

# STONE FOX

BY  
JOHN REYNOLDS GARDINER

Guide by Dr. Betty Powers Francis

**READING RIGHT**

© 2005, 1989

# STONE FOX

## Synopsis

Willy's grandfather is sick. The doctor says he has given up and Willy is determined to find out why he has given up and make it better. He uses his dog to plow up the potato field and harvests the crop by himself and sells it. Then he discovers the real problem. They owe the government five hundred dollars in back taxes. If they can't pay they will lose their farm.

Willy has a chance to make the needed money by winning a dogsled race. The only person standing in his way is Stone Fox, the legendary Indian mountain man who has never lost a dogsled race. Although there are other people in the race, it is between Willy and Stone Fox. Searchlight, Willy's dog, gives it her all, but her heart bursts just ten feet from the finish line. Stone Fox has a change of heart and even though he could have won, he allows Willy to carry his dog over the finish line and win.

# STONE FOX

## Lesson 1

### Chapter 1

1. Who is Searchlight?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Why did Willy think his grandfather staying in bed was a trick?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. When Willy arrived at the doctor's house she didn't seem to be in a hurry to help. Why not?
  - A. She was busy with another patient
  - B. She didn't believe Willy
  - C. She thought Willy's grandfather was playing a trick
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Underline the word or words that tell about Willy's grandfather.

Plays a harmonica   Grumpy   Tall   Plays tricks   Farmer
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Willy has a goal he wants to reach. What is it?

# STONE FOX

## Lesson 2

### Chapters 2 - 3

1. Willy thinks he knows what will make his grandfather feel better.  
What is he planning to do?
  - A. Harvest the potato crop
  - B. Go back to school
  - C. Get rid of Searchlight
  
2. What did Willy use instead of a horse to plow up the potatoes?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. How does Willy get to school each day?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What does "on credit" mean?  
"Everything they had needed since Grandfather took sick little Willy had purchased at Lester's General Store on credit."
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Harvesting the potatoes was a hard chore for Willy and Searchlight.  
What is the hardest chore you have ever had to do?

# STONE FOX

## Lesson 3

### Chapters 4 - 5

1. What do you think a derringer is?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What kind of person do you think Mr. Snyder is? Why do you think that?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Willy finds out the reason his grandfather has gotten sick. What is the reason?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Why do you think Willy didn't want to sell his grandfather's farm?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Willy wants to win the adult dogsled race because the prize money would pay for the farm taxes. Do you think a ten-year-old boy has a chance against Stone Fox, who has never lost a race? Why do you think that?

# STONE FOX

## Lesson 4

### Chapters 6 - 7

1. From where does Willy get the fifty dollar entrance fee?

2. Underline the words that tell about Willy.

Lazy      Noisy      Determined      Caring      Clumsy      Confident

3. What does "amateur" mean?

("This is not a race for amateurs.")

4. Why does Willy think he can win the race?

5. Willy wants to win the race more than anything. Tell about something you wanted more than anything.

# STONE FOX

## Lesson 5

### Chapters 8 - 10

1. Who are the three main characters?
2. Explain how you think Willy felt when he saw his grandfather standing in the farmhouse window?
3. Stone Fox and Willy each have a dogsled. Tell at least two ways their sleds and dogs are different.
4. Why do you think Stone Fox let Willy finish the race first?
5. Describe your favorite part of the story and explain what you liked.

# STONE FOX

## Answer Key

### LESSON 1

1. Searchlight is Willy's ten-year-old dog.
2. C
3. The words that should be underlined are: plays a harmonica, plays tricks, and farmer.
4. At first Willy thought his grandfather staying in bed was a trick because his grandfather liked to play tricks on him such as the time he pretended to be the scarecrow in the field.
5. Willy's goal is to find out what is wrong with his grandfather so that he will want to live again.

### DISCUSSION

Early in Chapter 1 the doctor asks Willy questions about the crops and any money they might owe because sometimes people give up if a problem seems too big to handle. Have the students share things that are difficult for them that might make them want to give up. What other choices do they have besides giving up?

### LESSON 2

1. A
2. Instead of a horse Willy uses Searchlight, his dog, to plow up the potatoes.
3. Willy gets to school each day by riding his dogsled.
4. On credit means to not use money but to agree to pay later.
5. Answers will vary.



### LESSON 3

1. A derringer is a small gun.
2. Answers will vary as to their feelings about Mr. Snyder.
3. The reason Willy's grandfather is sick is due to the state's plan to take his farm away for unpaid taxes.
4. Answers will vary.
5. Answers will vary.

### LESSON 4

1. Willy used the fifty dollars that was in his savings account for college to pay for the entrance fee to the race.
2. The words that should be underlined are: determined, caring, and confident.
3. Amateur means a person who takes part in a sport or hobby for pleasure and not for money.
4. Answers will vary. One answer would be the fact that part of the race route is the same road he races home on each day.
5. Answers will vary.

### LESSON 5

1. The three main characters are Willy, grandfather, and Stone Fox.
2. Answers will vary.
3. Some differences are: Willy has one dog to pull his sled, Stone Fox has five, Stone Fox's sled was larger than Willy's.
4. Answers will vary.
5. Answers will vary.