

Teaching Unit Lesson Plans

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EDCI 302: Literacy and Language in the Elementary or Middle School

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November 11, 2020

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Introduction

The following lessons are designed for a Grade 3 English Language Arts classroom. The activities involve a trusting and comfortable classroom environment where specific expectations have already been established and practiced. Therefore, these lessons would occur a few months into the school year.

In each lesson, we included numerous activities to help the students thoroughly understand each concept. These lessons will not be completed over one ELA period. Rather, the students will engage in the activities over three or four sessions so they can participate in each activity without being rushed. The lessons follow the GRR model, which stands for Gradual Release of Responsibility. In this process, the teacher begins with a focused lesson where a mentor text is shared, and a clear purpose is established. In the focused lesson, the teacher models what is being taught and the students have an opportunity to participate in various activities to deepen their understanding. Next, the students participate in a collaborative learning opportunity. In our lessons, this step varies from partner work, group work, or whole class writing. This allows the students to implement the new skill with help from their classmates and teacher. Finally, the students have a chance to apply their new knowledge individually. In our lessons, this step involves editing and revising a draft that describes their favourite place. The students implement the new skill into their writing, so they can see how these techniques can improve their drafts.

In addition to the GRR model, we have also incorporated other aspects of our learnings in this course. For example, we have included oral and visual elements. We have also incorporated Indigenous themes, exploratory talk, and peer writing conferences.

Lesson Plan 1: Using Adjectives to Describe A Setting

Grade 3 - English Language Arts

Big Ideas:

- “Stories and other texts help us learn about ourselves, our families, and our communities”
- “Using language in creative and playful ways helps us understand how language works”

Curricular Competencies:

- “Make connections between ideas from a variety of sources and prior knowledge to build understanding”
 - “Personal stories and experiences”
- “Develop awareness of how story in First Peoples cultures connects people to land”
 - “First Peoples stories were created to explain the landscape, the seasons, and local events”
- “Use oral storytelling processes”
 - “Creating an original story or finding an existing story (with permission), sharing the story from memory with others, using vocal expression to clarify the meaning of the text”

Content:

- “Literary elements and devices”
 - “Descriptive language, poetic language, figurative language, images, imagery, rhythm, rhyme, simile, alliteration”
- “Oral language strategies”
 - “Focusing on the speaker, asking questions to clarify, listening for specifics, expressing opinions, speaking with expression, staying on topic, taking turns, connecting with audience”
- “Writing processes”
 - “May include revising, editing, considering audience”
- “Legible writing”
 - “Legible handwriting with spacing between words”

(BC Ministry of Education, n.d.)

Prior Knowledge: Students will have a draft where they describe their favourite place. Their draft will be triple-spaced so they can return to it over the next few lessons and continue editing their writing. They will already know how to write a paragraph with a beginning, middle, and end. They will also know how to write descriptively using the “show, don’t tell” method and they will know about using a magnifying glass to focus on specific features (Dorfman & Cappelli, 2017).

This scaffolding activity, which introduces adjectives, is the first of three lessons that will emphasize returning to a piece of writing to edit and further improve their descriptions.

Additionally, the mentor text in this lesson discusses Residential Schools. Through previous classroom conversations, students will already have prior knowledge of Residential Schools and their impacts on Indigenous communities. Students will also have prior knowledge about how to maintain respectful classroom environment, especially while having classroom conversations.

Materials:

- Mentor Text: *Shi Shi Etko*, by Nicola L. Campbell
 - Provides examples of how adjectives are used to describe a place.
- Adjective magnets
 - Provides an opportunity for students to connect their prior knowledge before explicitly learning the definition of an adjective.
- Students' draft
 - Continuously editing and adding to their writing teaches the importance of revision.
- Teacher's piece of writing without adjectives
 - Allows the students to witness adjectives being added to a piece of writing so they know how to revise their draft.
- Document camera
 - Projects materials on the board so all students can view the information.
- Writer's notebook
 - A place for students to collect their thoughts. They can refer to their writer's notebook for inspiration.
- Anchor Chart Supplies (i.e. anchor chart paper and markers)
 - Provides examples of words that the students can replicate in their writing. Creating the chart shows the students ways they can brainstorm for their own writing.

Mentor Text: *Shi Shi Etko* by Nicola L. Campbell

Shi Shi Etko is a story about a young girl counting down the days until she needs to go to Residential School. During her last few days at home, she spends time with her family, exploring the land and appreciating nature. Through the use of adjectives, the reader can vividly imagine *Shi Shi Etko*'s love for her territory. Throughout the story, we can see *Shi Shi Etko*'s strength and resilience as she captures the memories of her explorations and attempts to remember the beauty of her land (DuMont, 2016).

This story effectively displays the benefits of adjectives. The vivid descriptions allow the reader to imagine the beautiful landscape. Additionally, this mentor text highlights Indigenous issues and themes, such as Residential Schools and appreciation of the land. The incorporation of Indigenous themes in lessons allows for Indigenous concepts to be discussed throughout the year.

Hook:

Choose six adjectives and six non-adjective words. Attach these words to magnets. Scatter the words on the board so they are displayed randomly. Students will have the opportunity to work collaboratively as a class to decide if the words are adjectives or not. They will use exploratory talk to discuss their reasoning with their classmates (please see “Exploratory Talk” at the end of this lesson for a description of this process). They will place the words that they believe are adjectives on one side of the whiteboard and place the non-adjectives on the other side. Once the students finish differentiating the adjectives from the non-adjectives, the teacher determines if they were placed in the correct categories. The teacher asks the students:

*What do you think an adjective is?
Why did you place “blue” in the adjective category?*

Once students explain what they think an adjective is, the teacher explains the proper definition and gives examples:

An adjective is a describing word that can be used to explain a noun, which is a person, place, or thing. These words can be colours, sizes, or shapes, for example. In the sentence “the big blue elephant,” the words big and blue are both adjectives. We use adjectives in our everyday language. For example, when we see a dog, we sometimes say, “look at that cute dog.” Now, we will work to transfer these adjectives from our everyday speech into our writing.

Purpose:

Today, we are going to talk about adjectives and look at how Nicola L. Campbell, an Indigenous author, uses adjectives in her writing to convey her message. Campbell illustrates a child leaving her home to attend residential schools. She describes the beautiful nature around her to display her love for the land. Then, we will discuss the theme of the book, the message about residential schools, and how the prominent use of adjectives allows us to vividly imagine the beautiful nature of Shi Shi Etko’s home (DuMont, 2016). Finally, you will work collaboratively and individually to use adjectives in your writing by incorporating them in your draft (the description of your favourite place). Adjectives are important to include while writing because they help enhance our description to make it more engaging. Adjectives add details that will allow the reader to understand and visualize what you are describing.

Discussion:

Before reading the mentor text, briefly remind students about Residential Schools. The students will already have prior knowledge about the impact of Residential Schools on children and their families.

Now, read *Shi Shi Etko* by Nicola L. Campbell. While reading the book, prompt students to place their finger on their nose when they hear a describing word. This will allow them to be engaged while listening to the story.

Once the story is done, discuss the themes of the book, such as Residential Schools and the importance of nature to Indigenous Peoples. Then, discuss how the use of adjectives allows us to visualize Shi Shi Etko's beautiful land:

Like we have discussed before, Shi Shi Etko was leaving her home to attend a residential school. She loves her home, her family, and nature. However, her family didn't have a choice and she needed to leave to go to residential schools. As she counts down the days before leaving, Shi Shi Etko creates memories of her home and promises to remember the beautiful features of her land. She spends her last few days appreciating nature and we can see how important the land is for Indigenous families (DuMont, 2016).

The effective use of adjectives illustrates the beauty of Shi Shi Etko's home, as we can clearly visualize the features of the land. In your writing, it is important to include adjectives so the reader can imagine the picture you are trying to paint.

Brainstorm:

As a class, brainstorm a list of adjectives on an anchor chart that the students remember hearing in the book *Shi Shi Etko*. Leave some pages of the book open and projected on the board using a document camera so the students can refer back to the book if they have trouble remembering what adjectives were used. The teacher will then add some adjectives that the students may have missed.

Some examples of adjectives in the story: tall (grass), shiny (rock), yellow (cedar paddles), working (bumblebees), brilliant (blue) (DuMont, 2016).

Model:

The teacher brings up a piece of writing that has no adjectives present. Using what was taught to the students, the teacher and students can work collaboratively to add adjectives to her previously written piece of writing. This activity occurs with student suggestions; however, it is predominantly teacher-led/modelled.

Example of pre-adjective writing: Today was a sunny day, so my dog and I went to the park. There was a duck in the pond.

Addition of adjectives: Today was a beautiful sunny day, so my fluffy dog and I went the park. There was an adorable duck in the ice blue pond.

Shared/Guided Writing:

Separate the students into partners and have them choose a few adjectives from the anchor chart we brainstormed earlier from *Shi Shi Etko*. The students will orally compose a few sentences using these adjectives in a different context than the way the book used them. Encourage students to compose four or five sentences with their partner. They can choose two of those sentences to write in their writer's notebook.

Adaptation: After this activity, those students who feel ready can begin working on the independent writing process. Repeat this activity (in a small group with the teacher, instead of partners) with the students that are struggling or need more practice with adjectives.

Independent Writing:

Ask the students to return to their previous writing draft where they described their favourite place and add some adjectives to their piece of writing. Some can be the same ones they discussed from *Shi Shi Etko*, but make sure they think of some of their own as well. Encourage the students to add at least five adjectives to their draft. They can add more if they choose.

If students finish early, they can begin an alternate activity while the rest of the class completes their independent work. The teacher can place an image from the mentor text *Shi Shi Etko* on the document camera. The students can brainstorm some adjectives to describe the features of the photo in their writer's notebook. This will provide students with more practice with adjectives and visuals.

Reflection:

After the activities, the students can complete a reflection as partners. They can orally discuss the questions and complete a worksheet, which will be given to the teacher. In addition to helping the students reflect on the process, this will also allow the teacher see if this scaffold activity worked for her class.

What is an adjective? Give some examples.

Was the revision process where you added adjectives to your draft easy or difficult? Explain.

How did the mentor text and our group activities help you learn about adjectives?

Why is it important to include adjectives in your writing?

Exploratory Talk

Exploratory talk occurs during the early stages of learning. Students are beginning to approach new ideas on a topic, so their thoughts will be hesitant and incomplete. This enables students to try out different ideas. They will also be participating in exploratory talk with their peers, so they will be able to hear what others think and rearrange the information according to varying thoughts. The students will feel better about “work[ing] on their understanding” (Barnes, 2008, p. 3) when they feel comfortable to share without being made fun of, judged, or contradicted. Exploratory talk provides the students with an opportunity to bounce their ideas off of each other to gain new opinions, ideas, and feedback.

Students will have prior knowledge about what exploratory talk is, and how it should be done respectfully. They will understand that it is an opportunity for everyone to explore new ideas for the first time. Thus, everyone is doing the same thing when they give their thoughts and opinions. This also means that the students will know how to approach exploratory talk conversations in a respectful way. So, if a student disagrees, they can respectfully share why they disagree in a non-judgemental way.

(Barnes, 2008; Wilmot, 2020)

Lesson Plan 2: Using Senses to Describe A Setting

Grade 3 - English Language Arts

Big Ideas:

- “Using language in creative and playful ways helps us understand how language works”

Curricular Competencies:

- “Use sources of information and prior knowledge to make meaning”
 - “Personal stories and experiences”
- “Make connections between ideas from a variety of sources and prior knowledge to build understanding”
 - “Personal stories and experiences”
- “Develop and apply expanding word knowledge”
- “Use oral storytelling processes”
 - “Creating an original story or finding an existing story (with permission), sharing the story from memory with others, using vocal expression to clarify the meaning of the text”

Content:

- “Literary elements and devices”
 - “Descriptive language, poetic language, figurative language, images, imagery, rhythm, rhyme, simile, alliteration”
- “Oral language strategies”
 - “Focusing on the speaker, asking questions to clarify, listening for specifics, expressing opinions, speaking with expression, staying on topic, taking turns, connecting with audience”
- “Writing processes”
 - “May include revising, editing, considering audience”
- “Legible handwriting”
 - “Legible handwriting with spacing between words”

(BC Ministry of Education, n.d.)

Prior Knowledge: Students will have a draft where they describe their favourite place. Their draft will be triple-spaced so they can return to it over the next few lessons and continue editing their writing. They will already know how to write a paragraph with a beginning, middle, and end. They will also know how to write descriptively using the “show, don’t tell” method and they will know about using a magnifying glass to focus on specific features (Dorfman & Cappelli, 2017).

In the first of three lessons, students learned how to add adjectives to their drafts to improve their descriptions. For this lesson, students will be introduced to the five senses and they will learn how to incorporate senses in their writing. Students will also have prior knowledge about a respectful classroom environment, especially while having classroom conversations.

Materials:

- Mentor Text: *Hello Ocean* by Pam Muñoz Ryan
 - Provides examples of how the five senses are used to describe a place.
- Bunch of grapes
 - Each student will get a single grape in which they can observe and describe using their five senses.
- Students' draft
 - Continuously editing and adding to their writing teaches the importance of revision.
- Teacher's piece of writing without senses
 - Allows the students to witness the senses being added to a piece of writing so they know how to revise their own draft.
- Writers notebook
 - A place for students to collect their thoughts. They can refer to their writer's notebook for inspiration.
- Anchor chart
 - Provides examples of words that the students can replicate in their writing. Creating the chart shows the students ways they can brainstorm for their own writing.

Mentor Text: Hello Ocean by Pam Muñoz Ryan

Hello Ocean is about a young girl exploring one of her favourite places - the ocean. While the young girl explores the beach, she illustrates her findings through her five senses (taste, smell, touch, hear, and see) (StoryTime, 2019).

This story effectively demonstrates the five senses and gives students the opportunity to visualize what the young girl feels while she is at the beach. Additionally, since the girl is illustrating her favourite place, it will demonstrate the strategies the students can use while editing their draft of their favourite place. This story also includes a strong use of adjectives, which can remind students of the previous lesson and how these adjectives add depth to their descriptions.

Hook:

Ask the students to raise their hand if they know what one of the five senses is. Once the students recite all five senses (taste, smell, touch, hear, and see), the teacher can display an anchor chart to further explain each of the senses (please see page #22 for a sample anchor chart).

Like we learned with adjectives, our senses also add an interesting element to our writing. Our five senses are what we use to observe the world around us. As writers, it is important to use all our senses to describe a setting, so our audience can visualize the location and its features. Since we explore new places with all five of our senses, our writing should reflect these experiences as well.

Now, I am going to hand out one grape to each student. I would like you to use all of your senses and make some observations about the grapes. You may feel the texture, look at the colour or specific features, and smell the grape. You may also taste the grape and listen to the sounds you hear while eating it. If you would not like to eat the grape, you do not have to.*

Teacher hands out grapes and gives students a couple minutes to silently observe the grape. Then, ask for volunteers to share their findings about the grape and write these observations on the anchor chart.

*Make sure to be aware of any class allergies before doing this exercise.

(Gregory, n.d.)

Purpose:

For our lesson today, we are going to look at how Pam Muñoz Ryan uses the five senses in her writing to enhance her description of a day at the ocean. She describes one of her favourite places, just like you are all doing with your drafts. She talks about how she uses her five senses to fully experience the ocean, the sand, and the beach environment (StoryTime, 2019). Adding five senses to our writing allows the reader to fully experience the place we are describing. When we read, make sure to also listen for some adjectives, like we learned about in our previous lesson.

Discussion:

Before reading the book, have the students make a table in their notebooks and label each column with a different sense. Then, start reading *Hello Ocean* by Pam Muñoz Ryan. Have the students write down the words that they hear for each sense as you are reading the book.

After the book is finished, add to the pre-existing anchor chart as a class. Have the students contribute by raising their hand to share the sense words they heard in the book. Leave the chart on the board so the class can revisit these ideas.

Brainstorm:

Take the students to an outdoor classroom (i.e. an open forest near the school, a large field, a park, etc.). The students will choose a “sit spot” to work at during this time. Make sure that students sit far away from their other classmates, as this is an independent, quiet activity. The students will silently sit in their chosen spots and observe the scenery, using all five of their senses. Students will record their findings in a writer's notebook. Encourage students to choose at least 3-5 words for each sense. For the “taste” component, inform students not to eat anything they find outdoors; however, they can be creative with this sense. For example, *I can taste the cool breeze of the air*. Students can

move to one other sit spot to record more observations from a different location and perspective.

Shared/Guided Writing:

After the outdoor classroom activity, the students discuss their findings with a partner. They can orally explain what they saw, felt, smelled, tasted, and heard while they were in their sit spots. After giving the students a few minutes to discuss, all the students will return to the anchor chart and record their findings as a group. By continuously adding to the anchor chart, students will have concrete examples that they can use in their independent practice.

After recording their observations and adding to the anchor chart, the class as a whole group will create a short paragraph with their findings. The teacher will compose the paragraph; however, he/she will use the students' suggestions and guidance. In this paragraph, encourage students to use adjectives (as discussed in the prior lesson) to make the description more engaging and to incorporate their previous learnings (Dorfman & Cappelli, 2017).

Model:

The teacher displays a description of her favourite place, which she previously wrote. This description does not include the use of the five senses to describe the features of her setting. Using what was just learned about senses, have the students work with the teacher to add some sense words to the writing. The students can give suggestions, but it is mostly teacher-led and modelled for the students. This will provide the students with some structure and inspiration when they edit their drafts.

Adaptation: If students need more practice distinguishing the five senses and incorporating these into their writing, they can remain with the class and practice brainstorming senses for a scenario. For example, explain your five senses while you are riding a roller coaster or building a snowman. If students feel as though they are ready to add senses to their draft without the extra practice, they are welcome to do so.

Independent Writing:

Have the students return to their draft about their favourite place to add details connected to their five senses. They should add at least one word for each of the five senses (totalling five new words) to help the reader fully experience the place that is being described.

Have the students look back at the anchor chart they collaboratively created if they are in need of help and inspiration, but also encourage them to think of their own sense words as well.

Emphasize the importance of returning back to a writing draft several times, and incorporating various writing strategies, such as adjectives and senses, to make their writing stronger and more engaging. This will help the students understand that revisions should be done multiple times before their final copy is submitted. Also, it will help students understand that adding more descriptive features (like senses and adjectives) will add depth to their writing.

Reflection:

In their writer's notebook, have students reflect on this scaffold activity. Additionally, have them reflect on their comfort of utilizing the five senses in their writing. Write the following questions on the board to guide the students' reflection.

What are the five senses? Give some examples.

Did you find it easy or difficult to observe your five senses in the outdoor classroom? Explain.

Did you find it easy or difficult to brainstorm five senses while revising your draft, even though you weren't physically able to experience each sense at the moment of writing? Explain.

Does this editing process of referring back to your previous work to add new skills help with your writing process? Explain.

Lesson Plan 3: Using Similes to Describe A Setting

Grade 3 - English Language Arts

Big Ideas:

- “Using language in creative and playful ways helps us understand how language works”
- “Questioning what we hear, read, and view contributes to our ability to be educated and engaged citizens”

Curricular Competencies:

- “Use sources of information and prior knowledge to make meaning”
 - “Personal stories and experiences”
- “Make connections between ideas from a variety of sources and prior knowledge to build understanding”
 - “Personal stories and experiences”
- “Develop and apply expanding word knowledge”
- “Use oral storytelling processes”
 - “Creating an original story or finding an existing story (with permission), sharing the story from memory with others, using vocal expression to clarify the meaning of the text”

Content:

- “Literary elements and devices”
 - “Descriptive language, poetic language, figurative language, images, imagery, rhythm, rhyme, simile, alliteration”
- “Writing processes”
 - “May include revising, editing, considering audience”
- “Oral language strategies”
 - “Focusing on the speaker, asking questions to clarify, listening for specifics, expressing opinions, speaking with expression, staying on topic, taking turns, connecting with audience”
- “Legible handwriting”
 - “Legible handwriting with spacing between words”

(BC Ministry of Education, n.d.)

Prior Knowledge: Students will have a draft where they describe their favourite place. Their draft will be triple-spaced so they can return to it over the next few lessons and continue editing their writing. They will already know how to write a paragraph with a beginning, middle, and end. They will also know how to write descriptively using the “show, don’t tell” method and they will know about using a magnifying glass to focus on specific features (Dorfman & Cappelli, 2017).

In the first two lessons, the students were introduced to adjectives and senses. They learned how to revise drafts to include these features to improve their descriptions. For the final lesson,

the students will learn about similes and how to effectively incorporate these into their writing. The students will also have prior knowledge about respectful feedback, as they will be participating in peer conferences (more detail about the prior knowledge needed for peer conferences is at the bottom of this lesson). Additionally, students will have prior knowledge about being respectful to their peers while they share their writing with the class.

Materials:

- Mentor Text: *Feathers: Not Just for Flying*, by Melissa Stewart
 - Provides examples of how similes are used for descriptions.
- Students' draft
 - Continuously editing and adding to their writing teaches the importance of revision.
- Teacher's piece of writing without adjectives
 - Allows the students to witness adjectives being added to a piece of writing so they know how to revise their draft.
- Writer's notebook
 - A place for students to collect their thoughts. They can refer to their writer's notebook for inspiration.
- Anchor Chart Supplies (i.e. anchor chart paper and markers)
 - Provides examples of words that the students can replicate in their writing. Creating the chart shows the students ways they can brainstorm for their own writing.
- Document camera
 - Projects materials on the board so all students can view the information.
- Anchor Chart with Peer Writing Conference Rules
 - Before the peer writing conferences, the teacher can review the expectations for editing. This will ensure a respectful and helpful peer editing session.

Mentor Text: *Feathers: Not Just for Flying*, by Melissa Stewart

Feathers: Not Just for Flying is about bird feathers, and how they have a variety of useful purposes. It explains that feathers can be used for much more than helping a bird fly. With the incorporation of similes, it displays the use of feathers and how they are essential to birds (Pelezo, 2020).

This book is full of excellent examples of similes, starting on the first page, which can help students learn about this writing technique. The diverse incorporation of similes displays the different ways a simile can be written. In addition to the effective use of similes, the book also provides detailed information about feathers. This gives the students external knowledge about birds as well. *Feathers: Not Just for Flying* demonstrates to the students how they can use similes in their own writing to convey a message.

Hook:

Write some similes on the board. For example, the sun is as yellow as a newborn baby duckling, or, sometimes I eat my breakfast as slow as a turtle. Using these examples, explain what a simile is:

A simile is a strategy that uses comparison to describe something. Similes always use the words “like” or “as” to compare two similar objects. For example, the first sentence on the board compares the colour of the sun to a newborn baby duck. This allows the reader to visualize the bright shade of yellow, as they imagine the colour of a baby duckling. Similes make our writing more engaging and unique. They also add an extra element of interest to engage the reader.

Now, reference the second sentence on the board: “Sometimes I eat my breakfast as slow as a turtle.” Ask the students what is being compared in this sentence. To further clarify their understanding of similes, ask a few students to raise their hand and offer some suggestions of similes.

Purpose:

Today, we will be exploring the use of similes in our writing. We will look at how Melissa Stewart utilizes similes to add a rich description to her informative book about feathers. The mentor text uses similes in an effective way that helps us clearly visualize these descriptions of feathers (Pelezo, 2020). Incorporating similes in our writing will allow the reader to imagine the features we are describing.

Read Aloud:

While reading, *Feathers: Not Just for Flying*, by Melissa Stewart, the students will be asked to listen for the similes. Whenever they hear a simile, they can touch their nose. This will let the teacher know that they are finding them, while not directly announcing it to the whole class. During the first few pages, the teacher will point out a few similes and touch his/her nose. This will show the students examples of similes in the book so they know what to look for. This activity will also help the teacher observe the students to see if they are generally grasping the concept, or if they need more explanation.

Brainstorm:

The teacher will select a picture from the mentor text and display this photo under a document camera. As a group, the students will be asked to create a simile to describe a certain feature in the picture. For example, page 11 in *Feathers: Not Just for Flying*, shows a bird flying over snow. After presenting the picture, ask the class to brainstorm a list of ideas that could fill in “the snow is as white as _____,” to create different similes to describe the snow. Encourage the class to brainstorm 5 or 6 unique comparisons. Also, encourage the students to use adjectives in their comparisons. They can also try and incorporate senses, such as feeling the snow. This will remind students of

the techniques they learned in the first two lessons. Write these comparisons on an anchor chart. The teacher can choose multiple photos from the book and complete this activity a few times until the students are confident with the process of creating similes.

(Dorfman & Cappelli, 2017)

Shared/Guided Writing:

Pick 4 or 5 images from the mentor text *Feathers: Not Just for Flying*, by Melissa Stewart. Place these pictures under a document camera or print them and tape them to the board. The students can work with a partner to describe one feature in the photo, by using a simile. Briefly review that a simile compares two things by using the words “like” or “as” to make comparisons.

After the partners create some similes based on the photos, the teacher can ask for a few volunteers to share their similes. The teacher can add these similes to an anchor chart for students to refer to while working on their independent writing.

Model:

The teacher will bring out his/her piece of writing that has been added to after learning about adjectives and senses, to add this final component - similes. The teacher will display their draft of their favourite place under the document camera and they will demonstrate how to add similes to a previously written paragraph.

Adaptation: If the students need extra assistance with creating similes and incorporating them into their writing, they can spend some extra time with the teacher. The teacher and students can work on brainstorming some similes to describe a feature (like the brainstorm activity completed earlier). This will allow the students to get more help from the teacher, and the teacher can then tackle some problem spots to help the students understand the concept. The students who feel comfortable with similes may begin working on their individual writing.

Independent Writing:

Now, the students return to their writing to add to some similes. Encourage the students to try and add one or two similes to their writing. If they are having trouble finding a place to add one where it makes sense, the teacher can provide some guidance.

After they finish, they will rewrite the paragraph with the new adjectives, senses, and similes. This will be a more complete draft that is no longer triple spaced. The students will double space their final copy and focus on legible handwriting. Make sure students can locate the three new techniques (adjectives, senses, and similes) in their final copy. If time allows, the students can participate in a peer writing conference (please see “The Peer Writing Conference” at the end of the lesson for how this process should be

executed). If not doing the peer writing conference, the students will submit this draft as their final copy.

Reflection:

Students can reflect on the simile learning process, and their overall editing process, in their writer's notebook.

What is a simile? Give some examples.

Did our group activities help with your understanding of similes? Why or why not?

Why are similes helpful to include in our writing?

After returning to your draft multiple times, do you feel like you produced a more detailed piece of writing? Explain.

Ask if any student would like to share a part of their writing. They can share as little as one sentence they are proud of, or a larger chunk of their writing as well. Before the sharing session, remind students of being respectful and kind to their peers while they are sharing. Students will already have prior knowledge about respectful sharing sessions, and class rules for this process would have already been outlined as well.

The Peer Writing Conference

The peer writing conference provides an opportunity for students to offer suggestions to their peers and obtain recommendations to make their writing better. Peer writing conferences require a trusting classroom environment, and time dedicated to brainstorming expectations for these conversations. Students must be aware of specific rules that will allow for a respectful and helpful conversation.

Before beginning the peer writing conference for this lesson, students will already have prior knowledge about the process of giving respectful feedback to their peers. They would have created an anchor chart that outlines the rules of peer writing conferences (i.e. being kind, specific, respectful, etc.). The teacher would have emphasized the importance of being respectful in these conferences and giving constructive feedback that will help their peers improve their writing, rather than make them upset about their work. Preparing students to respectfully participate in peer writing conferences would have been outlined numerous times prior to this activity. The students would also have some practice with giving peer feedback. All these steps must be pursued, and the teacher must feel confident in the students' ability to be respectful during these peer-editing activities, before he/she allows the students to participate in this activity.

Since students already have a lot of prior knowledge and practice with this process, they should already be comfortable with peer writing conferences. Before beginning, the teacher can display the anchor chart, which outlines the rules the class previously created. The teacher

will emphasize the importance of being respectful and giving specific feedback that will assist students in completing their drafts. The teacher will also emphasize that this peer feedback will help further polish their descriptions that they have been continuously working on.

To begin the peer writing conference, the students will choose a partner. The first partner will orally read their writing. The other student will carefully listen to their writing and think about what they like, any questions they have, and some suggestions they can give. These suggestions should be specific to the features of writing we have been working on (i.e. adjectives, senses, and similes). The students may recommend where they could potentially add one of these features to further enhance their writing. The students will follow the sentence stems listed on the peer editing worksheet to give their partner respectful and constructive feedback (please see the “Peer Writing Worksheet” on page #22). After the first partner receives their feedback, the students can switch roles.

(Wilmot, R. Anacleto, personal communication, November, 2020)

Grade 3 English Language Arts

Name: _____

Partner Reflection

In partners, orally discuss the following reflection questions about our adjective lesson. Individually record your answers in the space provided. You can include the information you discussed with your partner and individual responses as well.

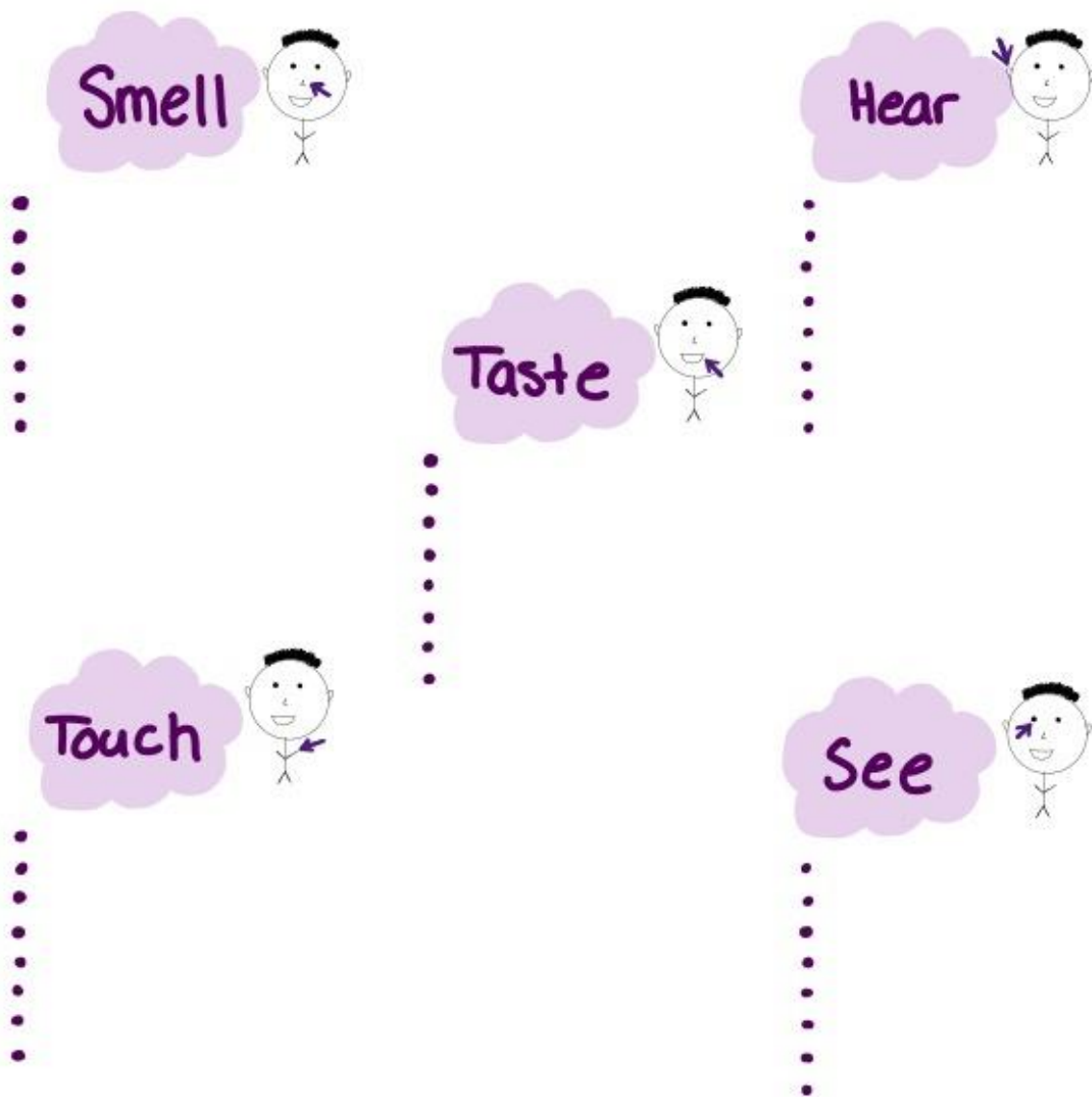
What is an adjective? Give some examples.

Was the revision process where you added adjectives to your draft easy or difficult? Explain

How did the mentor text and our group activities help you learn about adjectives?

Why is it important to include adjectives in your writing?

Our 5 Senses



Sample Anchor Chart - 5 Senses

Grade 3 - English Language Arts

Name: _____

The Peer Writing Conference

Choose 1 partner to orally read their description of a place. The other partner can carefully listen to their description and record feedback using the template below. Remember to be respectful and specific with your feedback (focussing on adjectives, senses, and similes).

Begin with likes:

I liked how you:

I really enjoyed when you mentioned:

My favourite part is:

Next, ask questions:

Why did you choose to:

What do you mean by:

Do you think you might:

Finally, provide suggestions:

Maybe you could:

To make this stronger, you might:

Might I suggest:

(Polk, 2019)

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