



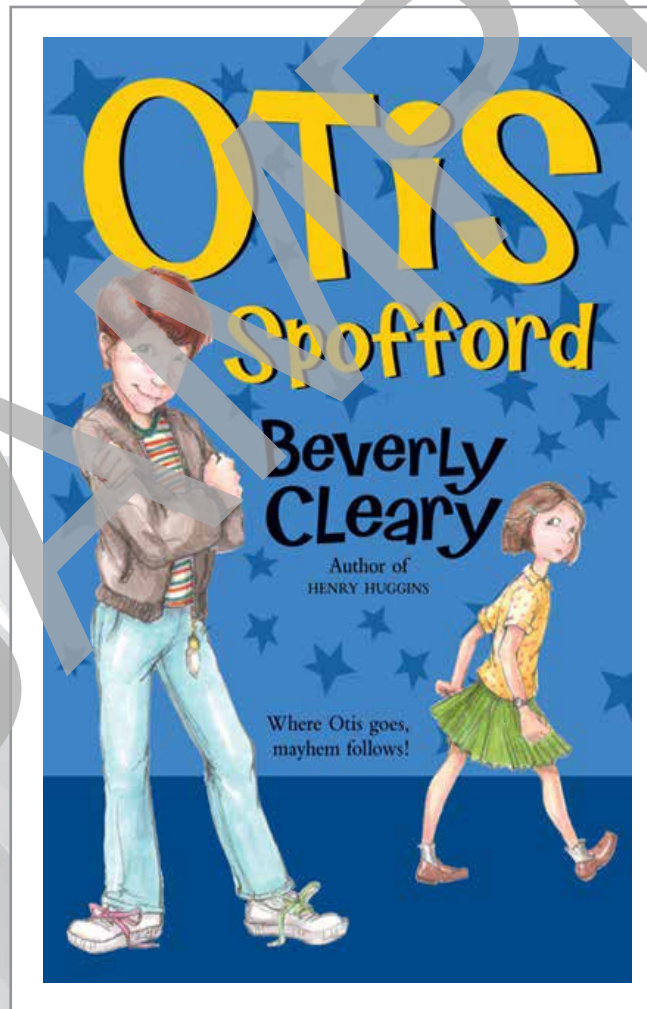
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 3-5

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Otis Spofford

Beverly Cleary



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Otis Spofford

Beverly Cleary

TEACHER GUIDE

NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

ISBN 978-1-50204-062-6

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Summary

Otis is a delightful, mischievous fourth grader who loves to stir up excitement. In the first chapter, he does this by making his part in the school fiesta the main attraction. In the second chapter, Otis is practically dared, by his very wise teacher Mrs. Gitler, to spit another spitball. He does, and true to her word, Mrs. Gitler makes him wish he had never seen a spitball. In the third chapter, Otis feels sorry for a baby white rat used in the class nutrition experiment and uses this as another chance to stir up excitement. The fourth chapter is mainly concerned with Otis and his friend Stewy. They are in competition to obtain thirty bugs for a local foot ball hero's science assignment. In the fifth chapter, Otis goes too far in trying to stir up excitement by cutting off Ellen's pigtail. Finally, Otis gets his "come-uppance" in the last chapter when the children in his neighborhood treat him as he has treated them.

Recommended Procedure: This book will be read one section at a time using DRTA (Directed Reading Thinking Activity) Method. This technique involves reading a section, predicting what will happen next (making good guesses) based on what has already occurred in the story. The students continue to read and verify predictions at the end of each section.

SAMPLE

Chapter One: "Otis Gets His Man"

Vocabulary

ballet (10)	cross (10)	auditorium (11)	fiesta (11)
visual aids (11)	phonograph (12)	promptly (13)	toreador (13)
nimbly (13)	showered (14)	charged (14)	cuspidor (16)
bustled (16)	fastening (16)	gunny sacks (17)	variations (17)
crepe-paper (17)	lock (17)	imitation (18)	swaggered (19)
adios (19)	impatient (19)	tambourines (20)	scornfully (20)
scoffed (20)	burlap (21)	microphone (23)	audience (23)
crouching (25)	restless (26)	advanced (29)	scowling (29)
retorted (31)	commotion (32)	victorious (32)	innocently (34)
come-uppance (34)	glower (34)	graciously (35)	

Discussion Questions

1. What did Otis love to do better than anything else? *(Page 9, Stir up excitement.)*
2. Who was Otis's mother and what did she do for a living? *(Page 10, Valerie Todd Spofford. She taught ballet and tap-dancing classes at the Spofford School of Dance.)*
3. Why did Otis not like the P.E. class that his teacher taught once a week in the auditorium? *(Page 11, he'd rather be playing dodge ball. He saw enough dancing at his mother's school.)*
4. Why was Otis not excited about the P.T.A. fiesta? *(Page 12, He thought a fiesta wasn't a good idea and that maybe the parents would rather see a good ball game.)*
5. Why do you think Otis danced stiff-legged? *(Page 12, To stir up excitement; so no girls would dance with him; to amuse himself during a boring class.)*
6. Why was Otis pleased with the idea of not dancing in the fiesta? *(Page 13, He thought he might get to be the bullfighter.)*
7. How did Otis feel, at first, when he found out that he was going to be the bull? How did he feel after he thought about it for a while? *(Page 14, Disappointed—because he wanted to be the toreador. He thought it would be better than folk dancing and it might give him a better chance to stir up excitement.)*
8. On page 17 it says, "Otis, who had not done a thing yet felt a little guilty." Why did he feel guilty? *(Page 17, Because he was going to do something at the fiesta and Mrs. Gitler didn't know that this was what he was planning.)*
9. Why did Ellen always tug on her hair? *(Page 17, To make it grow.)*
10. How did the class react to George's costume? How did Otis react? Why do you think he reacted this way? *(Page 19, Enthralled. He stared at first; then made fun of George; maybe because George was getting too much attention. Answers will vary.)*
11. How did the "bull" parade around the playground? *(Pages 23-24, The bull pawed the ground, nodded his head, waved, skipped.)*

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12. Why did Mrs. Gitler ask Otis and Stewy to wait behind the backstop? (Page 24, *Some of the mothers couldn't see over them, and maybe so that they wouldn't cause a scene.*)
 13. On page 26 it says that Otis and Stewy "began to clap their hands and stamp their feet." What effect did this have on the people at the fiesta program? (Page 26, *The boys in the crowd began to join in.*)
 14. Why did Otis hurry home? (Page 37, *Because George and Stewy were after him.*)
 15. What did you learn about Otis? Begin an attribute chart. Be able to support your ideas of what kind of boy Otis is. (See pages 9 and 10 of this guide.)
 16. **Prediction:** Chapter titles often refer to a key event in the chapter, a new character who is introduced, a problem which develops, or a solution which is found. What do you think will happen in Chapter Two, "Otis Takes Aim"?

Supplementary Activities

1. Illustrate the costumes of the following people in the program: Girls, George, Stewy, and Otis.
2. Write a summary of the performance of the bull in the fiesta.
3. Discuss irony. Irony is a technique the author uses in which the meaning is opposite to what is said. What was ironic about the way the mothers reacted to the bullfight?
4. Use a Venn diagram comparing apartment living and living in a house. (See page 11 of this guide.)
5. Research Mexico or Spain.
6. Learn a traditional dance.
7. Discuss and research the controversy surrounding bull fighting.
8. Make a chart of traditional Mexican costumes.

Chapter Two: "Otis Takes Aim"

Vocabulary

panted (39)	anxious (40)	scold (40)	clove (41)
unsnarl (41)	aisle (42)	co-operating (43)	astonishment (44)
fingered (46)	troublesome (47)	reciting (48)	ignored (48)
baffled (49)	boasted (50)	errand (51)	startled (51)
pitch pipe (52)	cackles (53)	lonesome (53)	altogether (53)
doggedly (54)	trilled (55)	darted (56)	bud (60)
garlic (60)	fierce (63)		