ryan Dooley is on his way home from work at the video store. He was let out early and plans on taking full advantage of this “free” time. After taking an undisclosed detour, he sees a person jump from a bridge over the ravine. When he arrives at the scene he checks the body, but the guy is dead. Dooley’s pager goes off and he must call his uncle to check in (a system his uncle devised to keep track of Dooley’s whereabouts). A young kid at the scene calls 9-1-1 and when the police arrive they interrogate Dooley. Dooley’s reaction to the cops implies that he has experience dealing with police. He is unnerved at being caught in this scene and of the possible consequences. He wants to prove to everyone he isn’t a total screw up anymore, but he can’t lie about knowing the boy who jumped. They go to the same school, even if Dooley has only been at the school a few weeks.

Preparing to Read

- Cover: What predictions can you make from the cover?
Title: What do you think “Dooley Takes the Fall” refers to?
Back cover copy:
 - Setting: Where and when does the story take place?
 - Character: Who is the main character and how old is he?
 - Plot: What do you think happens to Dooley during the story?
 - Conflict: What do you think will be the main conflict?
- **Vocabulary:** Crime scene, investigate, statement, homicide, suspicious, on the record, Charter rights, ravine.

After the Reading

- Opening line – what questions does it raise?
- *Dooley guessed he hadn’t had much experience with cops. If he had, he wouldn’t be so enthusiastic.* What can we infer about Dooley from this statement?
- What do we know that the cop doesn’t?

Extending the Reading

- *He knew he should feel sorry for the kid, but the truth was, he didn’t. What goes around comes around, he thought.* What does this imply?
- **Profile:** Based on what you discover in the opening chapters, start a file on Dooley.

Exploring the Writing

- **Detective Notes:** Jot some notes based on what you read.
 - **Facts:** What did you learn?
 - **Observations:** What did you observe about the characters and/or the scene?
 - **Suspicious:** What is your gut telling you? What seems suspicious to you?
 - **Questions:** What questions do you have after reading this section?
- Many great mysteries begin with a dead body and quickly draw you in to the action and suspense. What intrigues you and makes you want to continue reading?

Chapter Three and Four

(pages 15-29)

Summary

Dooley arrives home to face the ire and questions of his overbearing uncle. His uncle used to be a cop but now owns dry-cleaning stores; however his interrogating ways haven't changed. His uncle had called the video store and is angry with Dooley for not telling him exactly where he was or that he'd left work early. Dooley explains what happened at the ravine and his uncle, surprisingly, tells him he did the right thing. His uncle comments on Dooley's missing ring and assumes Dooley brought it in to be sized, but Dooley quietly wonders how the ring went missing. The next morning, Dooley acts as if he is going for a jog so he can revisit the crime scene and scan for his ring. Unfortunately, Graff is there and Dooley tries his best to act like a "normal, innocent person" but the whereabouts of his ring has him concerned. The papers report that the deceased's name was Mark Everley. By the way the kids at school are grieving, Dooley figures he must have been popular. Mr. Rektor, the vice-principal is very suspicious of Dooley based on Dooley's past, and refuses to allow him to attend the funeral for Mark. Dooley's uncle gets Dooley off school and buys him clothes for the funeral. He recognizes Mark's sister from the video store as well as Eddy Gillette, and Landers, someone Dooley considers as bad as Mark.

Preparing to Read

- Despite being near a body, Dooley seemed more anxious about not calling his uncle in time. Why?
- **Vocabulary:** incriminate, crime scene, justify, theoretically, aneurysm.

After the Reading

- Why does Dooley sneak out for a "jog"?
- We learn a lot about characters by how other characters feel about them.
 - How does Dooley feel about Mark?
 - How does Mr. Rektor feel about Dooley?

Extending the Reading

- Write a character sketch of Dooley's uncle.
- **Character Dynamics:** Describe their relationship. How does one feel about the other?
- **Profile:** start a file on the victim. Are Dooley's opinions considered facts?

Exploring the Writing

- **Plot Line** – summarize what has happened in the first few chapters. Include questions raised as you gather information (i.e. the ring).
- Discuss the difference between **fact and opinion**. Can something be both? What role does each one play in an investigation?

Chapter Five and Six

(pages 30-46)

Summary

Dooley talks with Mark's sister who is stopping by the school. She doesn't attend there. Dooley is attracted to her and disappointed to see Rhodes, a good looking guy from the funeral, join her. The girl stops by school the next day and gets angry with Dooley for not disclosing his involvement at the scene of the crime. They go for a coffee to avoid Rektor's gaze. Beth (Mark's sister) wants to know what Dooley saw that night. She refuses to believe that he jumped. Beth asks about Mark's missing backpack and camera. If it was an accident, he would have still been wearing them. They wonder if someone stole the backpack off the body.

Dooley sees Landers and Gillette bullying a scrawny kid at school. He considers intervening, given the reaction his presence gets and the fact that Beth appears on the scene, but Rhodes steps in to defend the victim.

Preparing to Read

- **Vocabulary:** Toxicology, accusation, neutral, rudiments, pulverize, spectators.

After the Reading

- What important information does Dooley learn about Mark from Beth?
- What about the scene tells Dooley the scrawny kid is being bullied? What does he compare it to?

Extending the Reading

- Why is the backpack an important clue to what happened that evening?
- How do the bullying participants react to Dooley's presence?

Exploring the Writing

- **Journal Response** Choose a Reading Response Prompt and write a short reflection.
- Reread the analogy on page 41 and write your own **analogy** of a bullying scenario. You may choose any character's point of view.

Chapter Seven and Eight

(pages 47-74)

Summary

Dooley is killing time at his mandatory counseling session with Kingston and is shocked to hear that Dr. Kingston wants to stop seeing him as a patient. Even more alarming is the news that Dooley's uncle has been paying for these sessions out of his own pocket. Although Dooley is completely skeptical about the possibility of any benefit, he begs Kingston for another chance. In a flashback to previous sessions, Dooley recalls when he took a sip of beer and broke the deal with his uncle to stay clean. Another flashback is to a discussion with Dr. Calvin while in detention where Dooley discerns anger management. We learn that Dooley's mother, Lorraine, has issues of her own, and tended to hold Dooley responsible for his father's nature. Dooley's uncle has no time for his little sister Lorraine. He's washed his hands of her.

Beth remains on Dooley's mind. He watches the movies she rents and likes them. When Beth and Rhodes come to the store, Dooley wonders if they are a couple. Linelle says they share the common story of dead siblings. Dooley's uncle tells him he heard through a cop at the store that toxicology reports showed Mark's blood alcohol levels were off the charts. Beth continues to ask Dooley if he remembered anything more about her brother's death. She asks him to be hypnotized but Dooley fears he will only get himself into more trouble.

Preparing to Read

- Do you think criminals can be rehabilitated? What is necessary for that to happen?
- **Vocabulary:** Strategize, impassively, initiative, progress, re-evaluate, coping mechanisms, incoherent, nostalgic.

After the Reading

- What is the deal Dooley has with his uncle? What is "the plan"? (page 52)
- Dooley's uncle was footing the bill for private sessions – why?
- How does Dooley see therapy and self reflection? Why doesn't he engage?
- Reread Dooley's description of his job and summarize how he sees customers and how he thinks they see him.

Extending the Reading

- Dooley juxtaposes Dr. Calvin's theory against the reality of his own life. What does this tell us about Dooley?
- What background information do we get during Dooley's flashback on page 58?
- Even Beth didn't look surprised that Dooley saw *Roshomon*. What can we infer from that?
- Why does Dooley decline hypnotism?

Exploring the Writing

- A bat has been mentioned several times. Repetition is an effective strategy for flagging something important. What can we infer from mention of the bat?
- Dooley's uncle thinks poorly of his sister (Dooley's mother). *She is what she is.* (page 67) Does the uncle seem to agree with Dooley's thought that Dooley "is what he is" as well?
- **Plot Line** – summarize what has happened in the last few chapters.
- Discuss the use of **flashback** in this chapter. Why did the author use this device?

Chapter Nine and Ten

(pages 75-87)

Summary

Gillette and Dooley have a conversation at Dooley's locker. Gillette is curious about what Dooley saw the night Mark died. The conversation implies that there is a history between the boys and each one has information on the other: Dooley thinks Gillette owes him an apology for what he "screwed up" and Gillette asked if Dooley "told the cops about you and Mark." Gillette is wary around Dooley; he knows what Dooley is capable of.

Unable to agree to hypnotism, Dooley decides he'll help Beth by finding her brother's backpack. His uncle is having a poker night with his cop buddies. Dooley recalls the time one of them was on his case about Dooley's crime and how easy he'd gotten off. Since then, as a favour, Dooley's uncle let Dooley stay in his room on poker nights. Dooley's uncle senses Dooley is up to something when Dooley inquires about Mark's whereabouts the night he died. When his uncle realizes Dooley wants to find the backpack to please Beth, he agrees to ask his cop friends. After the game he tells Dooley Mark left home at 4:30 that afternoon. Nobody knew where he went.

Preparing to Read

- **Vocabulary:** Sincerity, traumatize, prejudice.

After the Reading

- Dooley describes Gillette's impression of him on page 75. What does that tell us about Dooley? What does it tell us about Gillette? Why does his uncle's expression change (page 86) as he watches Dooley think about Beth?

Extending the Reading

- Gillette and Dooley obviously have a history we have yet to discover. Based on their conversation what are some assumptions that could be made?
- Dooley is eager to find the backpack to please Beth. Its whereabouts are a mystery. Fill out the **Evidence: backpack** file and add to it as clues are discovered.
- Dooley experiences prejudice from a cop on page 83. We don't know Dooley's crime yet, but does it seem fair that his reputation precedes him?

Exploring the Writing

- Reread the exchange between Dooley and Gillette at the end of chapter nine. Make note of the boys' **body language**. What is it telling us?
- **Journal Response:** Reflect on "reputations" and their effect in our culture or in your experience.
- Create a **Profile** on Gillette.

Chapter Eleven and Twelve

(pages 88-97)

Summary

Dooley drops in on Dr. Calvin and learns that under hypnosis he may say things he was thinking of during that period of time. He knows he can't do that but figures it doesn't matter anyway. Beth would never be interested in him. Rhodes invites Dooley to a fundraiser he is hosting to help Beth set up a Mark Everley Memorial Scholarship. Dooley is frustrated by the fact that, while he can't even agree to be hypnotized, Rhodes came up with the perfect idea to impress Beth. He's also reluctant to donate his hard earned money in the name of someone who was a jerk. He isn't rich like Rhodes. In hopes of finding the backpack, Dooley asks Rhodes where Mark drank. Rhodes admits that Mark liked to party, maybe even a bit too much, but doesn't say where.

Preparing to Read

- Hypnosis: Review the process and ask if anyone has had experience with it.
- Do you think Dooley has a chance with Beth or is he kidding himself?

After the Reading

- What do we learn about Dooley during his chat with Dr. Calvin?
- Dooley compares himself to Rhodes and comes up lacking. Give some examples.

Extending the Reading

- It seems unusual that Rhodes is inviting Dooley. What is his motivation? Do you suspect an ulterior motive?
- **Profile:** Rhodes isn't a suspect in the investigation, but start a profile on him as a contrast to Dooley.
- **Evidence: Backpack** — update your file based on what Dooley says in these chapters.

Exploring the Writing

- **Plot Line** – summarize what has happened in the last few chapters.
- Rhodes is often shown as a **foil** to Dooley. Discuss the use of foil and compare and contrast the two characters as Dooley sees them.

Chapter Thirteen and Fourteen

(pages 98-129)

Summary

Dooley reviews the possibilities concerning what happened to Mark's backpack. He wonders why Gillette was asking all those questions – did Gillette know something? Dooley stops two guys from stuffing the scrawny kid into a locker. They appear to be afraid of Dooley and his reputation. Warren (the scrawny kid – who also alludes to Dooley's baseball bat infamy) tells Dooley all those guys are losers who have been picking on him, but that Everley was the worst. He even harassed Warren's sister who has Down's Syndrome. Dooley's uncle is upset with the news from Dr. Kingston that he is no longer seeing Dooley as a patient because Dooley hasn't been taking it seriously. Dooley calls in sick to work the night of the fundraiser and lies to his uncle (who is going out of town.) He enters the party with the right intentions and drinks only ginger ale. Rhodes bragged about his father's collections (one being a gun collection) and tells how he and Gillette are friendly because Gillette trashed a car of someone Rhodes disliked, so Rhodes gave him an alibi. Rhodes intervenes in an altercation between Landers and some guy hanging with Landers' girlfriend. Rhodes makes a big deal of his \$500 donation to the fund when Beth arrives. Beth is hostile towards Dooley. The police have informed her of his past offences and she doesn't want anything to do with him. The frustration gets Dooley drinking. When he has to return his uncle's call, he interrupts Landers who is pressuring the maid Esperanza and threatening to have her deported if she doesn't do what he wants. Esperanza is later seen smiling at and talking with Gillette, which Dooley finds odd. Beth and Rhodes are nowhere to be seen, but Dooley figures they're together. Given the evening he's had, the way Beth shunned him, and the fact that his uncle is out of town overnight, Dooley continues drinking as he shoots pool with Gillette and Landers.

Preparing to Read

- Will Dooley go to the party? If he works and his uncle will say no what are his options?

After the Reading

- Why doesn't Dooley tell Beth her brother was drunk when he fell?
- Why didn't Warren like Mark Everley?

Extending the Reading

- What choices were made in chapter fourteen by Rhodes, Landers, and particularly Dooley? What do we learn about their characters? Fill out the **Choice: Dooley** sheet.
- **Corridor of Voices:** Reenact Dooley's thoughts at the party using corridor of voices.

Exploring the Writing

- **Journal:** Write a response to the following statement:
But if there was one thing Dooley knew, it was that you could tell yourself that no one knew what you were doing. You could even make yourself believe it. But that didn't make it true. Someone always knew (page 101).
- **Descriptive Writing:** *He hated when people looked at him like that, like he was a hungry tiger escaped from the zoo looking for someone – something – to eat (page 102).* What images does hungry tiger generate? Use analogies to describe how characters would look

at: a girl in a wheelchair, a basketball MVP, the silent kid in class, a flirt, a nervous supply teacher.

Chapter Fifteen and Sixteen

(pages 130-154)

Summary

Dooley wakes up in the hospital with a pounding headache and a furious uncle. His uncle assumes he'd gotten high and thrown away all their good work these past few months. Dooley confesses to lying about working, and to having three drinks, but his story doesn't match up with his level of intoxication. There's a cop in the room as well. Dooley is a suspect on a smash-and-grab at the electronics. His wallet was found at the scene and he was found passed out at home with the pipe used to smash the window. The police did not find stolen property on Dooley. Dooley has no memory of the night after the third drink and it usually took more than three drinks to get Dooley drunk. His uncle tells him witnesses reported seeing two people at the store window. Dooley and his uncle meet with Al Szabo his youth worker. He considers Dooley's track record, perfect attendance at school and work and says they'll wait and see about the smash-and-grab charges. Dooley's uncle tells him Dooley's urine specimen had Rohypnol in it and wonders if Dooley was taking the drug to get high.

Rhodes visits Dooley at work and tells him the cops were asking about Dooley's night. He then tells Dooley how Landers wanted to tear into Dooley because Megan was all over him. Dooley asked about Esperanza, but Rhodes didn't know anything about her incident with Landers. Rhodes says Dooley and Gillette got into an argument but he didn't remember when Gillette left. Dooley suspects Landers and Gillette had something to do with framing him but avoids looking for them for fear he might act out of rage and make things worse. He walks by the ravine and finds Beth on the bridge. He thought she was still angry about him not agreeing to hypnosis, but she tells him about the time Mark came home beat up and now knows it was by Dooley. She knew "everything." Dooley knows now it was Gillette and Landers who told her. He tries to explain that Mark hassled a kid and Dooley tried to make him stop. He tells her she didn't really know her brother as well as she thought, but Beth doesn't want to hear any more.

Preparing to Read

- Dooley had been on the straight and narrow for the past few months. Why did he throw it all away at the party? Predict the consequences of his choices that night.

After the Reading

- What is Rohypnol? What are the possibilities of how he got drugged?
- What is circumstantial evidence? Dooley is a suspect in the robbery. Will he be charged?

Extending the Reading

- *She's not the excuse. She's just the reason* (page 133). What's the difference?
- Add the recent events to Dooley's **Profile**. If you have profiles for other characters update them with information you have learned so far.

Exploring the Writing

- We know Dooley's thoughts and actions, but his uncle doesn't. Write his uncle's **diary entry** or a conversation his uncle would have with Jeannie about Dooley.

- **Plot Line** – summarize what has happened in the last few chapters.

Chapter Seventeen and Eighteen

(pages 155-176)

Summary

Dooley is looking for Gillette but he has been missing since the party. Rhodes reminds Dooley he saw them arguing at the party. Detective Joyeaux asks Dooley a few questions about Gillette but his uncle interrupts and takes him home. Detective Graff shows up to interrogate Dooley. Eddie Gillette was found dead from a massive head trauma in a ditch along the ravine. Graff asks questions about Dooley and Gillette's history. They used to do purse snatching until "the woman." Back at home Dooley tells his uncle about the altercation with Mark. Mark was teasing a girl with Down's Syndrome at the video store and Dooley stood up for her. It came to blows and Mark loved to fight. Landers and Gillette witnessed the fight and Dooley figured Gillette told Beth about it because he was afraid of Dooley. His uncle presses for more information and Dooley finally confesses that Gillette was with him the night he "hit the woman." Gillette planned it, but Dooley got caught. They were supposed to be in the empty house, but Gillette got it wrong. When Dooley says he doesn't think he did anything to Gillette the night of the party, his uncle advises him to keep that other story quiet. It would give Dooley a motive for killing Gillette.

Preparing to Read

- What does the title "Dooley Takes the Fall" imply? How is that relevant given what happened in the last chapters?

After the Reading

- What does the altercation with Mark tell us about Dooley's character?
- What does the "woman" incident tell us?

Extending the Reading

- Build a case for Dooley killing Gillette. Build a case against it. Which is more convincing?
- Dooley often withholds information from his uncle and from the readers. Discuss what important information has been missing up to this point and what information is still missing. Would the story have been as intriguing if we knew everything about Dooley right from page one?
- When it comes to Dooley's secrecy, do you think withholding information is the same as lying?

Exploring the Writing

- Write the closing arguments (a **persuasive essay**) as though you were the prosecution lawyer against Dooley. Be prepared for cross examination.

Chapter Nineteen and Twenty

(pages 177-201)

Summary

Dooley recalls the days purse-snatching with Gillette and Gillette's suggestion that they break and enter for more stuff. Gillette scouted the houses by the ravine. Breaking in gave Dooley a rush, especially when he was on something. He flashes back to breaking in to the house that night. He was stoned. Gillette shouted as they searched the house and a shadow came at Dooley. He swung his bat. It turned out to be the 54-year-old woman who lived there. He ran but the cops got his prints off the bat which he'd forgotten behind. She suffered permanent brain and motor damage.

Dooley realizes people are working to prove his guilt and only he will be working to prove his innocence. He decides to ask the people who saw him at the party for more information. Jen tells him he and Landers fought because of Megan and then because Landers told Beth about him beating up Mark. After that she saw Dooley shoving Gillette around. Megan tells him she left with Bracey, Landers and Gillette in a cab around two. Bracey tells him that Gillette wasn't in the cab, they walked to St. Clair and he took the bus from there, but Bracey didn't actually see him get on the bus.

It turns out the girl with Down's Syndrome that Dooley saved is Alicia, who happens to be Warren's sister. He is surprised that Dooley is the "Ryan" Alicia always talks about. He tells Dooley that she is picked on because he's her brother. A homeless person shows up at the store a few days later looking for a reward for the red backpack he took off a dead kid. Dooley gives him some money and hides the backpack at home in the closet.

Preparing to Read

- Talk about "intention" in criminal behaviours. Should an "accident" be treated the same as "intent to harm"? What constitutes "self defense"?

After the Reading

- Who was the "mastermind" in the break-in?
- Is Dooley sure he did not do the smash-and-grab?

Extending the Reading

- Did Dooley mean to hit the woman? Does that change how you see him?
- If the incident was accidental, what choices had he intentionally made prior to that?
- What do these lines tell us about Dooley's character?
 - *...but that woman had kept him up more nights than Lorraine ever had.*
 - *At first Dooley had felt bad, about being caught, not about the woman. Now he felt bad about everything.*

Exploring the Writing

- In this mystery, the suspect (Dooley) plays the role of the detective. He feels compelled to solve the mystery of what happened after the party. What is at stake for him?
- **Plot Line** – summarize what has happened in the last few chapters.
- **Profile**: Update Dooley's Profile and Gillette's Profile.

Chapter Twenty-One and Twenty-Two

(pages 202-238)

Summary

Dooley debates whether he should turn in the backpack and decides to check it out himself. In it he found a few items including notebooks of violent stories Mark wrote, a USB stick, and scraps of paper (including a business card for an immigrant organization with the name Sara on the back) which he throws in the trash. Since his uncle's computer isn't compatible, Dooley takes the stick to school and opens the file. Warren arrives and tells him he's using the wrong program and offers to help. They go to Warren's house and open the picture files on the USB stick. Many are password protected and Warren gives Dooley suggestions for finding someone's password and offers to try and open them in return for helping his sister. Dooley's uncle, lawyer, and Graff have found the backpack. Dooley explains how he got it. Graff questions him about the fight with Mark, which he hadn't mentioned previously. He hints that Gillette saw Dooley kill Mark and that's why Gillette is dead too. He asks what Dooley was looking for in the ravine the morning after Mark's death. Dooley's only alibi is his manager Kevin. He must have seen Dooley get the backpack from the homeless guy.

The cops took the backpack and searched his room, but they didn't take the business card in the trash. His uncle tells him the next day his cop friends are saying Mark was pushed off the bridge (scuff marks, etc.) Dooley finally tells his uncle what he'd been doing in the ravine that night. He wanted to see how the woman was, but a dog barked at him and he ran. His uncle thinks it might be a good alibi for that night.

Beth confronts Dooley, angry that he had the backpack. She accuses him of killing Mark. Rektor tries to get Dooley transferred out, but his uncle stands up to Rektor and reminds Dooley that he still has rights. He tells Dooley to keep focused and to know he's got his back.

Preparing to Read

- Predict how the backpack will come into play.
- How is having an uncle who is an ex-cop a bonus / a problem?

After the Reading

- Why doesn't Dooley take the backpack to the police or tell his uncle about it?
- How does Dooley feel about being at school, about the other kids?

Extending the Reading

- On page 223, Dooley names innocent people who were jailed. Research one of them.
- Why is his uncle's confrontation with Rektor so important?

Exploring the Writing

- In "the longest speech his uncle had ever made" (page 236), Dooley's uncle gives him some insight. Choose a part of it and write your **response** to it. For example:
 - *You need to make your own chances.*
 - *Life is more like rehab, Ryan. One day at a time.*
- Dooley's childhood is summarized on page 229. How have people's perception of Dooley changed over the years? Why?

Chapter Twenty-Three and Twenty-Four

(pages 238-269)

Summary

Warren can't open the files, and does tell Dooley how Beth was a big secret, that Mark said his sister went to a "special school" everyone assumed she was like Alicia. Warren says he was giving his condolences to Beth because he knows how it feels when people say nothing about your loss. His father had died. Beth told Warren Mark's favourite things, which Warren hopes will help him crack the password. Dooley's uncle has to leave to visit Jeannie's ailing mother for the weekend. Kevin told the cops he didn't remember the backpack, just the homeless guy. Warren shows up at Dooley's home with copies of the pictures from the locked files. They were photos of Mark with Esperanza, photos of animal skulls with a locket, and ones of newspapers with old ratty clothing items. Dooley confronts Esperanza about her relationship with Mark but she is afraid because Mr. Rhodes appears. Beth is waiting for him when he arrives home. Thanks to Warren's information, she apologizes for what Mark did to Alicia, she thought he was "getting better." She explains how he had spent January in Guatemala helping to build a school. Dooley explains that he got the backpack to give to her. Beth denies knowledge of Mark's girlfriend and Dooley realizes they kept their relationship a secret. Beth describes Mark's unusual behaviour the night she first met his friends a week before Mark died, and that he didn't want his friends to meet her. She figured he was being over-protective, that he didn't want her around guys with a temper. She tells Dooley about the night she and Mark witnessed their father shot during a car-jacking when they were kids. Mark grabbed the guy's gun and shot him. Mark kept kicking and Beth kept screaming until the cops arrived. Ever since, Beth struggled with fear and Mark struggled with anger.

Preparing to Read

- How has the backpack helped or hindered Dooley's problems?

After the Reading

- What did the photos prove? Create an **evidence file** for the photos.
- What is the problem if Kevin doesn't recall the backpack, just the homeless guy?
- How does Beth respond to the information from Warren?

Extending the Reading

- Reread the first chapter on page 240 where Warren talks about grieving. Write a response.
- Everyone has a story. How have the following characters been affected by their stories?
How does it affect Dooley?
 - Beth's traumatic experience of the car-jacking.
 - Mark's traumatic experience of the car-jacking.
 - Dooley's childhood.
 - Warren's life.

Exploring the Writing

- **Profile:** Add information from Beth to Mark's profile.
- **Plot Line** – summarize what has happened in the last few chapters.
- **Back Story:** Write your back story. What events (good or bad) have shaped you?

Chapter Twenty-Five

(pages 270-298)

Summary

Following the lead on the business card, Dooley checks out the address and talks with Sara. She tells him Esperanza's visa expired a year ago and she's in the country illegally. She alludes to Esperanza's unfortunate "employment conditions" and adds that her employers are fully aware of her situation and they're all breaking the law. Dooley suspects Mr. Rhodes is taking advantage of Esperanza's situation. Dooley also realizes that Esperanza would be deported if she got involved with the police. Dooley goes to see Esperanza and meets Rhodes there. Warren pages Dooley and he calls from Rhodes house to learn that the newspapers' dates were those of the homeless people murders. Dooley notices that the locket in Rhodes' family photo is the same as the one with the animal skulls and takes the photo. Landers is waiting and tells Rhodes. They had been listening in on his calls and ask for the photos and flash drive. The two gang up on Dooley, take the photos and pour a drugged drink down his throat. All this time, Rhodes was the leader. Dooley tells them those photos of trophies aren't of crimes Mark committed, he wasn't in the country in January, but he figures Mark took them to use against the Rhodes to help free Esperanza. Dooley accuses Rhodes of killing Mark and says he probably has a trophy of that night as well. Mark says Esperanza is his alibi. Landers has no idea what Dooley is talking about. Rhodes explains how he tried to talk to Mark and he fell. Dooley tells Landers that Rhodes started torturing animals, then his sister, then homeless guys. Landers says it was just one homeless guy and that was by accident during a fight. Rhodes hands Landers a gun and hit him three times with a poker explaining calmly how he will tell the police Dooley did it and how he had to shoot Dooley in self defense. Dooley charges for Rhodes and gets shot.

Preparing to Read

- What is a "lead"? What is a red herring? Who are the primary suspects?

After the Reading

- Who was the ringleader? Why is that surprising?
- Summarize the crimes in point form. If possible, include motive.

Extending the Reading

- Dooley infers Landers' level of involvement by Landers' reactions during the conversation. Give some specific examples.
- Reenact this scene. Be sure to include each character's body language.

Exploring the Writing

- **Plot Line** – summarize what has happened in the last chapter. Discuss climax. What makes a scene climactic?
- Fill out the **Mystery Brainstorm** sheet for *Dooley Takes the Fall*.
- Review your **detective's notes**. Are any questions still unanswered?

Chapter Twenty-Six and Twenty-Seven

(pages 299-313)

Summary

Dooley is in hospital. Warren brings him a card from Alicia. Dooley had read the papers: Landers was dead. If Rhodes hadn't hit his head on the fireplace in the struggle as he shot Dooley, Dooley is sure he'd be dead rather than in hospital. Beth visits the hospital and shares her feelings of anger. Dooley tells her Mark did it out of love for Esperanza. Dooley wishes Beth would stay, but figures he will always be associated with the death of her brother. Dooley's uncle tells him they found Rhodes' trunk and that Mark's camera was in it. Rhodes is still in the hospital. He said Esperanza made a statement saying she was in love with Mark and that she'd sneak him in and they'd go exploring. He took photos of Rhodes' trophies and made plans to get Esperanza out. Rhodes convinced Esperanza he wouldn't talk about Mark to his parents.

Dooley's uncle gives him his grandfather's ring, found in the yard where Dooley was the night Mark died, proof that Dooley was innocent.

Dooley goes to visit the woman from the robbery night. He wants to apologize but her husband is not interested in hearing it or letting Dooley anywhere near his wife.

Beth visits Dooley at work and they go for coffee. She tells him that Rhodes is going to be okay and that Esperanza has disappeared. Dooley comes clean with her on his past so that she knows everything about him when he finally gets the nerve to ask her out.

Preparing to Read

- How do you predict the novel will end?

After the Reading

- Why is the ring important?
- Was the ending satisfying?
- Was anything left unresolved?

Extending the Reading

- Dooley visits the woman's house but is not allowed to apologize to her. Why is this visit so important to Dooley? What does it tell us about him?
- Do you blame the man for reacting the way he did? Write that scene from his point of view.
- Is it important to take responsibility for our actions? Write a response.

Exploring the Writing

- **Plot Line** – summarize what has happened in the last few chapters.
- Choose a different **point of view** and rewrite the scene:
 - Alicia making the card.
 - Esperanza's disappearance.
 - The uncle gives him the ring.
 - Beth visits the hospital.
 - The woman's husband sees Dooley at the door.

Part II

NOVEL ACTIVITIES and BLACKLINE MASTERS

DETECTIVE

notes

chapters:

facts

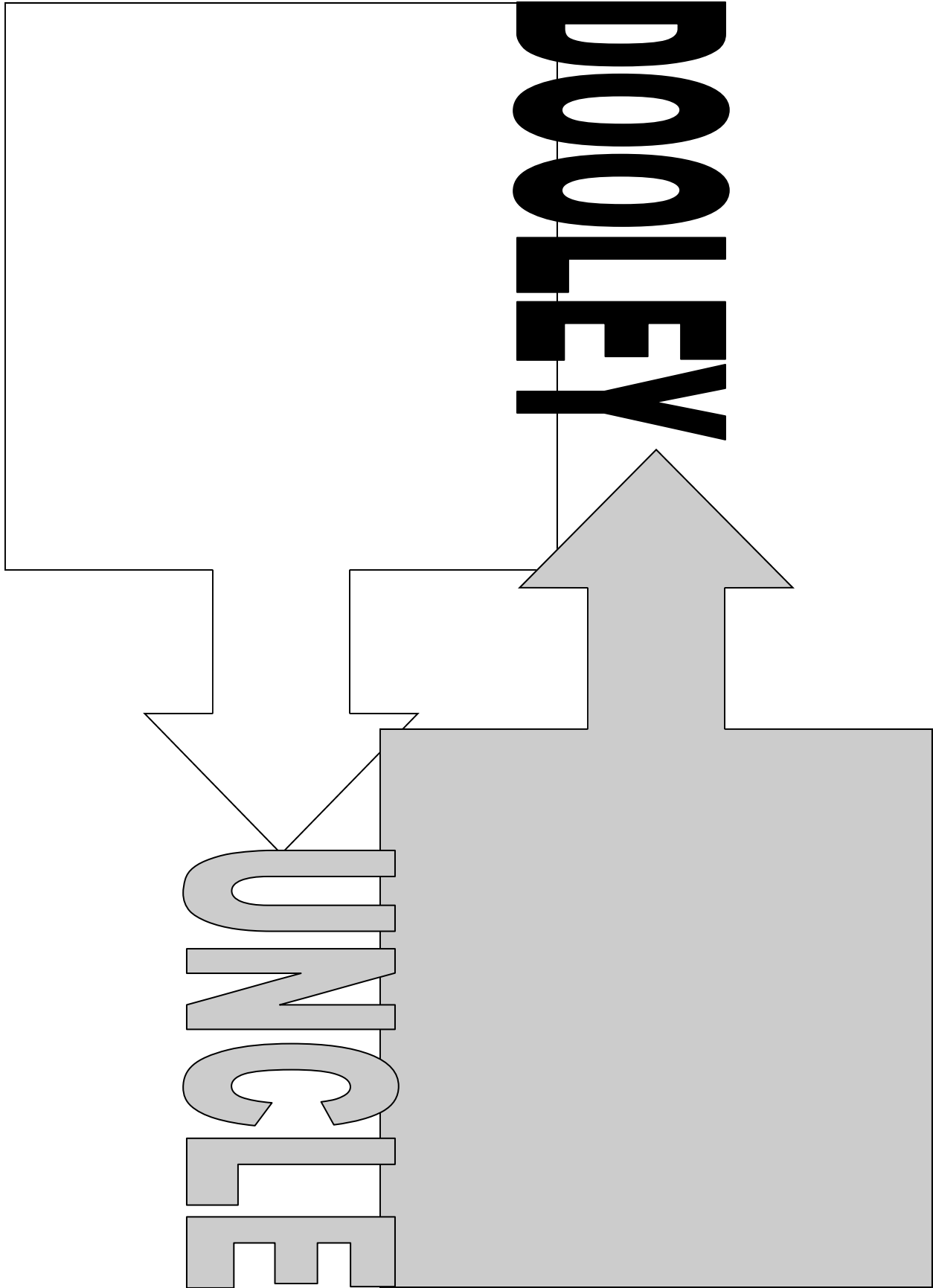
questions

observations

suspicious

Character Dynamics

Using examples from the story as evidence, describe how each character feels about the other.



DETECTIVE

profile:

notes

facts

observations

assumptions

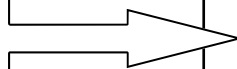
unanswered questions

description

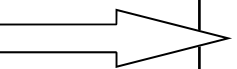
possible scenarios

assumptions

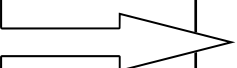
Everley didn't have it on the bridge.



Everley took it off on the bridge.



Everley jumped wearing it.



unanswered questions

DETECTIVE

EVIDENCE:

notes

item

description

**proof
that...**

→

→

→

→

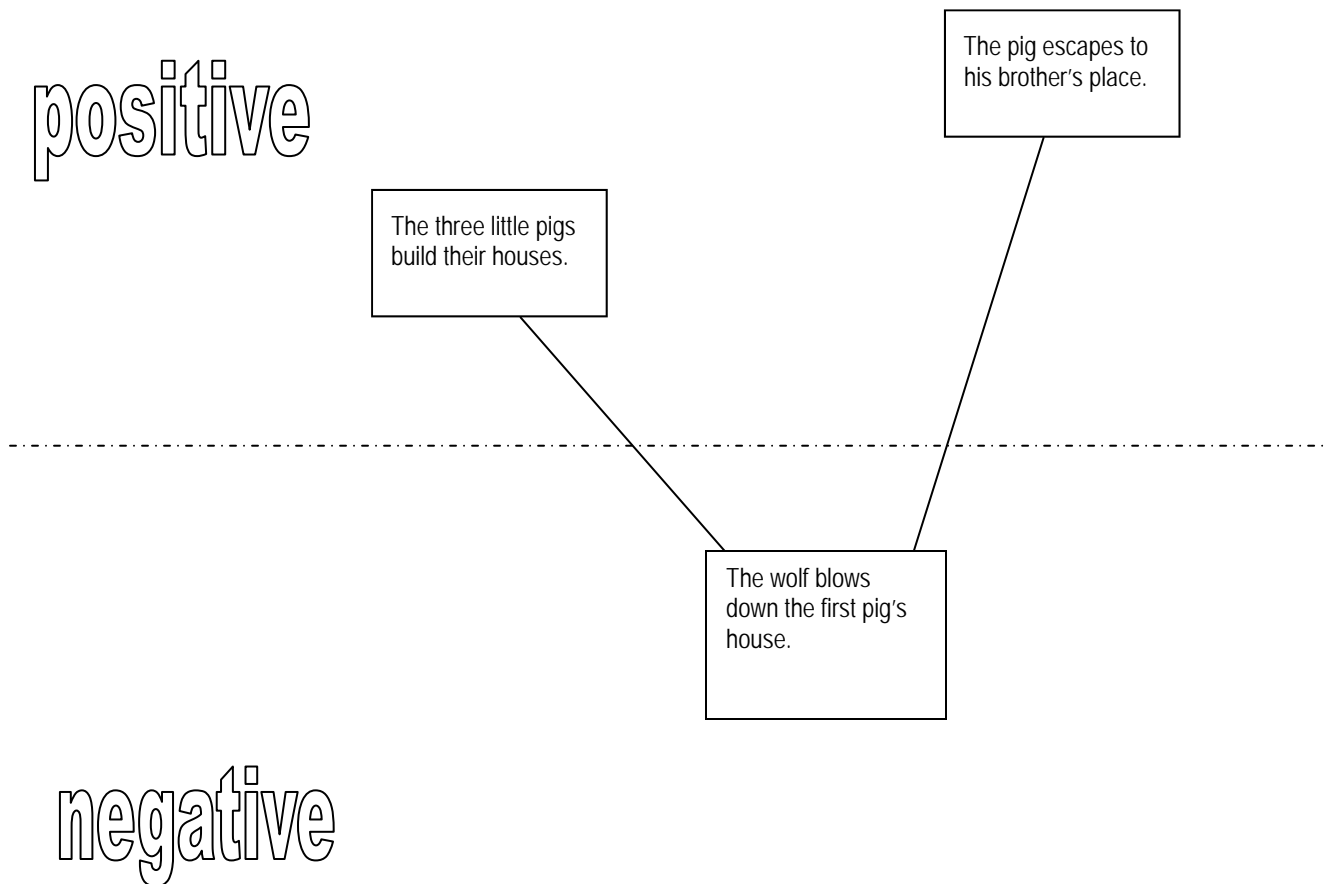
→

unanswered questions

PLOT LINE

Track the main events in the novel on a plot line. Include the page #, the event, and place it in relation to whether it is a positive or negative experience. Don't forget that it should be higher or lower based on how it relates to the other experiences. Track it in your notebook, or on a bulletin board as a group. Notice how the plot points move up and down and peak at the climax.

Sample Plot Line for *The Three Little Pigs*



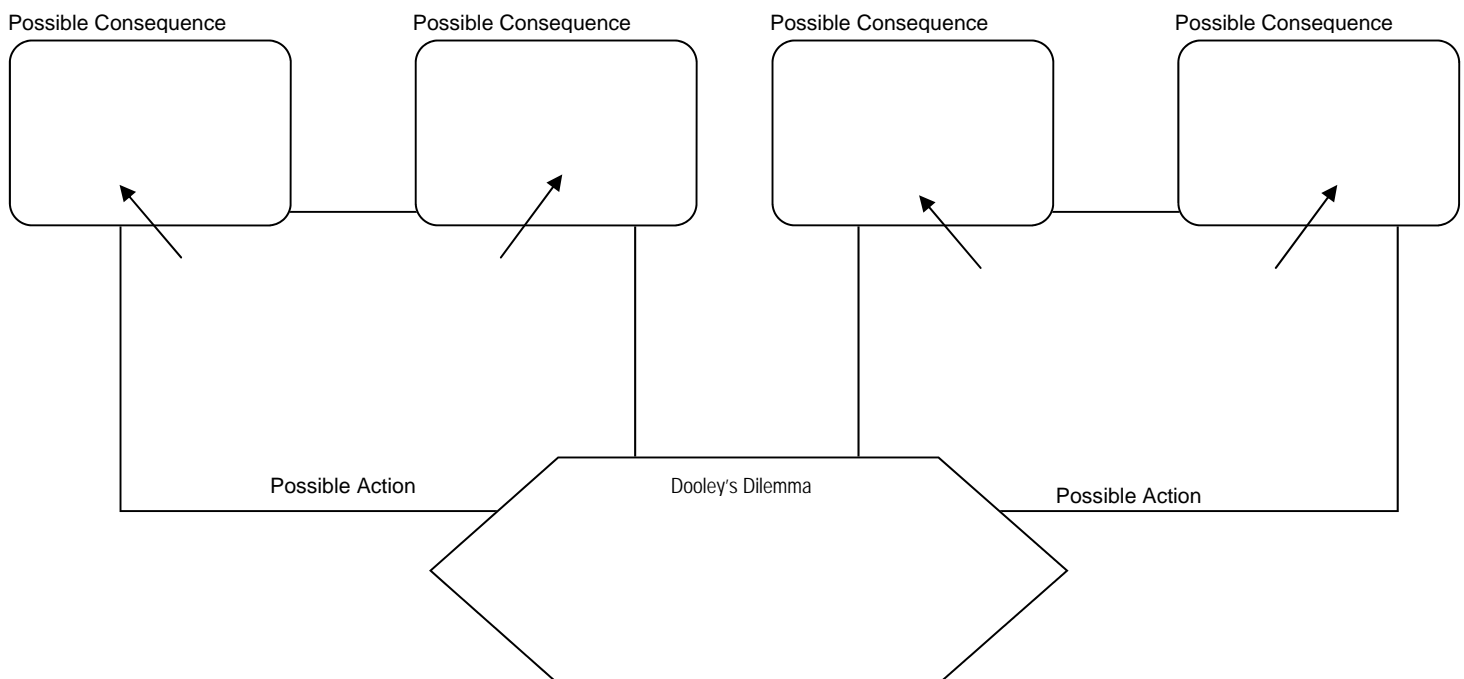
DETECTIVE notes

CHOICE: Dooley

Examine some of Dooley's choices by filling out the chart below.

Somebody <i>Character</i>	Wants <i>Character's desire</i>	But <i>Obstacle preventing character's fulfilled desire</i>	So <i>Choice or action made by character in response to obstacle</i>
Dooley	To impress Beth	He keeps making her angry and upset	He decides to find Mark's missing backpack

Break down one of those choices and examine the possible actions and consequences. Highlight the ones Dooley considers. If there are more than two actions or two consequences add more boxes or draw your own chart. Does he discern if the risked consequence is worth the desire?



CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

We get to know characters by what they say or think, how they act, and by what other characters say about them. As you find clues about a character fill in the chart below.

Character	Trait	Evidence	Page #

READING RESPONSE PROMPTS

Reading Response Journals encourage students to reflect on and relate to what they read. Remind students it is not a retelling of the story, but a relating to the story or a reaction to the story. Sometimes this is enough to give them sentence starters like:

- I wonder why...
- I was surprised that...
- I feel...
- I wonder if...
- I bet that...
- This reminds me of ...

Here are some other reading response prompts:

- What do you think will happen next?
- What has been the most exciting incident?
- What character do you find the most interesting? (Interesting doesn't mean you necessarily like the character.)
- Write a diary entry for one of the secondary characters.
- What would it be like for you to live in the setting where the story takes place?
- What choices would you have made differently from the main character?
- Would this story work if it happened today in your hometown?
- What other books or movies does it remind you of?
- What character do you relate most to? Why?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Non-Fiction

- You are a journalist for Dooley's local paper. Write three articles:
 - Mark's body is found
 - Dooley is found after the smash-and-grab
 - Gillette's body is found
 - a final piece after the mystery is solved
- Write a biography about a mystery author such as:
 - Edgar Allan Poe – Mystery's Creator
 - Agatha Christie
 - Sir Arthur Conan Doyle — Sherlock Holmes
 - Norah McClintock
 - For more authors visit <http://www.mysterynet.com/authors/>

Creative Writing

- Retell a part of this story from another character's point of view.
- Write the first chapter or outline for the sequel.
- Write a mystery (see **mystery writing activities**).
- Write an alternate ending to the novel, but be sure it leaves the readers satisfied.
- Study the mystery genre. Explain what elements are required in a mystery and how *Dooley Takes the Fall* incorporates those elements.

Arts and Oral/Visual Presentations

- Interview a character – radio or TV.
- Create a trailer for the movie (include a great hook, the themes, and conflict).
- Drama – present a key part of the novel in tableau.
 - tableau – choose four key points from a chapter and reenact the story

Drama — Corridor of Voices

Read a passage from the novel that involves internal struggle. For example:

- Dooley compares himself to Rhodes in the eyes of Beth.
- Dooley tries to figure out what happened to the backpack.
- Dooley debates about whether to intervene when Warren is bullied.
- Dooley as he witnesses the looks of fear from his classmates.

One student is the character, the rest of the group divides into two lines to form a corridor. As the character slowly walks through the corridor and passes each student, they voice concerns, thoughts, or ideas the character is feeling. The aim is to create a “collage” of comments that give voice to the internal struggle. Students may wish to plan who is saying what so the progression is logical.

Drama – Tableau

A tableau is one or more dramatic poses, or frozen scenes, created by students. The poses represent a key point (feeling, event, or idea) from the novel. Using body position, posture and expression, group members reflect on a specific point in the story. Encourage students to make use of space (high/low) and to have a focal point. Have them hold the pose for ten seconds then slowly transition into the next. Four is a good number of poses for one tableau story.

MYSTERY WRITING ACTIVITIES

What is a Mystery

Review the questions about **what is a mystery** at the beginning of the novel study.

Mysterious Photo

Students are to take photos that tell a story or raise questions. Post the photos on the board and have students create stories about the photos.

Break it Down

Effective mysteries should have certain elements. Complete the following checklist for *Dooley Takes the Fall*. Complete it for other mysteries you have read.

A mystery:

- begins with a crime (and usually a dead body) in the opening scene
- has suspense from page 1
- is plot driven rather than character driven
- has a hero who
 - has something “at stake”
 - is driven to solve the mystery or there will be dire consequences
 - has a personal problem (a subplot that complicates things)
- has many suspects with compelling motives and “guilty” behaviours
- has clues
 - red herrings – false leads based on clues
 - real clues or evidence that points to the solution
- has subplots (other stories besides the main mystery)
 - you find them in your character’s back story and secrets
- has a believable and satisfactory conclusion

Based on the above, that means a mystery author knows:

- how the story will end before they start writing it (write a plot line first).
- what information to “hide” from the reader until the very end
- the motive for the criminal
- every character’s secret (that makes them act the way they do)
- when to describe body language that tells the truth (even when dialogue isn’t).

Use the **Mystery Brainstorm** and the **Character Trait** worksheets (particularly for your main characters) to write your mystery. Be sure to check it against the above checklists as well.

Fiction from Facts.

Bring in mysterious crimes from newspapers. For example:

“A sixth human foot, wearing an Adidas training shoe, bobbed ashore near Vancouver yesterday in a grisly mystery that has gripped Canada.”

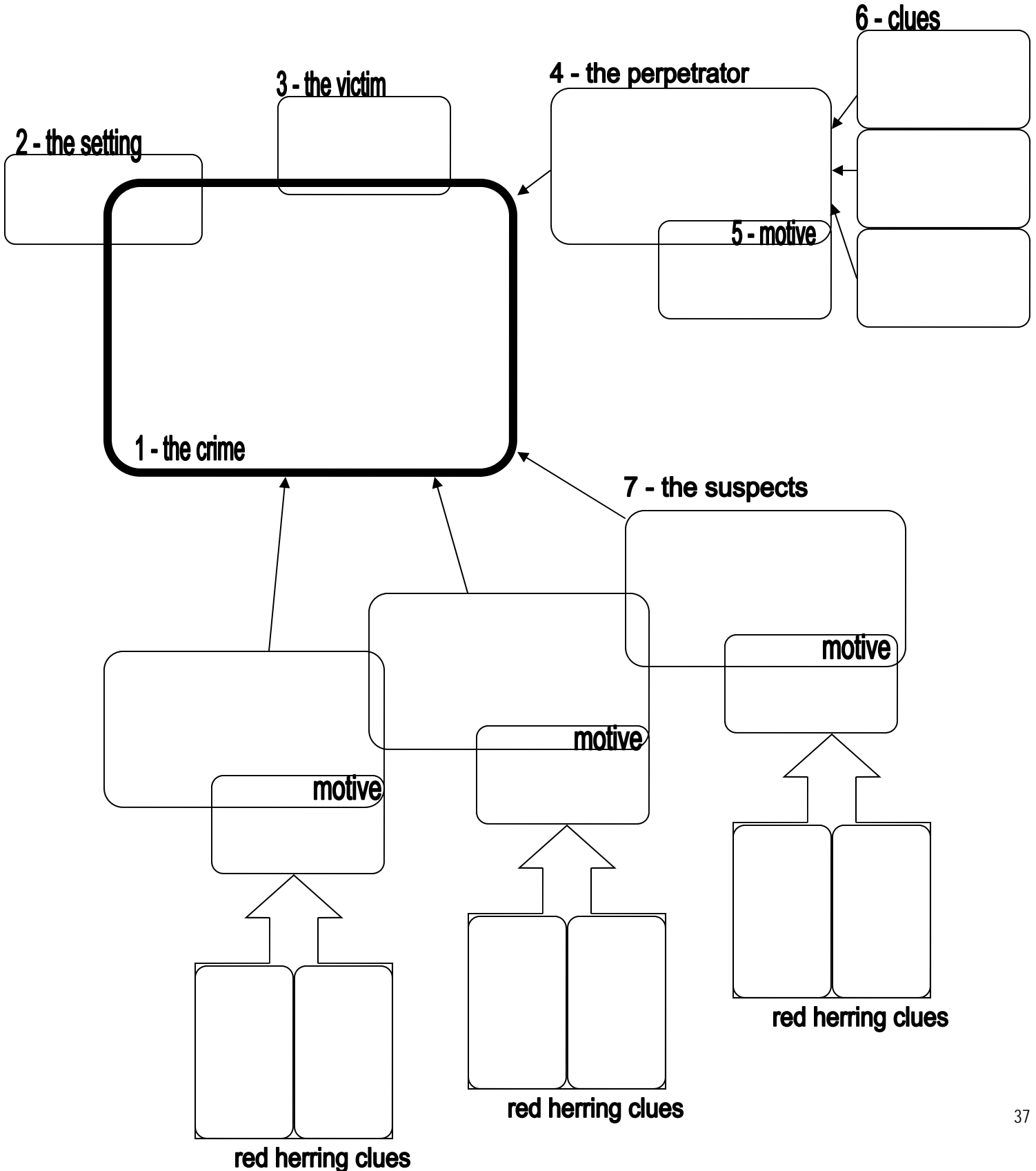
History also supplies us with unsolved mysteries. For example, “Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History” <http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/mysteries/indexen.html>

MYSTERY

writing

brainstorm sheet

Start with #1 and fill in each box. You may have more clues, red herrings or suspects — just make sure your perpetrator's motive is believable and the clues logically lead the reader to conclude he or she is guilty.



character

trait sheet

Character's Name	Age
Physical appearance — <i>Describe how they look</i>	
Facial features — <i>freckles, moles, dimples, glasses, etc</i>	
Hair colour	Eye colour
Clothes — How do they dress? Is it important to them?	
Posture — Proud, tall, slumped, slouched, shy, fearful, confident, etc	
Scars — What does it look like? How did it get there?	
If you looked in their bag, what interesting things would you find?	
What is their most noticeable gesture? Biting nails, twirling hair, fidgeting, looking away, etc.	
Basic attitude — Relaxed, irritated, uncomfortable, confident, cocky, shy, etc	
Self-image — What does this person think of themselves?	
What is their greatest wish?	
What are they most afraid of?	
Worst quality	
Best quality	
Talented at ...	
Really bad at ...	
Gives the first impression of.	
Friends say that he/she is...	
Favourite hobbies	
Favourite books	
Favourite sports	
Favourite piece of clothing and why	
Favorite hang out	
Favourite saying	

RESOURCES

Online sources

- www.canadianmysteries.ca.
- www.mysteryquests.ca/
great unsolved Canadian mysteries interactive site for students that includes excellent lesson plans for ages 11-14, 14-16 and 16-18.
- www.mysterynet.com

More Great Mysteries

- Keep an eye out for Norah McClintock's sequel to *Dooley Takes the Fall* in 2009, *Chloe and Levesque Mystery* series
- Richard Scrimger's *From Charlie's Point of View*.
- Christopher Pike (for good, old-fashioned teen slasher mysteries)

Award Winning Mysteries

2008 YA Edgar Nominees <http://www.mysterywriters.org/>

Rat Life by Tedd Arnold, Penguin — Dial Books for Young Readers (WINNER)

Diamonds in the Shadow by Caroline B. Cooney, Random House Children's Books — Delacorte Press

Touching Snow by M. Sindy Felin, Atheneum Books for Young Readers

Blood Brothers by S.A. Harazin, Random House Children's Books - Delacorte Press

Fragments by Jeffrey W. Johnston, Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing — Simon Pulse

Arthur Ellis Awards (Best Juvenile Award)

given annually since 1983 by Canada's national association of mystery-fiction writers

2007 Sean Cullen, *Hamish X and the Cheese Pirates*, Penguin Canada

2006 Vicki Grant, *Quid Pro Quo*, Orca Book Publishers

2005 Carrie Mac, *The Beckoners*, Orca

2004 Graham McNamee, *Acceleration*, Wendy Lamb Books

2003 Norah McClintock, *Break and Enter*, Scholastic Canada

2002 Norah McClintock, *Scared to Death*, Scholastic Canada

2001 Tim Wynne-Jones, *The Boy in the Burning House*, Greenwood Books

2000 Linda Bailey, *How Can a Brilliant Detective Shine in the Dark?*, Kids Can Press

1999 Norah McClintock, *Sins of the Fathers*, Scholastic

1998 Norah McClintock, *The Body in the Basement*, Scholastic

1997 Linda Bailey, *How Can A Frozen Detective Stay Hot On The Trail*, Kids Can Press

1996 Norah McClintock, *Mistaken Identity*, Scholastic

1995 James Heneghan, *Torn Away*, Viking

1994 John Dowd, *Abalone Summer*, Raincoast

AUTHOR CHAT

A Word with Norah McClintock

Norah McClintock's fascinating mysteries are hard to put down. Her *Chloe & Levesque* series, *Mike & Riel* series, and *Robyn Hunter* series, all published by Scholastic Canada, have been popular with readers in many countries. Norah has also written several crime novels for reluctant readers in the Orca Soundings series from Orca Book Publishers. Norah is a five-time winner of the Crime Writers of Canada's Arthur Ellis Award for Best Juvenile Crime Novel. Read *Mistaken Identity*, *The Body in the Basement*, *Sins of the Father*, *Scared to Death*, and *Break and Enter* to find out why! Norah's books have been translated into more than a dozen languages, and she has won numerous awards.

What inspired you to write crime novels? I love reading them — always have — and so I decided to try writing one. If you're going to spend months and months writing something, it helps if it's something you're really interested in. I was a huge fan of Nancy Drew when I was young. I can't remember how it happened, but my mother came home one day with the complete collection of Nancy Drews. Someone must have given them to her. I read every single one. I borrowed all of my brother's Hardy Boys books and read them too. And Brains Benton — boy, did I ever like Brains Benton. He was a genius (as if you couldn't figure that out) with a regular-guy sidekick named Jimmy who got to do all the heavy lifting and, as a result, usually got into the worst jams. Jimmy was always trying to dodge his mother's favourite supper dish — something called chicken croquettes. I never did figure out what they were, but they must have tasted terrible because Jimmy would rather face down death than have to eat even a single bite.

When I read those books, I liked to imagine that I was as smart and as fearless as those kid sleuths. They never took no for an answer, and they would do whatever they had to (usually something dangerous) to get to the truth. I used to wish the kinds of things that happened to those kids would happen in the boring (so I thought at the time) suburb where I grew up. I longed for the excitement that they faced. And the satisfaction they experienced when they solved a mystery and usually, as a result, made a huge difference in someone's life. Wow.

Where do you get your ideas?

Things I read in the newspaper or hear about on the news usually give me a starting point. Then I dream up the rest from there. Fortunately, I have a pretty lively imagination.

Of the books you have written, which one is your favourite?

I don't really have a favourite. Every time I sit down to write a book, it becomes my favourite. Trying to decide which one I like best would be like trying to decide which of my kids I like best. I love them all — but maybe in slightly different ways.

Excerpts from:

<http://www.scholastic.ca/titles/norahmcclintock/aboutnorah.htm>

<http://www.web.net/~nmbooks/index.html>