

Professor Scruffles and the Great Leash Heist

Teacher Guide · Case No. 2 by Devin Dietrich · A Devin's Dogs book

The Story

Leashes are vanishing all over Puddle Creek three days before the Dog Parade. Dixie Moreno, age 9, and her senior dog Otis, who becomes the grand (and often wrong) Professor Scruffles when his bow tie goes on, follow eight fair clues to a lonely yellow Lab named Noodle. He wasn't stealing. He just wanted a walk. The town turns the case into kindness.

Grade fit: K to 4 read-aloud (about 5 sittings, 10 chapters). Grades 2 to 3 independent reading.
Themes: noticing clues, changing your mind, dog safety, helping neighbors.

Detective Words

- **Clue:** a small hint that helps solve a mystery.
- **Suspects:** the ones who might have done it.
- **Theory:** your best guess about what happened.
- **Conspiracy:** a sneaky secret plan by more than one plotter.
- **Organized:** neat, with everything in its place.
- **Dignity:** being calm and proud, even with a crooked bow tie.

Talk About It

1. Why did Noodle take the leashes? Was he a bad dog?
2. The Professor and Dixie both guessed wrong. Why is it OK to change your mind?
3. How did the town help Mrs. Kim and Noodle? How could you help a neighbor?

What Happens Next?

Pause after each pair of chapters and ask:

- **Ch 1 to 2:** Who or what do you think is taking the leashes? Could crows really do it?
- **Ch 3 to 4:** The paw print is huge. Whose could it be? Is Mr. Grumbold guilty?
- **Ch 5 to 6:** Dixie's red dots make a circle. What might be in the middle?
- **Ch 7 to 8:** What will Dixie find in Mrs. Kim's yard? What do Noodle's "please" eyes mean?
- **Ch 9 to 10:** How can the town fix Noodle's problem? What should happen at the parade?

Activity: Map It Like Dixie

Kids draw a map of the school or their street. Hide a paper "leash" somewhere, and give partners three clues. Partners mark a red dot for each clue and look for the shape. Bonus: keep a class Case Book and count the Professor's wrong theories (the answer is 3).

Pairs with Book 1, *Professor Scruffles and the Blueberry Bandit*. Read them in order or on their own. · devinsdogs.com/professor-scruffles