



TEACHER'S PET PUBLICATIONS

LITPLAN TEACHER PACK™

for

Dacey's Song

based on the book by

Cynthia Voigt

Written by

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A FEW NOTES ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cynthia Voigt

VOIGT, CYNTHIA (born 1942), U.S. author, born on February 25, 1942, in Boston, Mass. Voigt writes fiction for children and young adults. She has been praised for her strong characterizations and for her careful style of writing.

Voigt studied at Smith College, receiving a B. A. in 1963, and taught high school English in Maryland from 1965 to 1967. She taught at The Key School in Annapolis beginning in 1968 and was chairman of the English department from 1971 to 1979. From 1981 she taught part time and continued as department chairman. Her first novel, *Homecoming* (1981), was nominated for an American Book Award. Other novels included *Tell Me If the Lovers Are Losers* (1982), which told the story of several girls of widely different backgrounds who learn from one another as they form a volleyball team in college; *Dacey's Song* (1982), which won a Newbery Medal; and *The Calendar Papers* (1983). *Homecoming* and *Dacey's Song* tell of a young girl named Dacey and her siblings.

--Courtesy of Compton's Learning Company

INTRODUCTION - *Dacey's Song*

This unit has been designed to develop students' reading, writing, thinking, and language skills through exercises and activities related to *Dacey's Song* by Cynthia Voigt. It includes seventeen lessons, supported by extra resource materials.

The **introductory lesson** introduces students to the novel through a short discussion of moving and relocating. Following the introductory activity, students are given a transition to explain how the activity relates to the book they are about to read. Following the transition, students are given the materials they will be using during the unit. At the end of the lesson, students begin the pre-reading work for the first reading assignment.

The **reading assignments** are approximately thirty pages each; some are a little shorter while others are a little longer. Students have approximately 15 minutes of pre-reading work to do prior to each reading assignment. This pre-reading work involves reviewing the study questions for the assignment and doing some vocabulary work for 8 to 10 vocabulary words they will encounter in their reading.

The **study guide questions** are fact-based questions; students can find the answers to these questions right in the text. These questions come in two formats: short answer required or multiple choice. The best use of these materials is probably to use the short answer version of the questions as study guides for students (since answers will be more complete), and to use the multiple choice version for occasional quizzes. It might be a good idea to make transparencies of your answer keys for the overhead projector.

The **vocabulary work** is intended to enrich students' vocabularies as well as to aid in the students' understanding of the book. Prior to each reading assignment, students will complete a two-part worksheet for approximately 8 to 10 vocabulary words in the upcoming reading assignment. Part I focuses on students' use of general knowledge and contextual clues by giving the sentence in which the word appears in the text. Students are then to write down what they think the words mean based on the words' usage. Part II nails down the definitions of the words by giving students dictionary definitions of the words and having students match the words to the correct definitions based on the words' contextual usage. Students should then have an understanding of the words when they meet them in the text.

After each reading assignment, students will go back and formulate answers for the study guide questions. Discussion of these questions serves as a **review** of the most important events and ideas presented in the reading assignments.

After students complete reading the work, there is a **vocabulary review** lesson which pulls together all of the fragmented vocabulary lists for the reading assignments and gives students a review of all of the words they have studied.

Following the vocabulary review, a lesson is devoted to the **extra discussion questions/writing assignments**. These questions focus on interpretation, critical analysis and personal response, employing a variety of thinking skills and adding to the students' understanding of the novel.

There is a **group activity** in which students working in small groups to create "Dicey's Song," actual lyrics to a song that would be appropriate as Dicey's song.

There is a **unit project** in which students must *create* something. Many of the characters in the book actually *make* things; they are *doers*. This project turns your students into *doers* (for at least one assignment!) and gives them the opportunity to show off their own talents.

There are three **writing assignments** in this unit, each with the purpose of informing, persuading, or having students express personal opinions. The first assignment is to express personal opinions: students have the same assignment Dicey did for her essay--to write a composition about someone they know who has a conflict in his/her life. The second assignment is to inform: students write a composition in which they prepare for their **oral presentation** relating to their unit projects. The third assignment is to persuade: students are temporarily turned into marketing agents responsible for creating a full-page advertisement for *Dicey's Song* to be distributed by the book-of-the-month club.

In addition, there is a **nonfiction reading assignment**. Students are required to read a piece of nonfiction related in some way to *Dicey's Song*. After reading their nonfiction pieces, students will fill out a worksheet on which they answer questions regarding facts, interpretation, criticism, and personal opinions. Most students will complete this assignment in relation to their unit project.

The **review lesson** pulls together all of the aspects of the unit. The teacher is given four or five choices of activities or games to use which all serve the same basic function of reviewing all of the information presented in the unit.

The **unit test** comes in two formats: all multiple choice-matching-true/false or with a mixture of matching, short answer, multiple choice, and composition. As a convenience, two different tests for each format have been included.

There are additional **support materials** included with this unit. The **unit resource** section includes suggestions for an in-class library, crossword and word search puzzles related to the novel, and extra vocabulary worksheets. There is a list of **bulletin board ideas** which gives the teacher suggestions for bulletin boards to go along with this unit. In addition, there is a list of **extra class activities** the teacher could choose from to enhance the unit or as a substitution for an exercise the teacher might feel is inappropriate for his/her class. **Answer keys** are located directly after the **reproducible student materials** throughout the unit. The student materials may be reproduced for use in the teacher's classroom without infringement of copyrights.

UNIT OBJECTIVES - *Dacey's Song*

1. Through reading *Dacey's Song*, students will analyze characters and their situations to better understand the themes of the novel.
2. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the text on four levels: factual, interpretive, critical and personal.
3. Students will complete a creative project.
4. Students will be given the opportunity to practice reading aloud and silently to improve their skills in each area.
5. Students will answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the main events and characters in *Dacey's Song* as they relate to the author's theme development.
6. Students will enrich their vocabularies and improve their understanding of the novel through the vocabulary lessons prepared for use in conjunction with the novel.
7. The writing assignments in this unit are geared to several purposes:
 - a. To have students demonstrate their abilities to inform, to persuade, or to express their own personal ideas
Note: Students will demonstrate ability to write effectively to inform by developing and organizing facts to convey information. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to persuade by selecting and organizing relevant information, establishing an argumentative purpose, and by designing an appropriate strategy for an identified audience. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to express personal ideas by selecting a form and its appropriate elements.
 - b. To check the students' reading comprehension
 - c. To make students think about the ideas presented by the novel
 - d. To encourage logical thinking
 - e. To provide an opportunity to practice good grammar and improve students' use of the English language.
8. Students will read aloud, report, and participate in large and small group discussions to improve their public speaking and personal interaction skills.

READING ASSIGNMENT SHEET - *Dickey's Song*

Date Assigned	Reading Assignments (Chapters)	Completion Date
	1-2	
	3-4	
	5-6	
	7-8	
	9-10	
	11-12	

UNIT OUTLINE - *Dacey's Song*

1	2	3	4	5
Introduction Project Assignment PV 1-2	Read 1-2 Orally	Study ?s 1-2 PVR 3-4	Quiz 3-4 PVR 5-6	Writing Assignment 1
6	7	8	9	10
Study ?s 5-6 PVR 7-8	Study ?s 7-8 Library PVR 9-10	Study ?s 9-10 Writing Assignment #2 Writing Conf.	PVR 11-12	Group Activity
11	12	13	14	15
Study ?s 11-12 Extra ?s	Vocabulary	Project Presentations	Project Presentations	Writing Assignment #3
16	17			
Review	Test			

Key: P = Preview Study Questions V = Vocabulary Work R = Read

LESSON ONE

Objectives

1. To introduce the *Dacey's Song* unit.
2. To distribute books and other related materials
3. To preview the study questions for chapters 1-2
4. To familiarize students with the vocabulary for chapters 1-2

Activity #1

Ask students for a show of hands of those who have at some time in the past moved and changed schools or neighborhoods. Ask these students from where they moved and what things were like at their old neighborhoods. (This works especially well if a few students have moved in from different states, or places substantially different from your community.)

As a transition, note that the novel students are about to read is about a girl, Dacey, and her brothers and sister who move to live with their grandmother.

Activity #2

Explain to students that there is a project assignment that goes along with this unit. The characters in the story are "doers." They all enjoy doing something which has a tangible product. The project assignment is to create something. Some suggestions are: to sew a garment or craft item, to knit or crochet something, to refinish a piece of furniture, to learn a new song to sing or play on an instrument (If several students wish to work together to form a "band" or quartet, that would help self-conscious students to perform), to paint a picture, to build a birdhouse, to make a model, or to compose a poem or a song. Of course, students are not limited to these suggestions; if they have other things they would like to do, they could be acceptable.

Tell students that whatever they create, they will be expected to show it (or perform it) during Lesson Twelve (give them a day and date). Explain the criteria on which their projects will be graded.

Activity #3

Distribute the materials students will use in this unit. Explain in detail how students are to use these materials.

Study Guides Students should read the study guide questions for each reading assignment prior to beginning the reading assignment to get a feeling for what events and ideas are important in the section they are about to read. After reading the section, students will (as a class or individually) answer the questions to review the important events and ideas from that section of the book. Students should keep the study guides as study materials for the unit test.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1 - *Dicey's Song*

PROMPT

"He wanted them to write a character sketch, he said, about a real character they had met, someone they knew. He wanted them to show the conflict in a real person's life."

Your assignment is the same as Dicey's (above).

PREWRITING

Dicey gave a lot of thought to her assignment before she began writing. First she brainstormed a bunch of ideas about whom she could write and what she might say about each person. That's a very good first step.

After you decide which person will be the subject of your composition, brainstorm a list of specific things you want to say about that person. Like Dicey, you may choose to change the name of your person so his or her true identity will not be known.

Organize the things you want to say into a logical order, trying to make one idea flow into (or from) another. Make a little outline to follow.

DRAFTING

First, write a paragraph in which you introduce your subject, your character.

In the body of your composition, write several paragraphs about your character, following the outline you made during the prewriting activity above.

Finally, write a concluding paragraph in which you bring together the ideas in your composition and give your final thoughts about your subject.

PROMPT

When you finish the rough draft of your paper, ask a student who sits near you to read it. After reading your rough draft, he/she should tell you what he/she liked best about your work, which parts were difficult to understand, and ways in which your work could be improved. Reread your paper considering your critic's comments, and make the corrections you think are necessary.

PROOFREADING

Do a final proofreading of your paper double-checking your grammar, spelling, organization, and the clarity of your ideas.