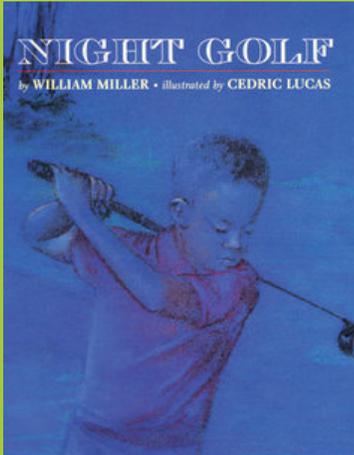


TEACHER'S GUIDE



LEE & LOW BOOKS

Night Golf

Written by William Miller, Illustrated by Cedric Lucas

About the Book

Reading Level: 3–4

Interest Level: Grades 2–5

Guided Reading Level: R

**Accelerated Reader®
Level/Points:** 3.3/0.5

Lexile™ Measure: 550L

**Reading level based on
Spache Readability Formula*

Genre: Historical Fiction

Themes: Sports (Golf), Persistence and Determination, Dreams and Aspirations, Mentors, Self-esteem, Prejudice, Civil Rights Movement, US History (Sports History), African/African American Interest

SYNOPSIS

James loves sports, but he's too short for basketball and too small for football. However, he finds an old golf club one day, and quickly realizes that golf comes naturally to him. When James goes to the town's golf course to learn more about the game, he discovers that only white people can play. In fact, African Americans are allowed onto the course only as caddies, carrying the heavy bags. Thinking fast on his feet, James applies to become a caddy.

James is worried that he'll never get to play. Then he meets another African American caddy and learns that there is a way: to play at night. Based on the true stories of many African American golfers of the late 1950s, *Night Golf* reveals a little-known part of American sports history. It is also a timely reminder that the love of the game was once hard-won by some before it was enjoyed by many.



BACKGROUND

The story of *Night Golf* was inspired by African American caddies who learned to play golf at night because of “whites only” rules at most private and public golf courses before the 1960s. Under the cover of darkness but with the light of the moon, African American golfers would practice the swings that they observed as caddies during the day.

Author’s Note: Not long ago, professional golf could only be played by white golfers. In fact, throughout most of the twentieth century, African Americans were denied the right to play at many private and even public golf courses. The closest most could come to playing golf was to serve as a caddy, carrying heavy bags for others. In some places, a few ingenious African American caddies found a way to swing a club on the green—at night. Under a cloak of darkness, they perfected their skills by striking the ball in the moonlight. A few even excelled at the game, including Charlie Sifford. The former caddy became the first African American admitted to the PGA tour in 1962. More than a decade later, in 1975, Lee Elder, another former caddy, became the first African American to play in the prestigious Masters Tournament. In 1997, Tiger Woods, whose father is African American and whose mother is Asian American, won the Masters Tournament by the largest stroke margin in its history. —William Miller, author of *Night Golf*

Golf and Race in the United States: Although the origin of golf may go back to the ancient Romans who played a game called “paganica,” the first organized golf club—and the first set of written rules for the game—did not exist until centuries later when they were established in Scotland in

1744. In the United States, golf did not appear until the late 1800s, and the PGA (Professional Golfers’ Association) was formed in 1916. A similar organization called the UGA (United Golf Association) for African American players was established in 1926. However, because it offered little prize money and received scant publicity, the UGA became known as the “peanut circuit.” It wasn’t until the 1940s that serious protests against the racial barriers of the PGA were raised. One avid golfer who lent his voice to the protest was the champion boxer, Joe Louis. In 1948 two UGA golfers gained admittance to the PGA’s open tournaments through an out-of-court settlement. The response from the PGA was to change its tournaments to “invitational” events, thus excluding people of color. By the late 1950s the NAACP took cases to the Supreme Court to open public courses to everyone. Finally, in 1961, the PGA was officially integrated. Charlie Sifford was the first African American to win the Hartford Open in 1967 and the Los Angeles Open in 1969. Since that time, the caddy system has largely been replaced by golf carts.

BEFORE READING

Prereading Focus Questions

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 5 and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

Before introducing this book to students, you may wish to develop background knowledge and promote anticipation by posing questions such as the following:

1. What do you know about golf? Have you ever played? Have you watched someone play it?



2. Who are some well-known golfers? What do you know about them?
3. When you want something really badly, how do you go about getting it? What characteristics do you think someone needs to achieve a difficult goal?
4. How do you feel about excluding certain people or groups from participating in a game or sport? Why?

Exploring the Book

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strand 1, Craft & Structure, Strand 5, and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

Read and talk about the title of the book. Ask students what they think the title means. Then ask them what they think this book will most likely be about and whom the book might be about. What places might be talked about in the text? What do they think might happen? What information do they think they might learn? What makes them think that?

Take students on a book walk and draw attention to the following parts of the book: front and back covers, title page, author's note, illustrations, and timeline.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

Have students read to find out about:

- why James and Charlie play golf at night
- how James learns to play golf
- how James challenges and resists prejudice

Encourage students to consider why the author, William Miller, would want to share this story and history with young people.

VOCABULARY

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

The story contains several content-specific and academic words that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary below. Encourage a variety of strategies to support students' vocabulary acquisition: look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, create a specific action for each word, list synonyms and antonyms, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.

CONTENT SPECIFIC

pigskin, golf bag, golf club, streetcar, golf course, caddy, golf tee, drivers (club), wood (club), cursing, underbrush, smart-mouthed, bunkers, clubhouse, fairway, hook it, slice it, water hazards, palms, pine trees, big head, corner of his eye, (putting) green

ACADEMIC

athlete, rusted, nervous(ly), winked, memorized, chuckled, proudly, faint, smoothly, moonlight, muttered, steady



Awards and honors:

AFTER READING

Discussion Questions

After students have read the book, use these or similar questions to generate discussion, enhance comprehension, and develop appreciation for the content. Encourage students to refer to passages and/or illustrations in the book to support their responses. **To build skills in close reading of a text, students should cite evidence with their answers.**

Literal Comprehension

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1 and 3)

1. What does James find in the garbage can?
2. What does James like about golf? What does not like about golf?
3. When does James learn to play golf?
4. Who is Charlie?
5. What secret does Charlie share with James?

6. How does Charlie help James?
7. What events are important for James getting a chance to play golf in the daylight?
8. What are some sentences that show how James feels? What are some sentences that show how Charlie feels?

Extension/Higher Level Thinking

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 2 and 3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4–6)

1. Why doesn't James's father encourage his son to play golf?
2. Why does the man at the golf course assume that James is there about the dishwasher's job?
3. What gives James the courage to speak up to the man at the golf course?
4. How would you describe the attitude of the golfers toward the caddies? Why do you think the golfers acted the way they did?
5. Why has Charlie been a caddy for twenty years?
6. Why do you think Charlie helps James?
7. How do you think life might change for James in the future? Will it change for Charlie too? Why or why not?
8. Imagine the story continues and James returns the next day. What do you think will happen to James? Do you think other golfers will treat him differently? Why or why not?
9. How does playing golf at night help James's game?
10. Do you think James's father will react to his son's skills at golf? Will he feel proud, worried, angry, or something else? Why?



Reader's Response

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4)

Use the following questions and writing activities to help students practice active reading and personalize their responses to the book. **Suggest that students respond in reader's response journals, essays, or oral discussion.** You may also want to set aside time for students to share and discuss their written work.

1. James really wanted to play golf. What are the things you really want to do? What obstacles do you face achieving success? How will you try to overcome them?
2. How do the illustrations in the book add to your understanding of the story?
3. What is your favorite part of the story? Why?
4. Why do you think the white characters in the book were prejudiced? How does this story affect your attitude toward prejudice?

ELL Teaching Activities

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4–6)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

These strategies might be helpful to use with students who are English Language Learners.

1. Assign ELL students to partner-read the story with strong English readers/speakers. Students can alternate reading between pages, repeat passages after one another, or listen to the more fluent reader. Students who speak Spanish can help with the pronunciations of the Spanish words in the book.

2. Have each student write three questions about the story. Then let students pair up and discuss the answers to the questions.
3. Depending on students' level of English proficiency, after the first reading:
 - Review the illustrations in order and have students summarize what is happening on each page, first orally, then in writing.
 - Have students work in pairs to retell either the plot of the story or key details. Then ask students to write a short summary, synopsis, or opinion about what they have read.
4. Have students give a short talk about what they admire about James or Charlie, or a time they learned a new skill.
5. The book contains some content-specific and academic words that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary. Expose English Language Learners to multiple vocabulary strategies. Have students make predictions about word meanings, look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, list synonyms and antonyms, create an action for each word, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.



INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES

(Introduction to the Standards, page 7: Students who are college and career ready must be able to build strong content knowledge, value evidence, and use technology and digital media strategically and capably)

Use some of the following activities to help students integrate their reading experiences with other curriculum areas. These can also be used for extension activities, for advanced readers, and for building a home-school connection.

Writing/English Language Arts

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–2 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4–6)

(Language Standards, Conventions of Standard English, Strand 1)

1. Think about the ending of the book. How believable are the last events in the story when James gets a chance to hit the ball and a crowd gathers to watch him play? Explain your response.
2. Night Golf is about racial barriers that a boy faces in golf. Think about an injustice that you feel is taking place today. Write a persuasive paragraph explaining what this injustice is and how you think it should be addressed.
3. Pretend you are James. Write a letter to Charlie telling him how you feel and thanking him for helping you.

Social Studies

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Writings Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strand 2 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

1. Have students study the timeline in the back of the book. Then have students research other information about the breakdown of racial barriers in golf. Extension opportunity: encourage small teams to research the breakdown of racial barriers in other sports in the United States.
2. Remind students that golf was the last major sport to be officially integrated. Have students make a chart comparing the steps toward racial equality in golf and another major sport such as baseball or basketball. Students may use the timeline at the end of the story as a starting point for information about golf.
3. Students might research and compile biographies of African American golfers such as Lee Elder and Tiger Woods. Students may also expand their collection of biographies to include other people of color who have become prominent in golf.
4. Men's and women's golf tournaments today are still segregated by gender. Encourage students to argue in a paragraph whether golf should be integrated by gender today.

Consider having a class debate.

Science

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writings Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strand 2 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

Point out that James and Charlie play golf by moonlight. Discuss the different phases of the



moon. Then have students figure out how often James and Charlie might be able to play during the summer months of June, July, and August, depending on the amount of moonlight available.

Art

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

1. Share with students some facts about golf courses. As you do so, draw a diagram of a hole and map of a golf course. Make sure to label each part as students follow or copy along.

- Most courses have 18 holes that are numbered.
- Each hole has a tee, a fairway, a green, and usually a hazard such as a sand trap or small pond.
- Most courses are designed as a loop so that players end up near the point where they began after each set of nine holes.
- Each hole begins at a tee where the golfer takes the first stroke. The stroke should send the ball along a fairway. At the end of the fairway is a green with grass that has been mowed very closely. Each green has a hole marked by a flag.

2. Have interested students research further the design of golf courses and then challenge them to design their own 9-hole or 18-hole golf course. Students may also wish to include a

clubhouse on the edge of the course, new traps or hazards along each hole, and even a design for a new or innovative golf cart.

Physical Education

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration,

Strands 1 and 2)

(Language Standards, Conventions of Standard English, Strand 1)

Have students research the rules and technical aspects of playing golf. Then have teams of students give golf demonstrations to the class. Some students might display the different kinds of clubs and explain when each is used. Others might demonstrate (on playground grass) how to swing a golf club. Still others might tell the class about various protocols that golfers follow as they play.

Home–School Connection

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 2 and 3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strand 7)

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

1. If a parent or golf pro is available in your community, you might invite him or her to come to school and talk to students about the game.
2. Interested students might follow golf news and report on the tournaments taking place. Most of the major men's and women's golf championships take place during the spring and summer: the Masters (April), United States Open (June), the British Open (July), and PGA (August) for men; the LPGA (June) and United States Women's Open (July). Many other important golf tournaments take place during this time as well.
3. Encourage students to interview a family member about a sport he or she enjoys and a sports figure he or she admires. Students should write down the interview responses and be prepared to share them in class.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William Miller is the author of numerous award-winning for young people, including *Zora Hurston and the Chinaberry Tree*, *Frederick Douglass: The Last Day of Slavery*, *Richard Wright and the Library Card*, *The Bus Ride*, *The Piano*, and *Rent Party Jazz*. Among them Miller's books have won major children's book awards, from organizations such as Reading Rainbow, *Smithsonian* magazine, Cooperative Children's Book Center, International Literacy Association, and the Parents' Choice Foundation. Of his first three picture books Miller has said, "My purpose is to inspire young readers and encourage them to know more about [Zora] Hurston, [Frederick] Douglass, and [Richard] Wright."

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Cedric Lucas is the illustrator of *Night Golf* and *Frederick Douglass: The Last Day of Slavery* (Lee & Low, 1995). He is also a contributing illustrator to *America: My Land, Your Land, Our Land*. He teaches art to middle school students in Bronx, NY, and lives in Yonkers, New York, with his wife and their two children.

ABOUT LEE & LOW BOOKS

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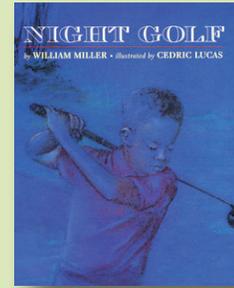
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Book Information



\$18.95, HARDCOVER

978-0-89239-325-1

32 pages, 9 x 10-3/4

*Reading Level: Grade 3-4

*Reading level based on the Spache Readability Formula

Interest Level: Grades 2-5

Guided Reading Level: R

Accelerated Reader® Level/Points:
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Lexile™ Measure: 550L

Themes: Sports (Golf), Persistence and Determination, Dreams and Aspirations, Mentors, Self-esteem, Prejudice, Civil Rights Movement, US History (Sports History), African/African American Interest

RESOURCES ON THE WEB:

Learn more about *Night Golf* at:
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All guided reading level placements may vary and are subject to revision. Teachers may adjust the assigned levels in accordance with their own evaluations.