



HC: 978-0-8234-4414-4 • Ages 7–10
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BLUE DAISY

by Helen Frost
illustrated by Rob Shepperson

“Positive examples of parenting offer the children guidance as they learn important **lessons in responsibility, forgiveness, and understanding.**”

—*Booklist*

About the Book

Sam and Katie find a stray dog and make a big mistake, but it's hard to make amends—how can you apologize to a dog?

A dirty, skinny dog shows up in Sam and Katie's neighborhood. How they earn the dog's trust, help it find its place in their town, and how it gets its name, make for a heartwarming story told in two voices using prose and poetry. *Blue Daisy* is illustrated with twenty black-and-white illustrations and includes recipes for dog biscuits and snickerdoodles.

Classroom Discussion

BEFORE READING

Blue Daisy, written by Helen Frost, has a unique style and structure, alternating between prose and verse for each character.



MINI LESSON #1—Style

Style is the way an author presents information and ideas. Compare and contrast **narrative prose** vs **poetry**.

<u>Narrative Prose</u>	<u>Both Prose and Poetry</u>	<u>Poetry</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Straightforward language; usually tells a story• Thoughts and feelings expressed in a normal narrative structure• Arranged in paragraphs• Meant to provide information or give a message	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forms of literature• Have a purpose• Written expression• Have characters and a plot	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unique style and rhythm• Distinctive writing pattern• Line lengths vary• Expressive or decorated language• Meant to amuse• Arranged in stanzas

Identify which is an example of **prose** and which is an example of **poetry**. Supply reasons for your answer.

I think that I shall never see

a poem lovely as a tree . . .

poems are made by fools like me,

but only God can make a tree.

—Joyce Kilmer, *Trees*

“I’m a mountain that moves.

Look,

I come to you,”

Says Cloud.

—Antoinette Portis, *A New Green Day*

MINI LESSON #2—Structure

Structure is the way a text is organized. *Blue Daisy* has two points of view and two voices.

Point of view/voice is the way the characters look at situations and consider things. In fiction, this shows us the opinion or feelings of the individuals involved in a situation. Point of view is the mode of narration that an author uses to let the readers “hear” and “see” what takes place in a story.

Some stories have alternating points of view so you can hear the story from different “voices,” or characters.

Discuss books that you have read as a group or movies the students have seen that have alternate voices or multiple points of view.



MINI LESSON #3—Irony

Irony is a literary element used by authors to show a situation that ends up differently than what is expected. It is the difference between appearance and reality. There will be times when you as the reader will be surprised by what happens in the story.

Discuss examples of irony from stories you have read.

Pick out the examples of irony from the situations below.

- A police station gets robbed.
- A dog wanders around town.
- Dorothy from *The Wizard of Oz* searches for the Wizard to help her find a way home. In the end, she learns that she is the only one who can get herself home.
- In the movie *Monsters Inc.*, the monsters' job is to scare children, but they are actually afraid of the children!

Think of a few more on your own!

DURING READING

As you read/listen to the story, make predictions. This story is a bit of a mystery. Pretend you are watching a movie. Check your predictions as you read and learn new information.

AFTER READING

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What do you learn about Sam, Katie, and the dog from the poem on page 2?
- How does the author, Helen Frost, describe the Wilson sisters, Mr. Jenkins, and the Tracy twins?
How are the other characters introduced?
- Who are the main characters?
- Who is telling the story?
- Where does the story take place?
- What is the problem in the story?
- How does the author use style and structure in *Blue Daisy*?
- How does the style and structure contribute to the story?
- Which character uses prose and which character uses poetry to tell the story?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS—continued

- How would the story change if it was told by Miranda and Michael?
- How is irony used throughout the book? What event surprised you the most?
- Things aren't always as they appear to be. How does this theme play out in the book?
- Why do Sam and Katie paint the dog? How did that make you feel?
- How did the other characters, including Sam and Katie, feel about the paint on the dog?
- How do you apologize to a dog? How did Sam and Kate apologize to Blue Daisy?
- Even though the paint gave Blue Daisy her name, was it the right thing to do? How does Katie's mom react to what Sam and Katie did?
- Write three examples of situational irony from the story.
- How does the tone change throughout the story?
- When does the book make you feel sad, angry, happy, worried, relieved?
- Conflicts in books are things that oppose each other. What are some of the conflicts from the story?
 - Man vs. Man—when people do not get along or agree with each other
 - Man vs. Self—when a person struggles with a bad choice that he or she made or something within him- or herself
 - Man vs. Fate—when something happens beyond your control
- Describe some of the changes that take place in the book from the beginning to the end of the story. Include the characters' thoughts, feelings, and actions.
- As you read the story, who did you think deserved to keep Blue Daisy?
- Whose dog is she? What does it mean that Blue Daisy belongs to herself?
- How did you change your mind as you read the book? What were some pivotal events?
- When does the author use italics in the book?
- How do the recipes in the back of the book relate to the story?
- What are some of the themes and central ideas in the book?
- What did you personally learn about friendship and people from the story?
- How does Blue Daisy change lives? Do you think that a dog can really change lives?
- Write a piece of narrative prose or a poem about the impact dogs have on our lives.
- Did you ever do something that you regret? How do you feel about it?



CONCLUDING ACTIVITY

As a class, write down something you feel horrible about doing in the past. Think about why you will never repeat that mistake. Fold up the paper without sharing it and put it in a small box. Bury the box in the yard or throw it away and say goodbye to those bad feelings. Everyone makes mistakes!

Guide written by Marla Conn, MS, Ed., reading/literacy specialist and educational consultant.

About the Creators



Helen Frost is the author of *Blue Daisy* and is an award-winning children's book author, playwright, and poet. She has written many award-winning books for children and young adults and her young-adult novel *Keesha's House* was a Michael L. Printz Honor Book. She lives in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Learn more about Helen Frost at www.helenfrost.net.

Rob Shepperson, the illustrator of *Blue Daisy*, has illustrated more than two dozen books for children, most recently the Franklin School Friends series by Claudia Mills. His editorial illustrations have appeared regularly in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Wall Street Journal*. He lives in Croton-on-Hudson, New York.



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