

READING GUIDE



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Purpose

This reading guide will help the reader focus on building vocabulary, strengthen reading fluency, follow the plot, focus on themes, use inferring skills, and discover character growth. It will provide opportunities for readers to engage in authentic discussion while encouraging an understanding of varying perspectives.

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MY EASY READ BOOKS, LLC
GUIDED READING FOR *OZZIE*, BY L.B. TILLIT
NOTICE TO TEACHERS

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Chapter 1 Practice

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

assistant—someone who helps but is not in charge

season—a specific time of the year (school sports are played during different seasons: fall, winter and spring)

trickle—when liquid flows slowly

huddle—crowd together

sidelines—In football, it is the line that marks the border between the playing field and out-of-bounds area. It is also used as a term for the whole area right outside that line. “Sitting on the sidelines” does not mean on the line itself, but in the area. (To be sidelined in life also means to be excluded; made to watch from the sidelines as a form of discipline or punishment).

Questions

What are your first impressions of Ozzie?

Who is Vic, and why is he important?

Reflections

Do you think it would be hard to play a sport when your older brother is your coach? Why/why not?

Do you think Ozzie should have talked to Vic the way that he did? Explain.

How do you think Vic felt about being the assistant coach? What does this tell us about Vic?

Chapter 2 Axman

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

plastered—stuck to

quarterback—in football, a player on offense that calls plays and will throw the ball, hand the ball off, or run with the ball (considered to be the star of the team—a big deal)

doubted—was not sure about

tackle—verb: in football, to take the person with the ball to the ground. noun: a player that is usually the biggest and strongest on the team. The player either blocks others from getting to key players (offense), or rushes players/stops players on the other team from scoring (defense).

lineman—In football, a player who is placed with other players in the most forward starting position. This means they are often meant to protect the players behind them (offensive lineman) or break the barrier of the other team's line (defensive lineman).

defense—in football, when the team that does not have the ball tries to keep the other team from scoring

offense—In football, the team that has the ball and is trying to score

legacy—something that has been passed down from someone in the past

generation—people born in a certain time period. For example, the father is one generation and the son a different generation.

MVP—most valuable player

running back—in football, an offensive player who often carries the ball to score

rivals—teams that compete against each on a regular basis, often due to closeness or history

Questions

Why was Ozzie called the Axman?

Describe the Waxman family legacy? How did this legacy impact Ozzie?

How did Ozzie view himself? How did others view Ozzie? What does this reveal about a new type of conflict in the plot?

What was Vic and Coach McCoy's response at the end of practice? What did Ozzie realize at that moment?

Reflections

How do you think Ozzie felt the moment he realized what Vic and Coach McCoy were doing? Why?

How would you feel if you were Ozzie? What might you have done differently?

Chapter 3 Hall

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

tight end—in football, a player that can act as a lineman (see chapter 2 vocab) or a receiver (someone who catches the ball)

namesake—when a child is given the name of someone else because that name means something to the parent/guardian(s)

scouts—in sports, people who are sent out from colleges or universities to gather information on athletes they might want to invite to play for their school one day

potluck—when each person or family that comes to an event brings a food dish to share with others

public housing—houses or apartments that are low rent because the government helps with the cost

Questions

Why was Hall important to Ozzie?

What did Vic and Ozzie's conversation reveal about Ozzie's internal conflict?

What are your first impressions of Vashon?

Reflection

Why do you think that the Cleveland Browns cap was important to Ozzie? What do you think this reveals about how Ozzie felt about himself?

Chapter 4 Zonta

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

Dude Ranch—a place people go to have a “western” experience like riding horseback.

to be sweet on someone—to like someone

jersey—in football, the standard (uniform) top they must wear. They have jerseys for practice and for games.

to be benched—in football, to sit on the sidelines and not play in the game

Questions

What are your first impressions of Zonta?

How did Ozzie seem to feel about Zonta?

What can we tell about the personalities of Carlos and Blake?

Why did Ozzie say that he was already over school?

Reflection

Do you think it was okay for Ozzie not to sit with his friends? Explain.

Chapter 5 Hancock High

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

perch—to sit up high on something, like a bird sits, or is perched, on a tree branch

oppress—when one group of people treats another group of people in a cruel and unfair way

blistering—when several areas on the skin are injured by the sun. These areas, known as blisters, often have clear fluid trapped inside.

Questions

Why was Ms. Williams upset with Blake?

What do you learn about Emma Tang-Lee from her answer to the teacher's question about history?

From the way Ozzie described Lilly, what was his first impression of her?

Reflections

Do you think that Blake was wrong to point out that the teacher had not called roll yet? What does this tell us about Blake's personality?

The teacher kept asking, "Why should you care about history?" Even though Lilly did not explain it, what do you think she meant when she answered, "Because it tells us who we are today"? Do you agree with her?

Chapter 6 Lunch

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

plays—in football, the plans for different moves that will be made on the field

figured—guessed

trashing people—talking badly about others

stereotyping—when someone makes a statement about a whole group of people that is not true for everyone in that group, or when someone has a set idea about a person because they belong to a specific group, but that idea is wrong

brush off—dismiss like it does not matter

racist—showing prejudice and hatred toward a specific racial or ethnic group

sexist—showing prejudice or hatred based on sex/gender—mostly used in referring to mean comments made toward women

Questions

What does this chapter reveal about Carlos, Gavin, and Blake?

What does Ozzie's reaction to the trash talk tell you about Ozzie?

Why did Zonta smile at Ozzie? And why did the guys at the table tease Ozzie about her reaction?

Reflections

Do you think Ozzie liked Zonta? Why or why not?

How would you have reacted to the trash talk if you were Ozzie?

Chapter 7 Friday Night Football

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

line of scrimmage—in football, the area on the field where each play begins

touchdown—in football, to score six points by taking the football into the opponent's end zone

end zone—in football, the area on the field where the team scores points

winging it—making it up as you go along

Questions

Why did Ozzie try to avoid Zonta?

Why was Ozzie upset with Vic during halftime?

Reflection

Do you think Ozzie was right to be upset with Vic? Explain.

Chapter 8 Winging it

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

offensive series—in football, plays the offense runs while they possess the ball

punt—kicking the ball to the other team after failing to get a first down

no gain—a play in which the team with the ball fails to advance any yards

reverse—an offensive play that quickly changes direction in hopes of confusing the defense

bite guard—a piece of plastic that fits into the mouth to protect the teeth and tongue

Questions

What happened to Ozzie during the second half of the game? Were you surprised? Why or why not?

Who did Ozzie blame for his messing up on the field? Do you agree with him? Explain.

Reflection

What does this incident reveal about Ozzie and Vic's relationship?

Chapter 9 Lilly

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

muggy—hot and humid

duffle bag—a bag shaped like a cylinder

ticked—angry

8—ate

epic—huge, a big deal

readjusted—moved again

Questions

Why did Ozzie wait so late to leave the locker room after the game?

How did Ozzie react to Lilly? Why?

Lilly told Ozzie, “You don’t want to see me AND you don’t want to be seen. So I won’t see you.” What do you think she meant by that?

Reflections

What do you think this chapter reveals about Ozzie’s personality or character?

What does this chapter reveal about Lilly’s personality or character?

Chapter 10 Dad

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

sprawled—spread out

topple—fall

simmer—slowly burn

highlight video—a video with different clips that show off a player's skill

to sign someone—to have a player agree to come to a team or a school to play ball

Question

Describe the relationship between Ozzie and his father.

Reflection

Why do you think Ozzie felt badly at the end of this chapter?

Chapter 11: The Good Rumor

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

brooding—thinking about something, but in a dark and moody way

hydrate—drink enough water

Questions

What was Ozzie surprised about when he got to school on Monday?

How did Lilly treat Ozzie when she walked into class late? Do you agree with her actions? Explain.

Reflection

Do you think Ozzie should have corrected the rumor? Why or why not?

Chapter 12 The Fix

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

concussion—head injury

discarded—thrown out

champions—winners

Questions

Why did Ozzie feel guilty?

How did Ozzie deal with his guilt?

What was “the fix”?

Reflections

What does the beginning of the chapter tell you about Vic and Ozzie’s relationship?

Do you think Vic and Coach McCoy’s plan was a good one? Explain.

Chapter 13 Mom

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

sizable—large

snatching—quickly grab

smothered—fully covered

Question

Why were Ozzie and Vic suddenly happy?

Reflection

What is your opinion of the Waxman family dynamics (*dynamics*—the way they interact and live their lives together)?

Chapter 14 Maybe

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

shook—surprised or shocked

sweet on—to really like someone

Questions

Why were Gavin, Blake, and Carlos teasing Ozzie?

What made Ozzie think that his friends might have been right about Zonta?

Reflections

What do you think of the guys' behavior at the lunch table? Explain.

Do you think Ozzie should ask Zonta out? Explain.

Chapter 15 Pissed

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

straddling—one leg on each side

lanky—tall and thin

dramatically—as if acting in a play; big obvious movements

massive—huge

fuming—very angry

dis—insult or offend

Questions

Why did Ozzie walk over to Lilly?

What confused Vashon?

Reflection

Who do you think was right, Ozzie or Lilly? Explain.

Chapter 16 Away

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

pregame hype—all the noise and activity before a game to get people excited

hauled—carried

Questions

What was Ozzie worried about?

What did Vic explain to Ozzie?

Reflection

Why do you think Ozzie performed so well during the away game?

Chapter 17 Homecoming

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

glory days—good old times

crook—a bend

Questions

Why was Ozzie so happy at the beginning of the chapter?

What did Ozzie feel that he was “not good at”?

Reflection

Do you think that Ozzie and Lilly made the right choices at the dance? Explain.

Chapter 18 Together?

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

sketchy—questionable

wyd—what are you doing

u—you

ur—you are

gn—good night

r—are

k—okay

omg—oh my goodness/God/gosh

2—too

Question

Why did Ozzie state that he was not sure what he had gotten into?

Reflection

What do Zonta's texts tell you about Zonta?

Chapter 19 What Now?

Vocabulary

Check out how this word is used in context:

conference—in sports, a group of teams or schools in an area that play against each other

Questions

Why did Ozzie suddenly want to sit with his friends? What does this tell us about his feelings toward Zonta?

What role did Lilly play in this chapter?

Reflections

Do you think it was okay for Ozzie to lie to Zonta? Why do you think he lied? Explain.

What feelings did Ozzie keep pushing away? Do you think this could become a problem? Explain.

Chapter 20 Bence

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

ride shotgun—ride in the front seat next to the driver

dashed—broken

veer—shift or turn in a different direction

flank—stand on each side of

canopy—a covering

whack—messed up

Questions

Why did Ozzie think that maybe things would work out with Zonta?

How did the social media post change things between Ozzie and Zonta?

Reflections

Why do you think Zonta was a little upset in the car when Ozzie told his story about when he used to trick or treat in the neighborhood?

Do you think Zonta was right to challenge Ozzie?

Do you think Ozzie could have said something to Zonta to fix his mistakes? Explain.

Chapter 21 First Period

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

hooked up—had sex

ancestors—past family members that no longer live (from a long time ago)

glaring—looking at with anger

fiddled—played with

Amendments/Bill of Rights—additions made to the U.S. Constitution to state basic rights that were believed missing and needed to be included. The first ten of these additions or amendments are known as The Bill of Rights

Questions

What was wrong with the post that Carlos sent out about Zonta and Ozzie?

Why did Blake's statements shock the class?

What did Carlos's actions reveal about Carlos?

Why didn't Ozzie and Lilly want to work together?

Reflections

How will Carlos's text impact how people view Zonta? How will it impact how people view Ozzie?

What did Ozzie realize about the reason Blake made the outright racist comments?

Why do you think Ms. Williams partnered Blake with Emma?

Chapter 22 It Is What It Is

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

talking straight—telling the truth

school-issued—provided by the school

managed—were able to

Questions

Why was Ozzie irritated with Lilly before they even started working?

Why was he upset with Lilly while they were planning the project? What did he assume at first?

What reasons did Lilly give that convinced Ozzie to meet her?

Why did Ozzie decide not to tell anyone that the rumor that Carlos started was a lie?

Reflections

What do you think is really going on with Lilly? Explain using evidence from any chapters so far to prove your point.

Do you think Ozzie should or should not clear up the rumor about him and Zonta? Explain.

Chapter 23 Fight

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

found his footing—was able to keep standing without falling

signaled—made a move

disgrace—cause shame

swapping—trading

give a heads up—let someone know

pacing—walking

Questions

Why did Carlos decide to beat up Blake?

Why did Ozzie stop Carlos?

What role did Ozzie's inner voice play in this chapter? Did it help or hurt the situation?

What action from Blake surprised everyone?

Reflections

What do you learn about Blake's character in this chapter? Do you think he did or did not know his statements were racist? Explain.

Why do you think Ozzie states at the end of the chapter that they are ready to move on? Do you think this will really happen? Explain.

Chapter 24 9th Amendment

Vocabulary

Check out how this word is used in context:

Scarf down—eat quickly

Question

What happened to Ozzie and Lilly as they began working together on the project?

Reflection

Do you think Ozzie and Lilly will begin to act differently toward each other after the project? Explain.

Chapter 25 Wrong

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

compromise—give and take

hesitate—wait because one is not sure

whiff—smell

literally—actually

surge—sudden rush or rise

Questions

What did Lilly do that surprised and disgusted Ozzie?

At first, Lilly was cold with Ozzie again. What did Ozzie say that made her suddenly talk to him honestly? Why do you think that those words made a difference to Lilly?

What did Lilly promise Ozzie about the next time he saw her? How did Ozzie react?

Reflections

How is Ozzie changing, even if it is only just a little? Give some examples of specific things he said or did that show this slight change?

In spite of Ozzie's slight changes, why did he still feel guilt at the end of this chapter? Do you think he should feel guilty? Explain.

Chapter 26 Another Lie

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

eating at my gut—bothering me deep down

hung in the air—was present

Questions

Explain Ozzie's inner conflicts about what happened to Blake.

Explain Ozzie's inner conflicts about his brother. What was the big lie between Ozzie and Vic that they both still pretended to believe?

Reflection

How do you think Ozzie should deal with his inner conflicts?

Chapter 27 Missing

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

tended to be—like it normally happened

narrowed—became smaller

portion—part

Questions

Did everything really go back to normal between Ozzie's friends after the fight? Explain.

Why was Ozzie concerned about Lilly?

Reflection

What do you think Ozzie's conversation with Vashon revealed about Ozzie?

Chapter 28 Questions

Questions

How were Ozzie's feelings toward Blake changing? Why?

List Lilly's physical changes that Ozzie noticed:

What did Ozzie worry about when he saw Lilly eating and becoming friends with Zonta?

Reflections

Look over your list of Lilly's physical changes. What do you think all these changes could possibly mean about Lilly?

Why did Ozzie call himself a monster? Do you agree with him? Explain.

Chapter 29 1st Playoff Game

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

featuring—showing

footage—a length of film

piped in music—music from a soundtrack played on a speaker

Questions

Why was Ozzie upset with Vic's response to all the attention Ozzie was getting from colleges and universities?

What happened to Ozzie at the end of the playoff game?

Reflection

What do you think will happen next to Ozzie and the team?

Chapter 30 Rift

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

rift—split, clash, or break between people

elevating—lifting up

compressed—held tight

bonus—extra

chewed out—scolded

Questions

Why was Ozzie upset with his teammates?

How did Ozzie's parents try to make him feel less miserable about his torn ACL?

Why did Ozzie suddenly snap at Vic when Vic was just being positive about Ozzie's recovery?

What caused Vic's Mom to kick Vic out? Do you agree with her? Explain.

Reflection

Should Ozzie have taken the blame for Vic being kicked out? Explain.

Chapter 31 Back to School

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

crutches—long support sticks used to help people walk

thanx—thanks

Question

Why did Ozzie think that being back at school was not so bad?

Reflections

What message do you think Lilly was sending Ozzie?

What message do you think Zonta was sending Ozzie? Do you think he was reading her correctly?

Chapter 32 The Truth

Questions

How did girls in the hall treat Zonta? What did Ozzie finally realize had happened to Zonta because he let the rumor spread?

What did Ozzie finally discover about Lilly? How did he react?

Ozzie suddenly took the blame for two other incidents as well. What were they? Do you think those were his fault as well?

Reflections

This chapter is a turning point for Ozzie because he finally faced the consequences of his inaction when he should have taken action. However, instead of figuring out how to fix the problems, what did Ozzie choose to do?

Do you think this was a good way for Ozzie to deal with it all? Explain.

Chapter 33: The Dive

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

consumed—completely filled with

numbness—no feeling

blaring—playing at a loud volume

mastered—became really good at something

Questions

Why did the team do better without Ozzie?

What did Ozzie realize he missed about football? Why did this make Ozzie wonder what was wrong with himself?

What made things worse in Ozzie's life over Thanksgiving?

What was Ozzie's opinion of himself?

What did Ozzie decide was the best thing to do to solve his problems?

Reflection

Why do you think it was important to Ozzie, even in all his numbness and self-hate, to give Blake the Browns cap?

Chapter 34 Failure

Vocabulary

Check out how this word is used in context:

whooping—spanking or beating

Questions

Who did Ozzie meet on his way home? How did she mess up Ozzie's plan?

Why did Ozzie think he was a failure all over again?

Reflections

What are some signs that Ozzie was not better yet, even if he was not able to follow through with his plan?

What do you think needs to happen next to help Ozzie?

Chapter 35 Help

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

peeked—looked

assess—study or check out

10-4—okay (everything is okay)

paramedics—people trained to give first aid and other life-saving efforts in times of emergency

unravel—come apart

procedure—the way something is done

collapsing—falling

Questions

Why was Ozzie surprised when he woke up?

How did Officer Evans finally get Ozzie to confess his plans?

When did Ozzie finally have a breakthrough to help him begin to move past his guilt and self-hate?

Reflection

How do you think Vashon, Lilly, and Zonta knew what Ozzie was going to do?

Chapter 36 Friends

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

itching to tell—eager to tell

holding her distance—standing away from

Question

How did Lilly, Zonta, and Vashon know something was wrong? Were your guesses close?

Reflections

Why do you think Zonta is still holding her distance from Ozzie?

What do you think Ozzie is learning about friendship?

Chapter 37 The Plan

Vocabulary

Check out how these words are used in context:

evaluating—determining or judging

psych unit—short for psychiatric unit, a place in a hospital for patients going through mental health issues

observation—watch

therapists—counselors

developed—made

Questions

Why was Ozzie in the psych unit?

Why did Vic say that it did not make sense?

What was Ozzie learning to do as he talked with his family about what happened?

What was the plan?

What did Ozzie finally do to fix his mistake with Zonta? What did he hope would happen?

Reflection

At the end of the chapter Ozzie states, “I had a long way to go. But I suddenly felt like going there. I suddenly cared.” What does this statement reveal?

Chapter 38 Think About It

Questions

What did Ozzie ask Lilly and what did you learn about Lilly from her answer?

What did Ozzie mean when he said, “She’s your history”? What did Ozzie’s insight tell Lilly about Ozzie?

Reflections

Why do you think Ozzie asked Lilly the question?

How do you think Ozzie felt about Lilly? Explain.

How has Ozzie changed? Explain using any examples from the story to support your answer.