



Provincial Outreach Program for the Early Years



Supporting Playful & Cross-Curricular Learning with Story Workshop

Tuesday, March 5th

8:30am – 2:00 pm

Connect with us online!



@POPEYBC



@popeybc

Facilitator

Lisa Thomas

POPEY Program Manager



Our learning objectives

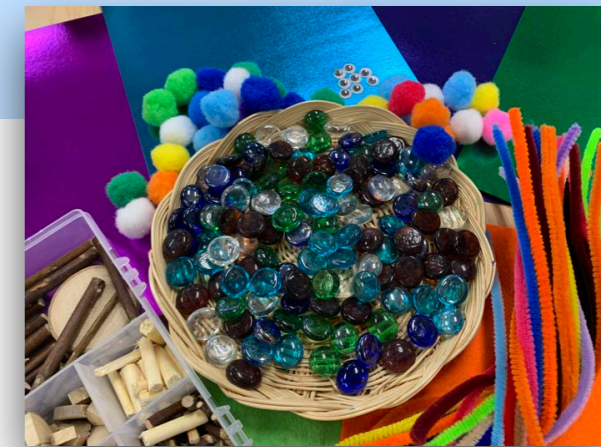
Today we will share strategies, resources, and ideas to incorporate Story Workshop, loose parts, and materials into your primary literacy block, as we:

- ✓ nurture curiosity and joy as students build their identity as storytellers
- ✓ use big questions and mentor texts to inspire meaningful learning experiences
- ✓ make natural connections to reading and writing across curricular areas

Throughout the day, we will engage in hands-on exploration of loose parts and provocations, engage in rich and reflective conversations, and consider how the stories we tell support our sense of identity and agency. POPEY will provide practical ideas that you will be able to use in your classroom right away.



Shape of the Day



- 8:30–10:15am
 - ✓ Setting the stage for story workshop
 - ✓ Cross-curricular connections and big ideas
 - ✓ Fiction and nonfiction mentor texts to connect to science
 - ✓ Graphic organizers to bridge story workshop to writing
 - ✓ Gallery walks as community learning experiences – connect & reflect
- 10:30–12:00pm
 - ✓ The power of questions to guide our thinking, learning, and storytelling
 - ✓ The five elements of story workshop
 - ✓ Narrative nonfiction mentor texts to connect to social studies
 - ✓ Story creation into writing about our stories
 - ✓ Reflecting on your practice, planning for our final session (May 22nd)
- 12:30–2:00pm
 - ✓ Playful learning and the benefits of loose parts
 - ✓ Story workshop and connections to numeracy, SEL, art, nature, and writing
 - ✓ Reflect, discuss, plan, and share – looking back and looking ahead

Checking in - you and story workshop

How would you describe your prior experience and comfort level with Story Workshop?

1. Haven't tried it yet
2. Have tried it a bit
3. Feel pretty comfortable with it
4. Feel very comfortable with it

What is Story Workshop?

Adults invite children to imagine, write, edit, revise, publish, and share their stories. Prepared spaces and organized materials inspire and entice children to overflow with thoughts and ideas and memories and imagination.



"Stories are maps
of your life."
-Kellen, age 4

What is Story Workshop?

Story Workshop **invites** children to **show** and to **tell** us what **makes sense** to them

- ✓ it is grounded in the stories children bring to school – real and imagined
- ✓ it encourages writing from those stories
- ✓ it supports children to develop an authentic relationship between their experiences and the way they choose to create and tell stories about them
- ✓ these tellings, in a variety of forms, nurture listening
- ✓ the reciprocity of storytelling and listening allows students to know themselves and each other better
- ✓ students learn that stories help us find each other, and that writing is a powerful tool for connection

Why Story Workshop?

Story Workshop helps teachers work with students who exclaim they have nothing to write about during writing workshop.

Students start to understand that they:

- * can be curious about the environment around them
- * are competent communicators
- * have important stories to tell
- * can make connections to other people's stories
- * have big emotions they can explore and share with others

Story Workshop is the confluence of meaning-making, play, and the arts.

The Five Elements of Story Workshop

Preparation

organizing materials and environments specifically designed to support both the children's story creation and the teacher's research

Provocation

the whole-group session that begins each story workshop, including a proposal the teacher introduces to the children to engage, sustain, and extend their interests and curiosity

Invitation and negotiation

is the transition between provocation and creation; intended to support each child with a plan to get started

Story creation

makes up the bulk of a session of story workshop; a time for using the arts and play as well as writing to make meaning, to imagine, to create, and to share stories

Story sharing

brings closure to story workshop each day, and is a time for building community through story and reflection

Story Workshop & Provocations



★ What story can these colours tell?

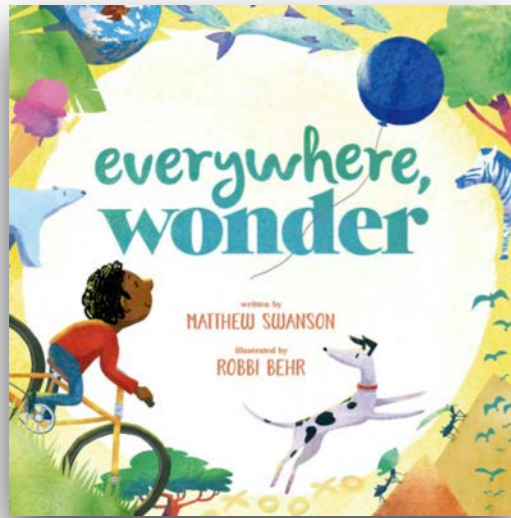
Loose Parts as Provocations in Story Workshop



When children interact with loose parts, they enter a world of “**what if**” that promotes the type of **thinking** that leads to **problem solving** and **theoretical reasoning**. Loose parts **enhance** children’s ability to **think imaginatively** and see **solutions**, and they bring a sense of **adventure** and **excitement** to children’s play.

–Daly & Beloglovsky in
Loose Parts: Inspiring Play in Young Children

Story workshop examples



Question:
What's a wonderful memory of a special place?



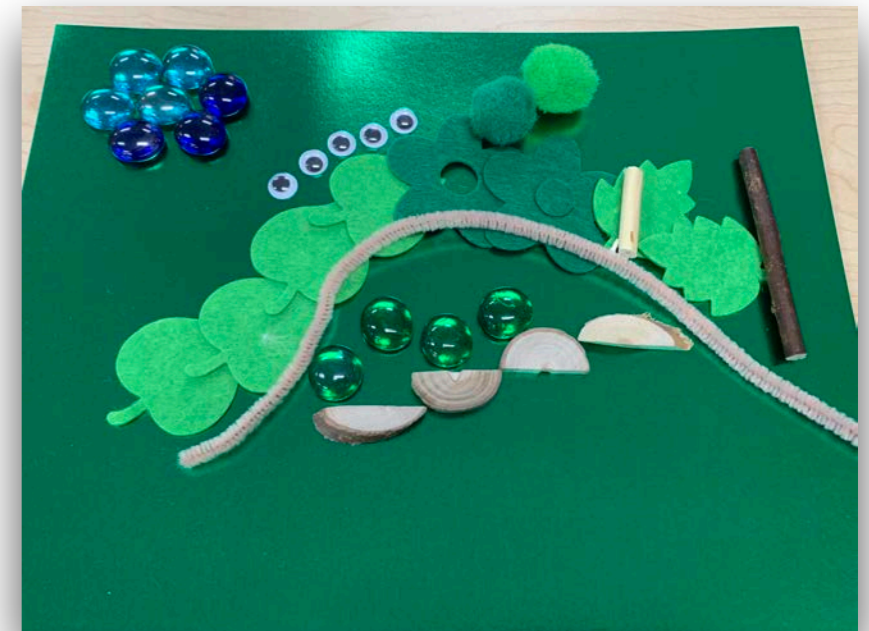
a camping trip

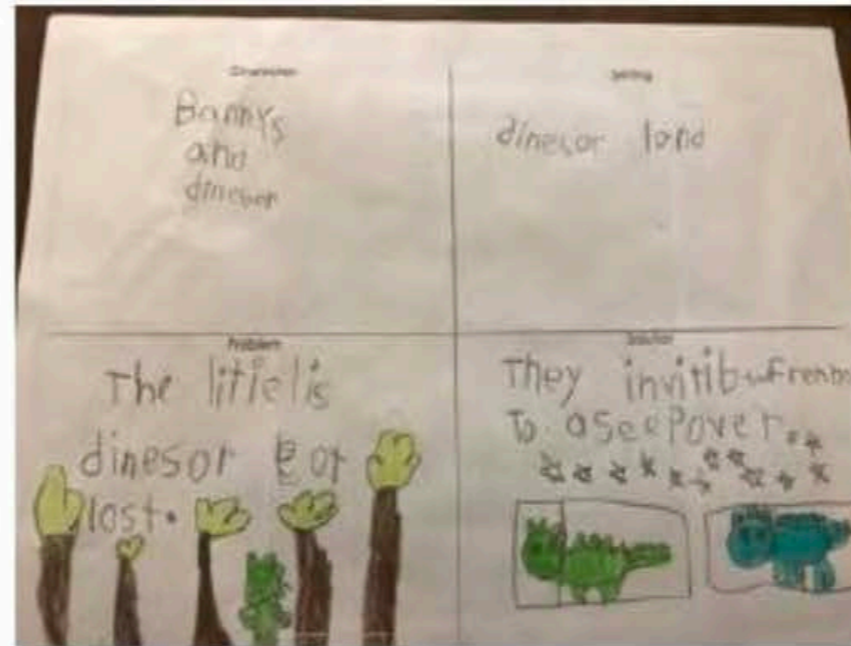


my grandparents' cabin on the lake



a family hike in the mountains





The First Day the Dinosaurs and the Bunnies Raced By Margo

One beautiful sunny morning the dinosaurs wanted to race with the bunnies. So they decided to race in the forest. "One...two...three GO!" said the dinosaur and they went. But when they raced the smallest dinosaur got lost and they went to look for him, and the biggest dinosaur found the smallest dinosaur. But the Dinosaur was stuck. So they dinosaurs had a good idea, they went to get scissors but the scissors didn't work. All the dinosaurs pulled and pulled and finally got the dinosaur out. The dinosaur was really happy and they invited their friends.

Graphic Organizer - Story Elements

Characters

Setting

Problem

Solution

Story making is world making

What **three words** do **you** feel are most important when it comes to supporting your students as **story tellers** and **world makers**?

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Equity | Inventiveness | Meaning making | Creativity |
| Voice | Innovation | Emotional literacy | Generosity |
| Agency | Problem solving | Compassion | Hope |
| Empathy | Leadership | Humour | Care |
| Collaboration | Engagement | Interdependence | Power |
| Listening | Vision | Perspective taking | Uncertainty |
| Imagination | Trust | Community | Reading |
| Inquiry | Play | Connection | Writing |
| Curiosity | Art | Flexibility | Self-efficacy |

What questions do these words inspire you to ask?

Discuss & share your three words with your table group

Read, Reflect, Discuss & Connect...

Read through the Big Ideas for all subject areas for the grade(s) you teach.

Extra Handout:
Curricular Big Ideas

| Subject | Big Idea | Subject | Big Idea |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| English Language Arts | The need and tools work together when creating works of art. | Mathematics | Fractions are a type of number that can represent quantities. |
| English Language Arts | Creative experiences involve an interplay between imagination, inquiry, and personal choice. | Mathematics | Development of computational fluency in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of whole numbers requires flexible decomposing and composing. |
| English Language Arts | Claims, strong reasons, and vivid facts are used to persuade readers for reading and comprehension. | Mathematics | Regular practice and fluency in operations can be developed and used for more generalizations. |
| English Language Arts | The arts connect our experiences to the experiences of others. | Mathematics | Number and operations are used to describe, measure, and compare attributes of objects and shapes. |
| English Language Arts | Designs give out of cultural context. | Science | Living things are diverse, can be grouped, and interact in their environments. |
| English Language Arts | Techniques are tools that extend human capabilities. | Science | All matter is made of particles. |
| English Language Arts | Language and story can be a source of conflict and joy. | Science | Theoretical energy can be produced and transferred. |
| English Language Arts | Stories and other texts help us learn about ourselves, our families, and our communities. | Science | Abiotic, abiotic, and biotic change the shape of the land. |
| English Language Arts | Stories can be understood from different perspectives. | Science | Learning about indigenous concepts surfaces multicultural awareness and respect for diversity. |
| English Language Arts | Using language to create and speak of our world is an essential part of language. | Social Studies | People from diverse cultures and experiences and aspects of the indigenous world have shaped our lives through oral history, traditions, and other activities. |
| English Language Arts | Critically and wonder lead us to new questions about ourselves and the world around us. | Social Studies | Indigenous wisdom throughout the world can be used to help us understand the world, ourselves, and ourselves. |

- ✓ How do you use nonfiction read alouds with your students?
- ✓ How could story workshop support cross-curricular learning?
- ✓ How could story workshop support writing across the curriculum?
- ✓ Chat and share with your table group.
- ✓ Be ready to share one takeaway with me afterwards

Read Aloud to Launch Story Workshop

I Hear You, Forest

Kallie George * Carmen Mok



Using mentor texts to launch story workshop

Questions: If you listen carefully, what have you heard the forest say? What do your senses tell you?

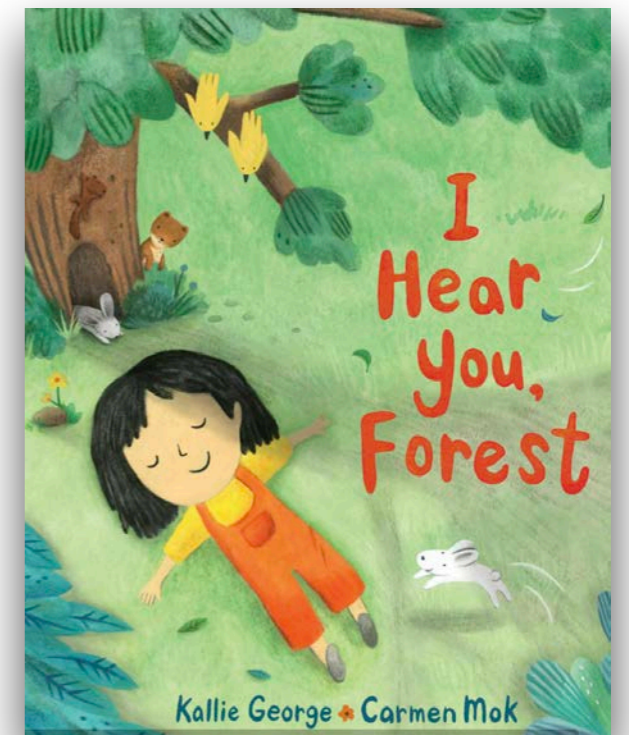
Think about **2-3 things** you've **noticed, heard,** or **learned about** – in the forest – on a hike, a walk, or while camping.

Sharing – oral storytelling

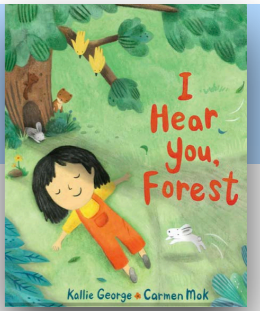
–Choose **one** of your things to describe, and share a brief description with your table group

Finding & Creating Stories – loose parts

- Using the loose parts available, tell your story
- Take a picture if you want to document it



Graphic Organizers & Story Workshop



Documenting story creation and building a bridge to writing...

See?

Hear?

Touch?

Smell?

Taste?

Who?

What?

Where?

When?

Why?

Setting

Characters

Problem

Solution

Graphic Organizer - Using Your Senses

See

Smell

Hear

Touch

Taste

Graphic Organizer - Questions to Guide Your Writing

What?

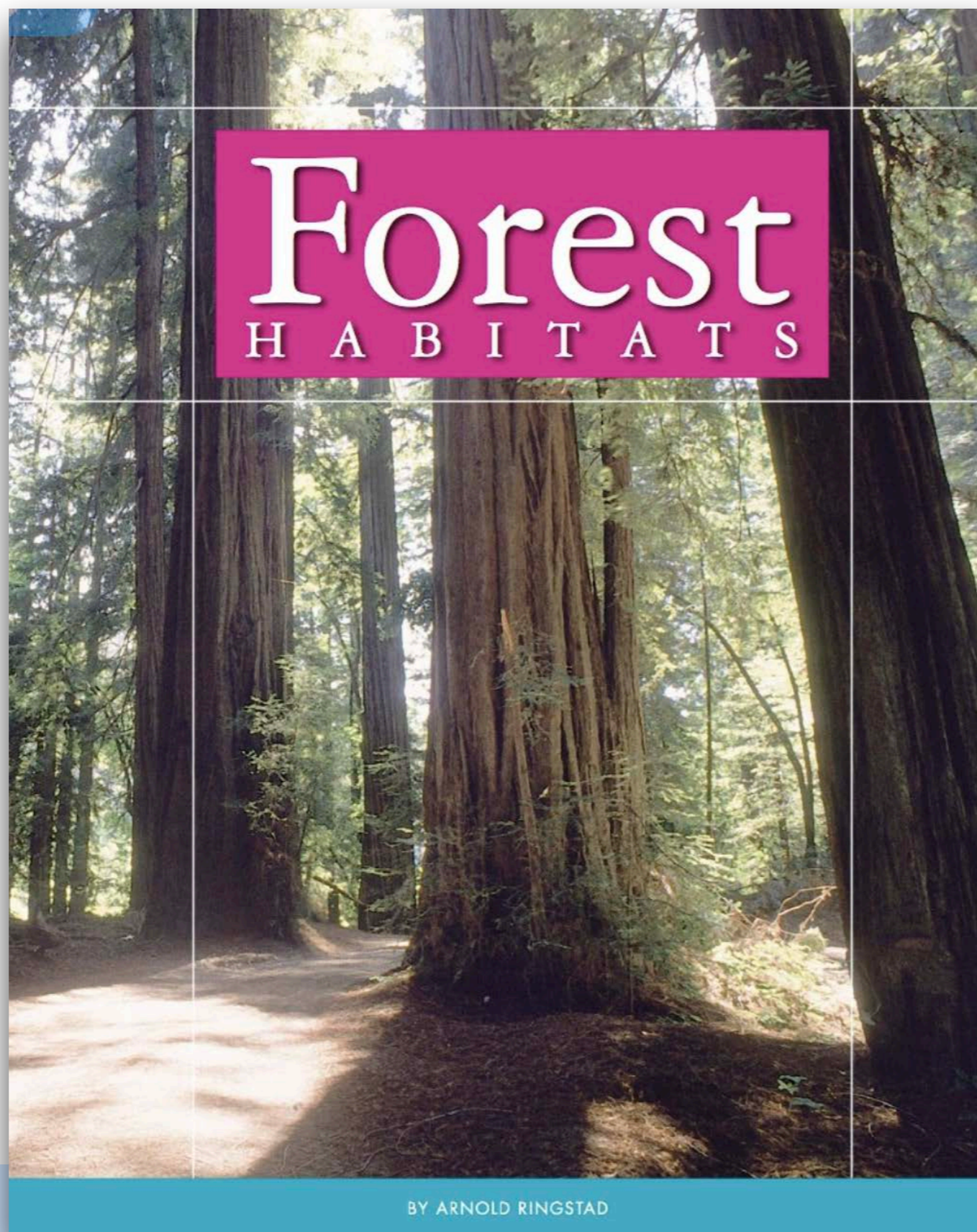
Where?

Who?

When?

Why?

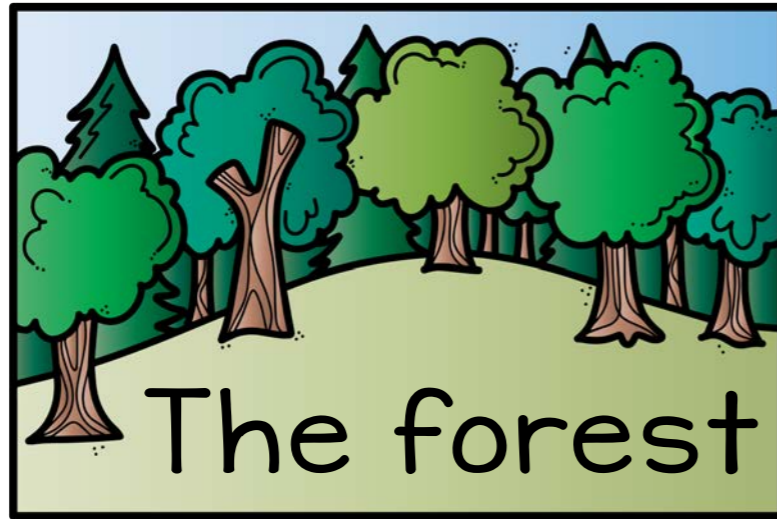
Nonfiction mentor texts - cross-curricular connection



Graphic Organizer -

“What is this book teaching me?”

Topic



WOW Facts!

- ✓ Forests cover 1/3 of the land on Earth
- ✓ Deciduous forests are the only type with four seasons
- ✓ Animals can eat plants or other animals in the forest.

Vocabulary & Key Words

- ✓ canopy
- ✓ boreal
- ✓ coniferous
- ✓ deciduous
- ✓ nutrients
- ✓ undergrowth
- ✓ equator
- ✓ precipitation

Questions?

- ✓ What do different types of forests look like?
- ✓ What plants & animals live in the forest?
- ✓ What adaptations do animals use?

Plants and animals have observable features – Kindergarten

Living things have features & behaviours that help them survive in their environment – Gr 1

Living things have life cycles adapted to their environment – Gr 2

Living things are diverse, can be grouped, and interact with their ecosystems – Gr 3

Reflect, Connect & Discuss - fiction and nonfiction

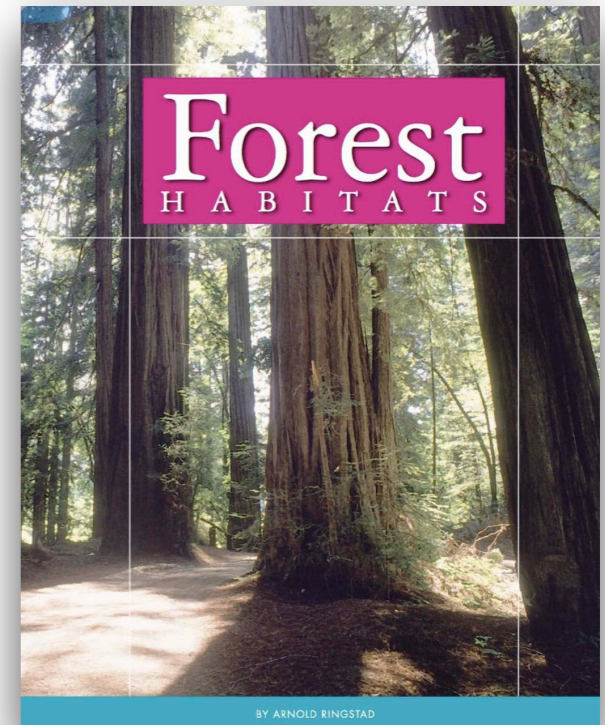
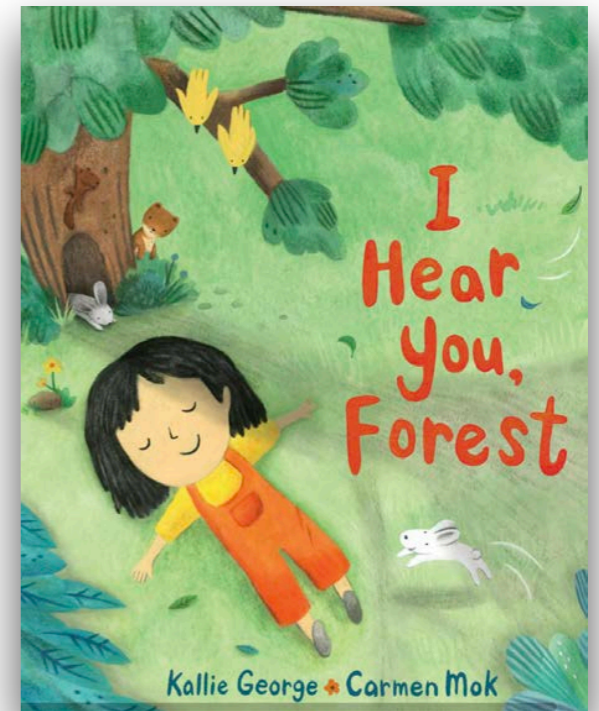
Questions:

If you listen carefully, what have you heard the forest say? What do your senses tell you?

What plants and animals live in a forest?

How do forests change over the seasons? Do all forests change?

How do these books build on your thinking and ideas, and what forest stories do you want to tell?



Doing a Gallery Walk



Gallery Walks allow children to **see themselves and their peers as sources of knowledge** who can **guide and shape** their own and their peers' learning.

Gallery Walks that **share work in progress** enable children to look at and learn from the work of their peers, and to offer **feedback** to each other on how to move forward – a benefit to both the **creator** and the **viewer**.

Gallery Walks give young people the opportunity to **develop their abilities to offer, accept, and negotiate different points of view**, and to become more comfortable with the sometimes-sensitive topic of assessment.

“Play and art and story are tools that allow us to experiment with life and to take charge of it...we need to create opportunities for ourselves to witness the power of play in our classrooms...” –Susan Harris MacKay



The Power of Questions

Story workshop is a structure and approach that supports language and literacy development. Adults work alongside children as they explore prepared environments and experiences and share stories.

Together with our students, we wonder...

Where do stories live?

What stories do I want the world to hear?

What stories do I need to tell?

How do stories influence me and our community?

How do my stories become part of my community, and how do the stories of others in my community become a part of me?

The power & expansiveness of a thoughtfully crafted question

What stories live within...?

What do you notice when...?

What do you wonder about...?

What is the relationship between...?

What are the connections between...?

What happens when...?

How do these materials help you think about...?

Where do we see _____ in the world?

A beautiful question shapes a beautiful mind. -poet David Whyte

The Five Elements of Story Workshop

Preparation

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Provocation

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Invitation and negotiation

is the transition between provocation and creation; intended to support each child with a plan to get started

Story creation

makes up the bulk of a session of story workshop; a time for using the arts and play as well as writing to make meaning, to imagine, to create, and to share stories

Story sharing

brings closure to story workshop each day, and is a time for building community through story and reflection

Preparation

There are two kinds of preparation:

1. Setting intentions and documenting

Getting ourselves ready to LISTEN to children, meet them where they are, and learn alongside them

2. The physical space

Organizing a physical environment that supports research, relationship, and the construction of meaningful language and literacy.

“We are preparing ourselves for stories”

Writing Workshop Connection

interesting paper, journals, good writing materials, staplers, tape, interesting office supplies, stapled blank books, clipboards, alphabet charts, personal dictionaries, folders...

Provocation

Invite children to play with ideas

- offering a proposal to children to engage, sustain, and extend their interests and curiosity as they begin the workshop
- like mini-lessons in writers' workshop – they both ready the children to use their independent time constructively
- a kind of prediction that a teacher makes – a hunch about what will spark and sustain children's curiosity

It's like a game of ball toss between teacher and children.

Example & Context:

longer term learning goal: becoming more familiar with literary nonfiction in order to inspire students' own writing

smaller goal: exploring the topic of forests

Invitation & Negotiation

Overview & Expectations

- giving a daily overview of the materials available
- the teacher and students make agreements about where each child will get started and spend their time during story creation
- the teachers check in, listen, nudge, encourage, and hold children accountable each day
- the child and their work meets up with the teacher and their research, in genuine relationship and authentic inquiry

It's a moment to play with each child individually

Writing Workshop Connection:

transitioning to independent work teachers take care to help children focus as they head to work; children may be asked to state an intention before they head to work

What invitation and negotiation sounds like

- What's your plan? What are you working on?
- Where will you find your story?
- What part of your story are you working on?
- What materials are you going to use? What tools do you need?
- You used blocks yesterday and got stuck. What new material might help you get unstuck today?
- How will you capture your story?
- Would you like to start by telling a friend what you've got so far?
- What are you struggling with and how can I help you?
- What will you do if you get stuck?

Story Creation

Independent work time devoted to using the arts, play, and writing to make meaning

- children play with materials (including art media), talk to each other, and tell and write stories
- teachers work with small groups and individuals, as they explore patterns, connections, and relationships through the arts and play
- young authors construct and share meaning – to make sense of their relationship to the world through story

Teachers create the conditions that promote 'relaxed alertness'

Writing Workshop Connection:

teachers use children's own writing to teach writing skills and strategies; children are invited to write like readers and read like writers; children gain important skills through writing and then reading their own words

Supporting Children Through Story Creation

When talking with children about their stories, use supportive language...

- Can you tell me more about...?
- I notice...
- That reminds me of...
- Your story makes me feel...
- I wonder... (where that idea came from, what will happen next, how that character felt)
- What would you like to do next?
- How do you plan to capture that story?
- What tools do you need?
- I look forward to hearing more!

Asking the right questions...

It's a small shift, but reframing our thinking from:
What can I learn **ABOUT** trees, plants, animals, land, water...
to:

What can I learn **FROM** trees, plants, animals, land, water...
is a powerful step towards a deeper connection to
– and respect for – all living entities.



Connecting story workshop to Social Studies

Questions:

What can I learn from Indigenous peoples about respecting diversity, including respecting ourselves, plants, animals, and the land?

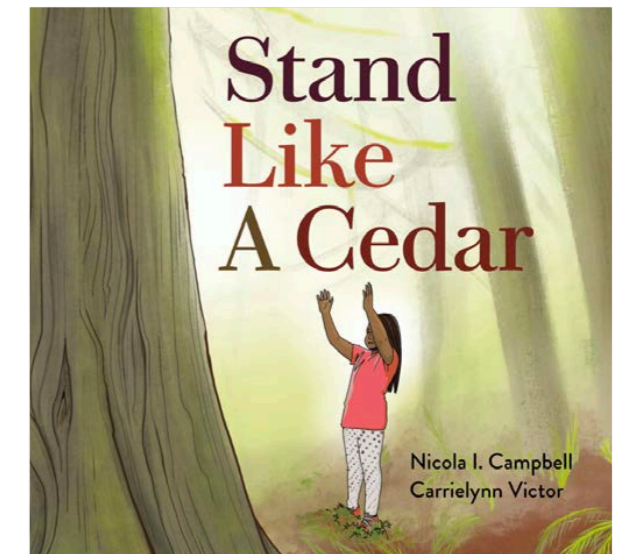
What can I learn **FROM** trees, plants, animals, land, water...?

Sharing – oral connections

–Choose one of your noticings or takeaways from the book and share it with your table group

Finding & Creating Stories – loose parts

- Using the loose parts available, tell your story
- Take a picture if you want to document it



Stories and traditions about ourselves and our families reflect who we are and where we are from. Healthy communities recognize and respect the diversity of individuals and care for the local environment. Indigenous knowledge is passed down through oral history, traditions, and collective memory. Indigenous societies throughout the world value the well-being of the self, the land, spirits, and ancestors.

Graphic Organizer - documenting your story creation

What?

Where?

Who?

When?

Why?

Story Sharing

Each session of story workshop ends with a whole-group reflection on the work that happened during story creation

- it's a time for zooming in, paying attention, listening, and making connections
- it's a journey to explore the territory of understanding, imagination, curiosity, and empathy

Writing Workshop Connection: Author's Chair

one child sharing a piece of writing, sometimes to get feedback from peers (compliments, questions, or suggestions); or a few children are asked to share what they tried in their own writing; or small groups or pairs share with each other from their ongoing work

Engaging in story sharing by focusing on connection

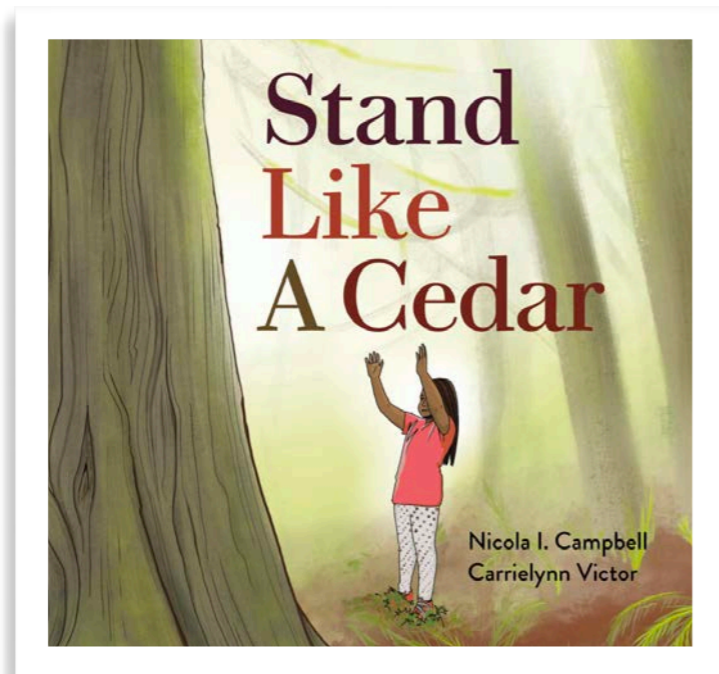
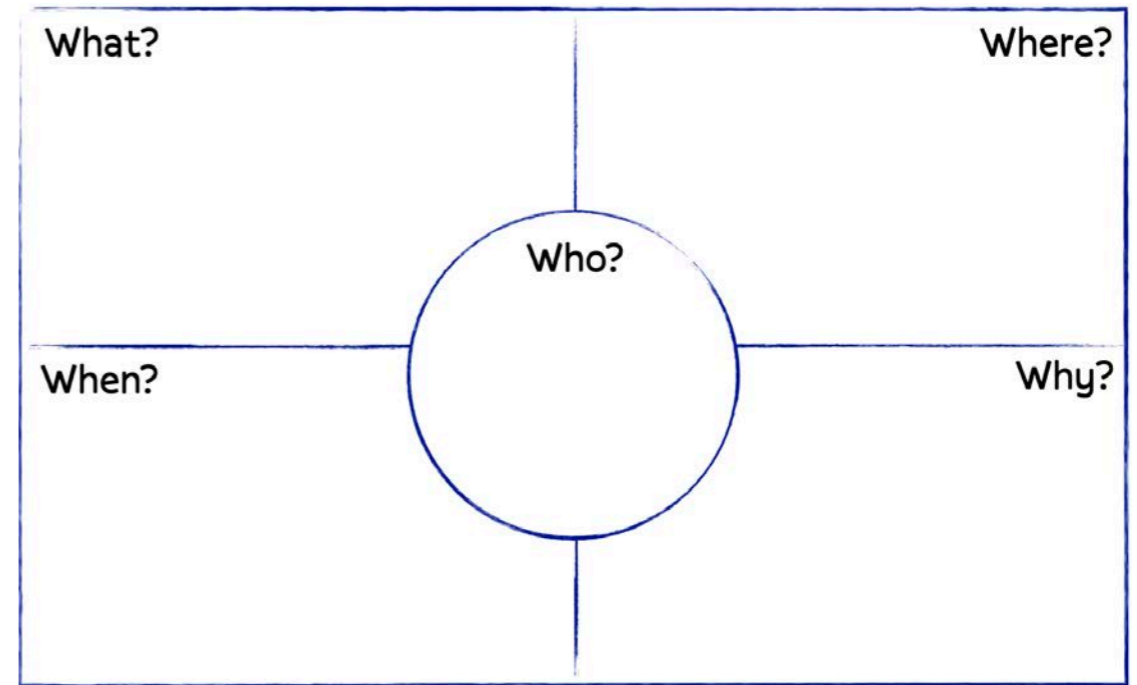
It takes time to learn to listen deeply.

We can ask questions like:

- Who was reminded of their own story?
- What pictures did you make in your mind?
- What are you wondering?
- How did the story make you feel?
- Do you have any connections?
- What inspired you?
- What does listening sound like, look like, and feel like?
- How do you feel when someone listens to you?
- What do you do when you get stuck?
- Why do people tell stories?

Story Sharing - share your graphic organizers

At your tables, take turns sharing what you wrote on your graphic organizers.



- How did the story make you feel?
- What connections did you make?
- What inspired you?
- What might be your next step?

Using Documentation to Inform Practice

Consider Intentions: What is your learning intention? What materials will you need? What provocations will you use? What will you invite the children to do?

Prepare: What do you want to gather more information about? What tools will you need? How will you position yourself to observe with an open mind?

Observe: Capture through notes, writing down children's dialogue, take photographs to support your memory.

Interpret & Speculate: What do you notice? What patterns do you see? What evidence do you see that supports your interpretation. What surprises or confuses you?

What documentation tools work for you?
What can support story workshop for you?

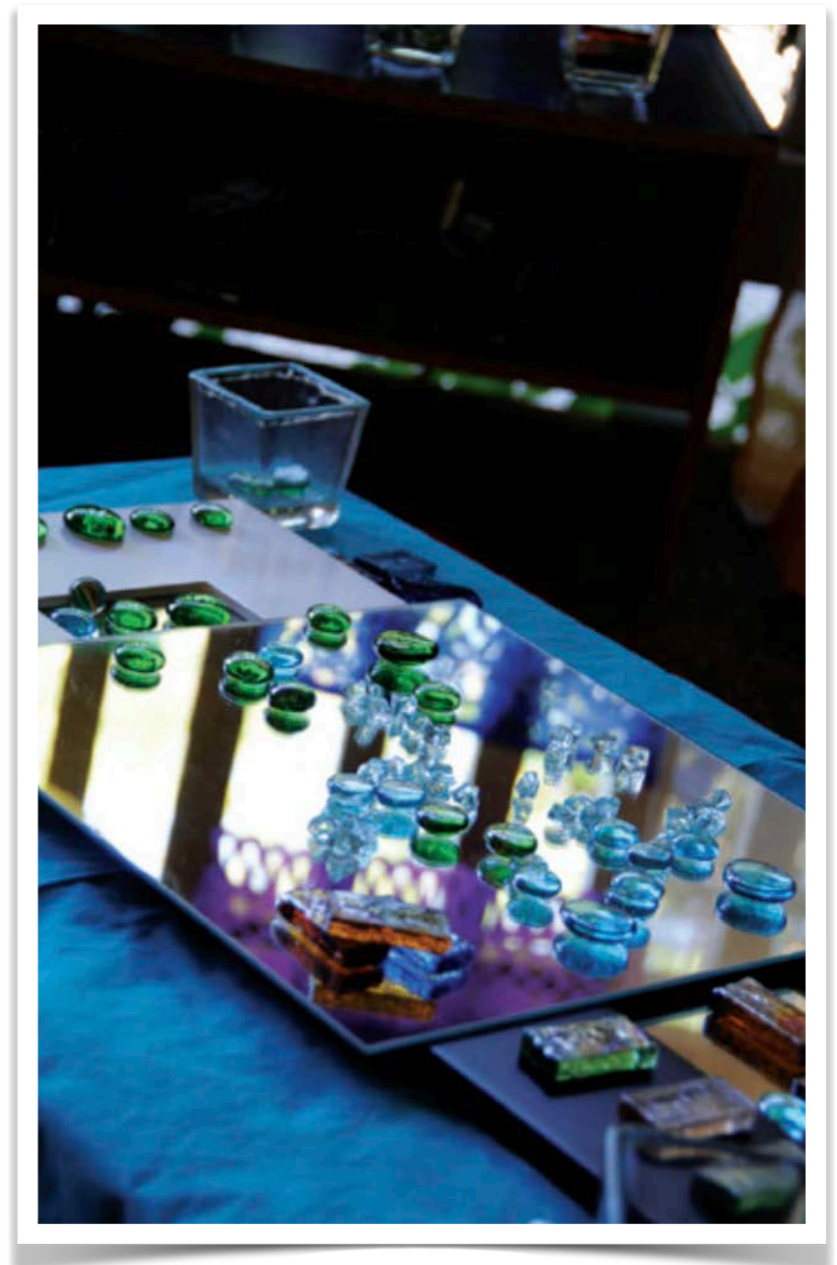
Reflect, Connect & Share

What are you noticing or wondering about, in relation to these five elements of story workshop?

1. Preparation
2. Provocation
3. Invitation & Negotiation
4. Story Creation
5. Story Sharing

Reflect on the information just shared and connect it with your own personal story workshop experiences, and share your thoughts, questions, ideas etc. with your table group.

- ✓ promote active learning
- ✓ deepen critical thinking
- ✓ promote divergent and creative thinking
- ✓ support developmental domains –
 - ★ physical development
 - ★ social-emotional development
 - ★ cognitive development
- ✓ are developmentally inclusive
- ✓ promote a wide range of play –
 - ★ functional play
 - ★ constructive play
 - ★ dramatic and symbolic play
- ✓ are sustainable and economically feasible
- ✓ support the curriculum –
 - ★ math, language/literacy, science, art, dramatic and symbolic play, sensory exploration, movement and music



Grade 1 Students on Story Workshop

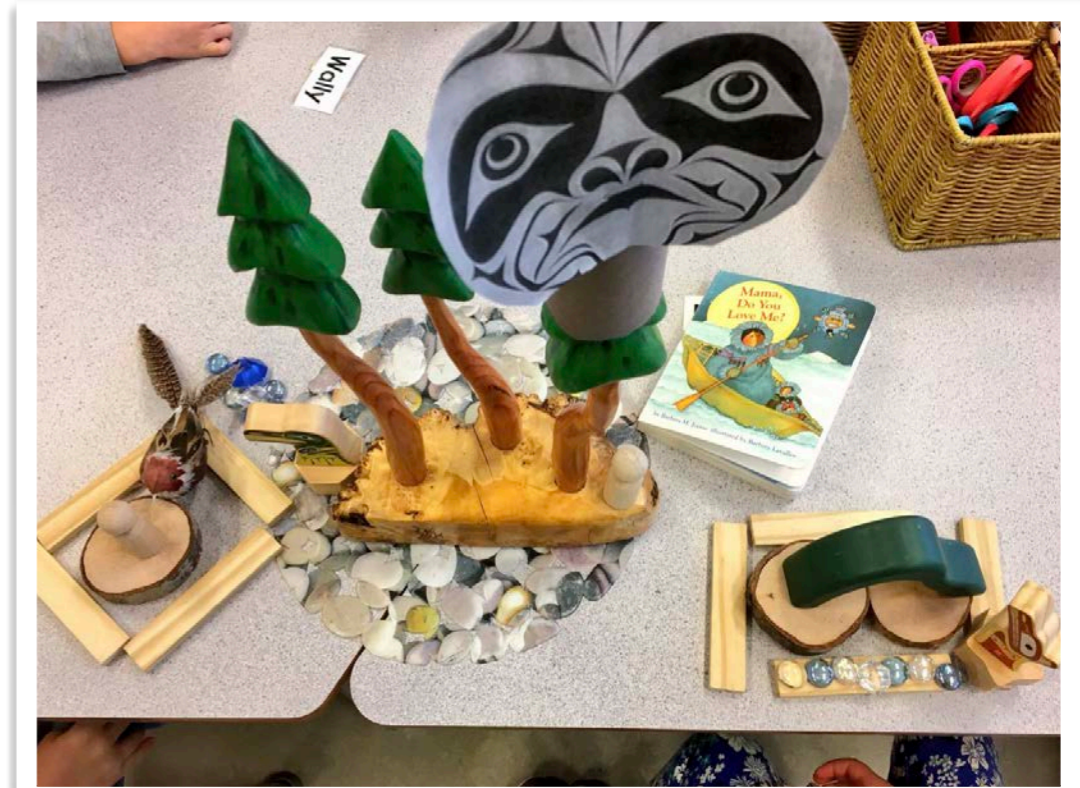
“I like doing lots of things like making cool stories and getting to write and draw, it’s fun” – Taylor

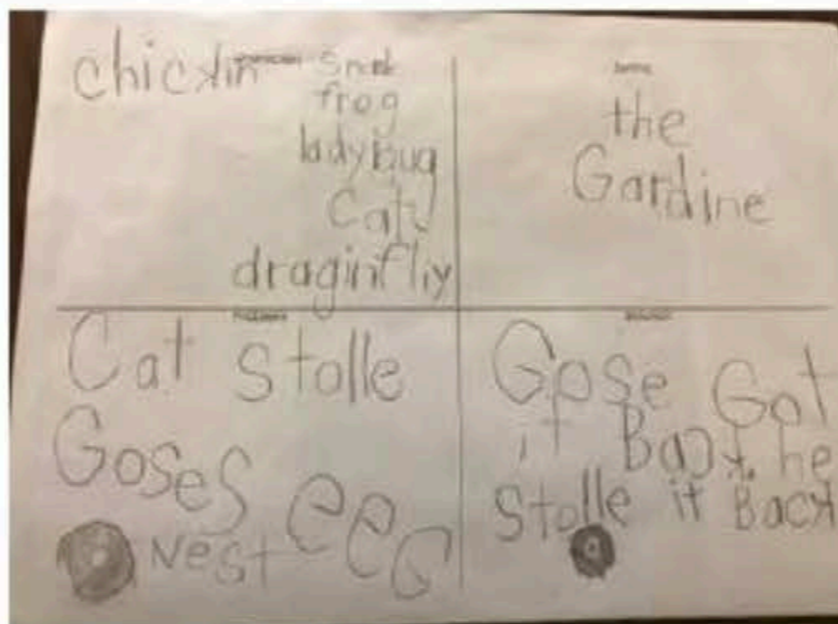
“I like to build stories with my hands” – Luke

“It’s fun to make stories with friends, they help make my story better” – Maeve

“Because you already have a picture it helps you write.” – Ryan

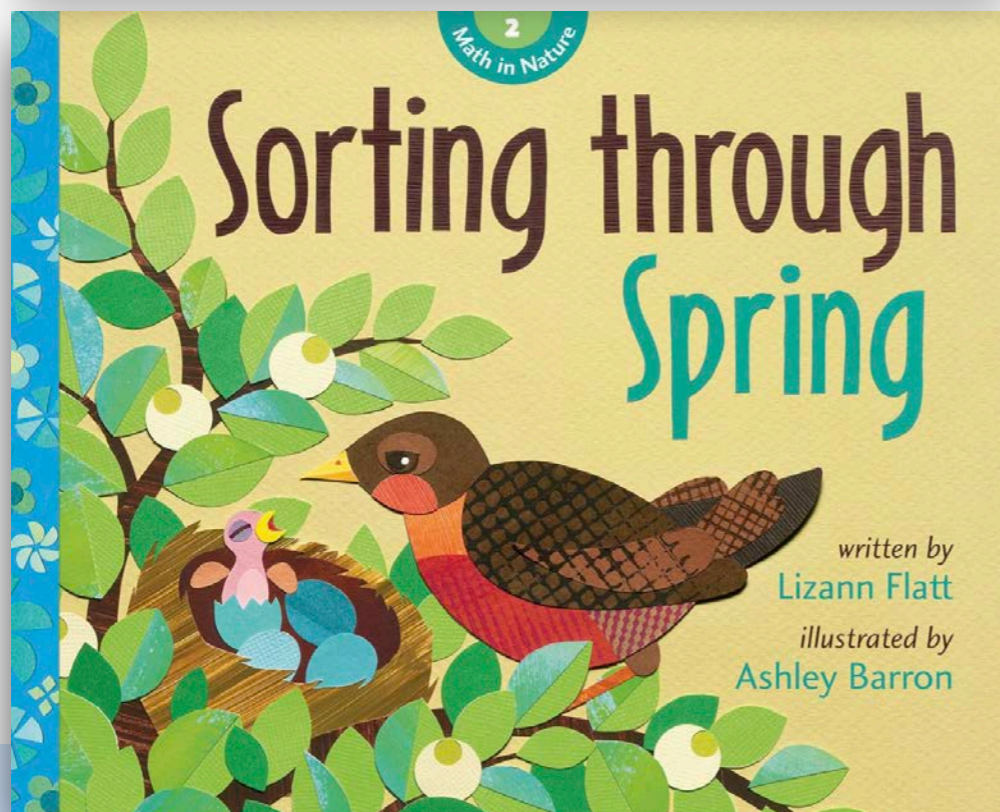
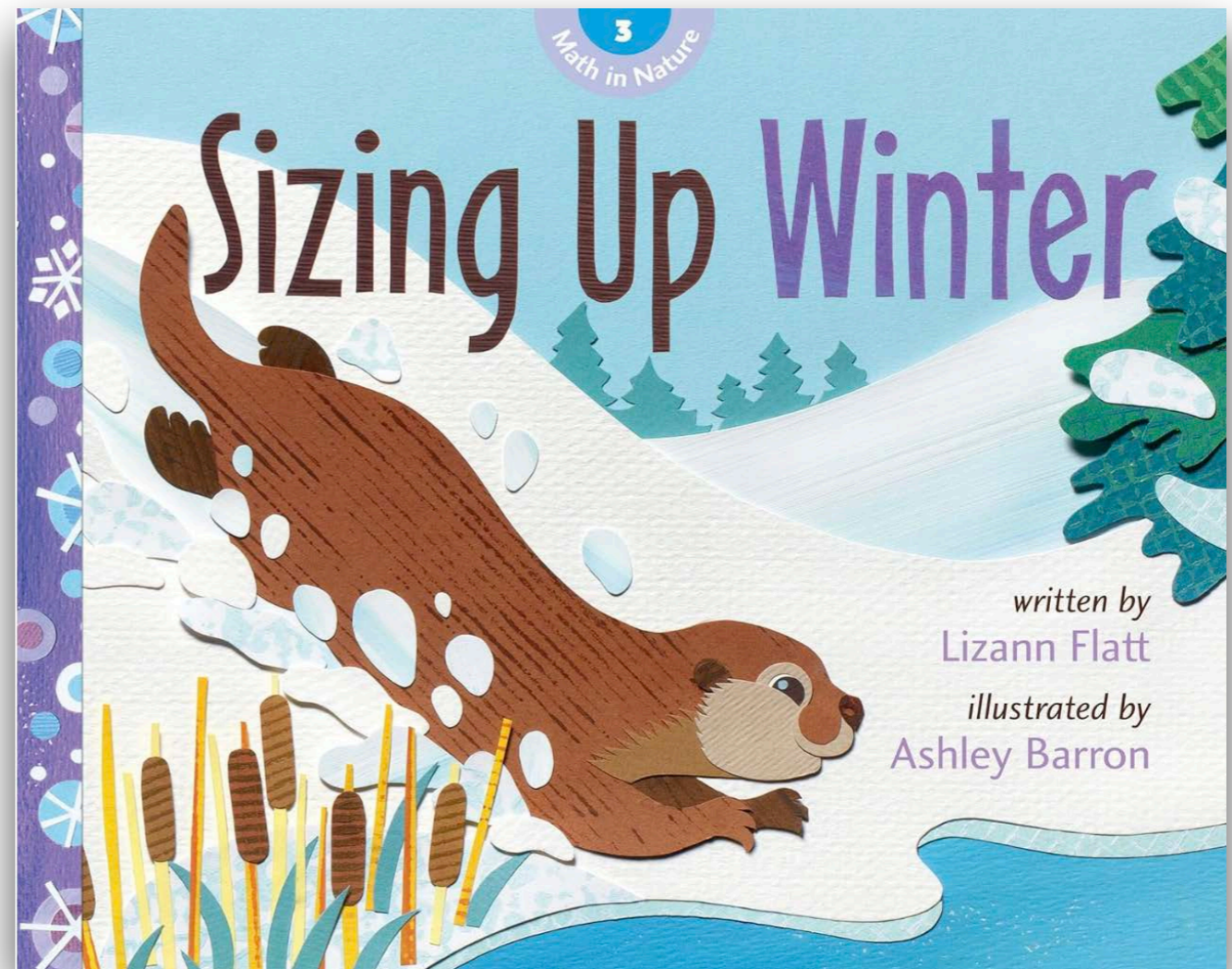
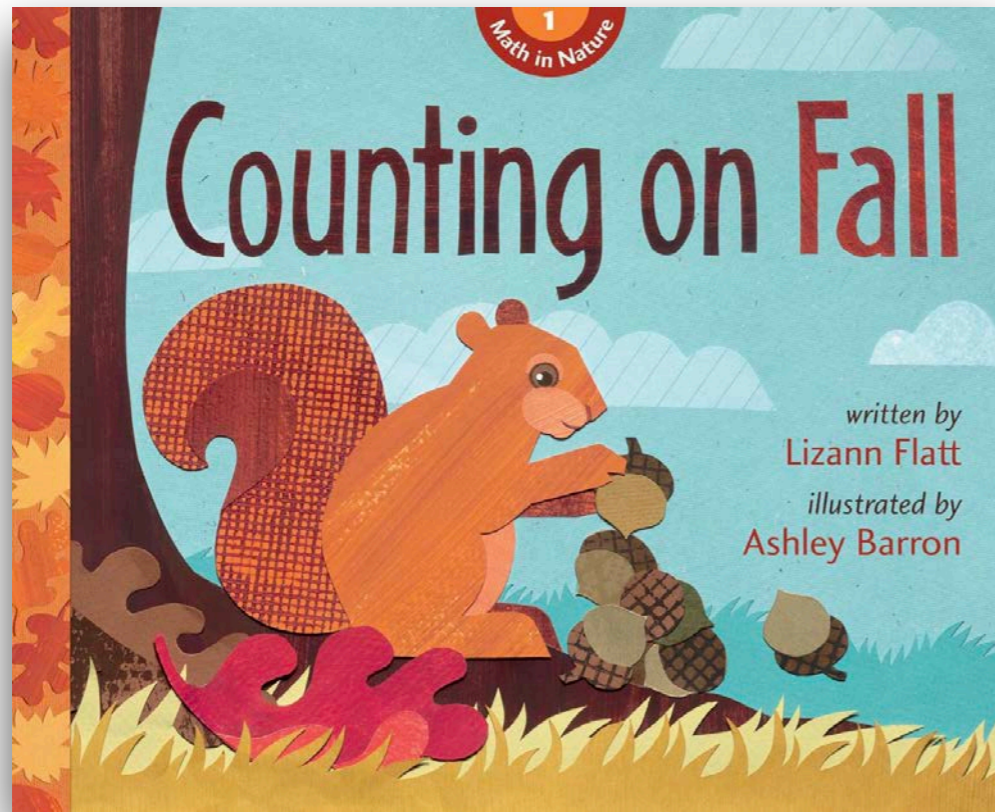
“Well you make stories with different materials, it helps you to write stories because it gives your brain ideas.” – William





The Garden By Kate

Once there was a garden. One night in the garden there was 1 chicken, 1 cat, 1 snake, 1 frog, 1 lady bug, 1 dragon fly. The cat stole the chicken's egg and chicken stole it back.



Story workshop and math

Questions:

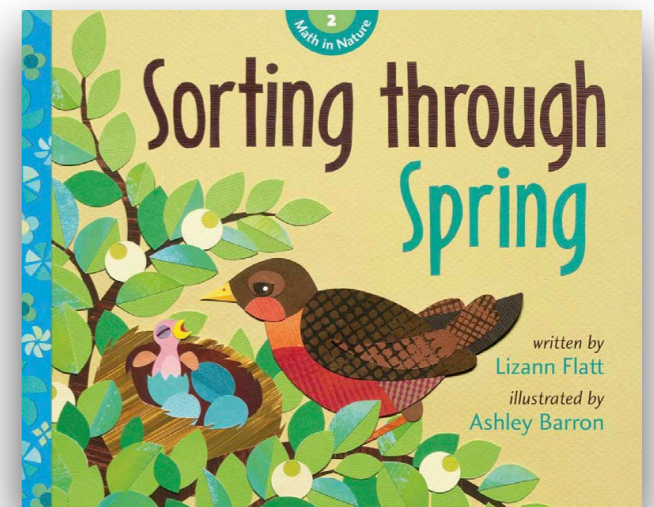
Can you find a seasonal story in the loose parts at your table?
How might numbers, patterns, or shapes live in this story?

Sharing – oral connections

–Choose **one** math connection or takeaway from the book and share it with your table group

Finding & Creating Stories – loose parts

–Using the loose parts available, tell your story
–Take a picture if you want to document it



Objects (and shapes) have attributes that can be described, measured, and compared

Repeating elements can be identified

Regular increases and decreases in patterns can be identified and used to make generalizations

What stories live inside of these materials?



What stories live in a lake? In the ocean?

What stories live in a river or stream?

What stories live in the forest?

What stories live in our students?

Emotions and story workshop

Can you use colours and lines to capture the feeling of angry?



“I used brown and black and I made scribbles because angry things feel scribbles. You might explode.”

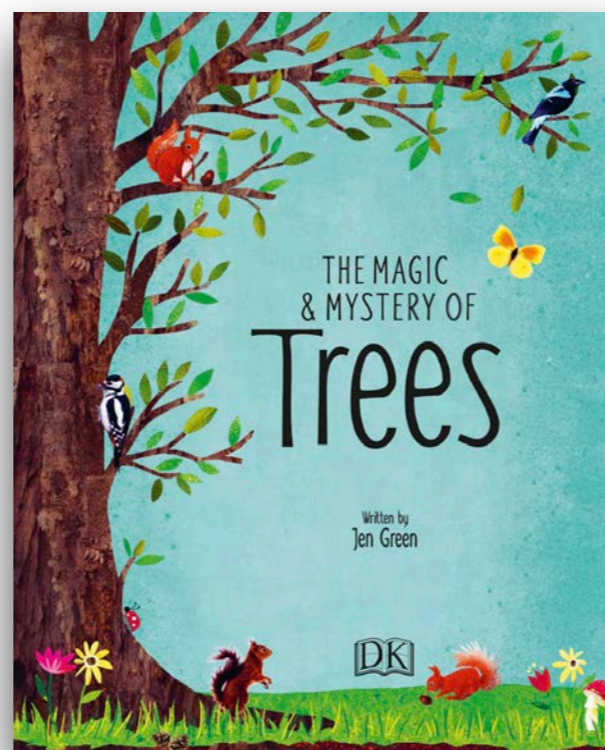
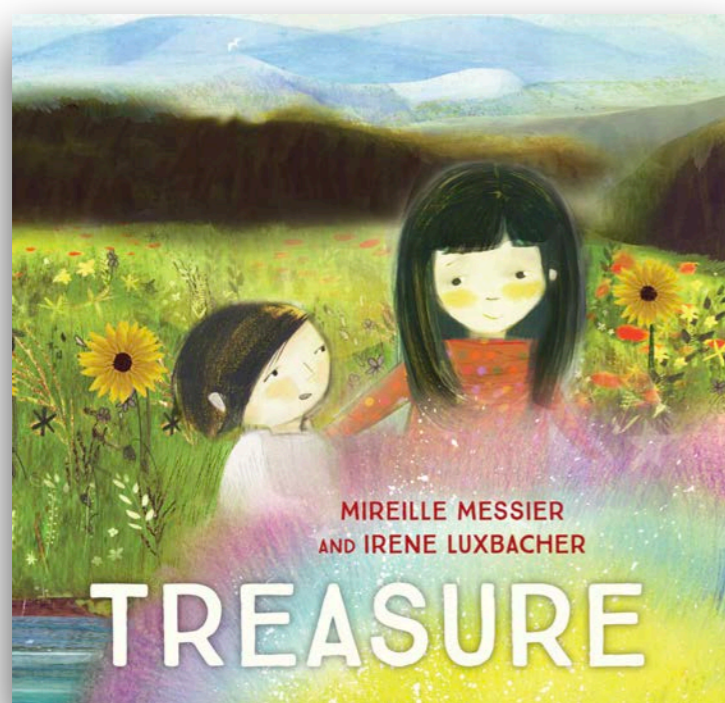
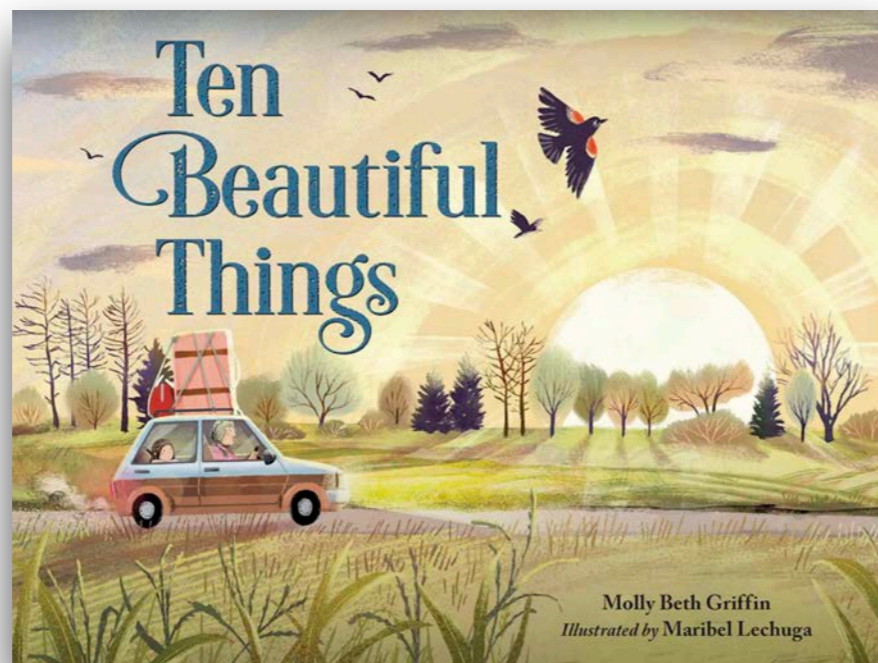


“When I’m angry, it is a loud angry, like thunder and lightning.”

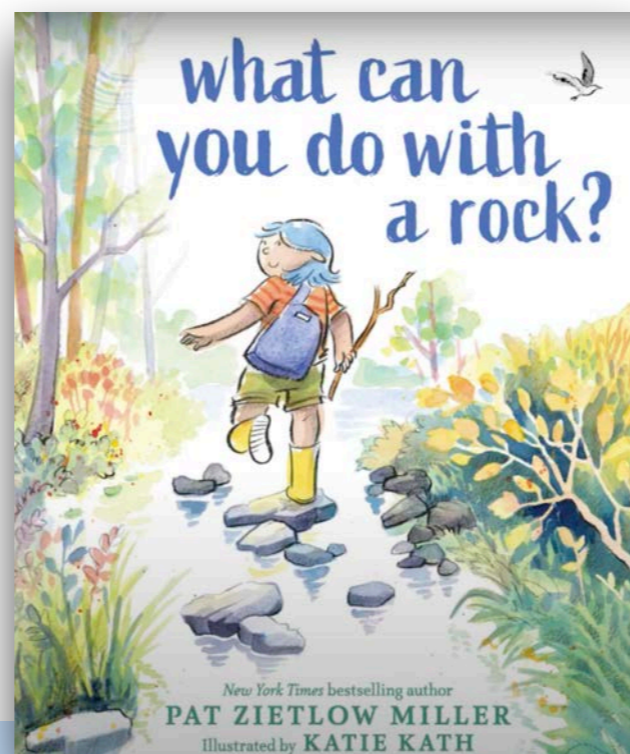
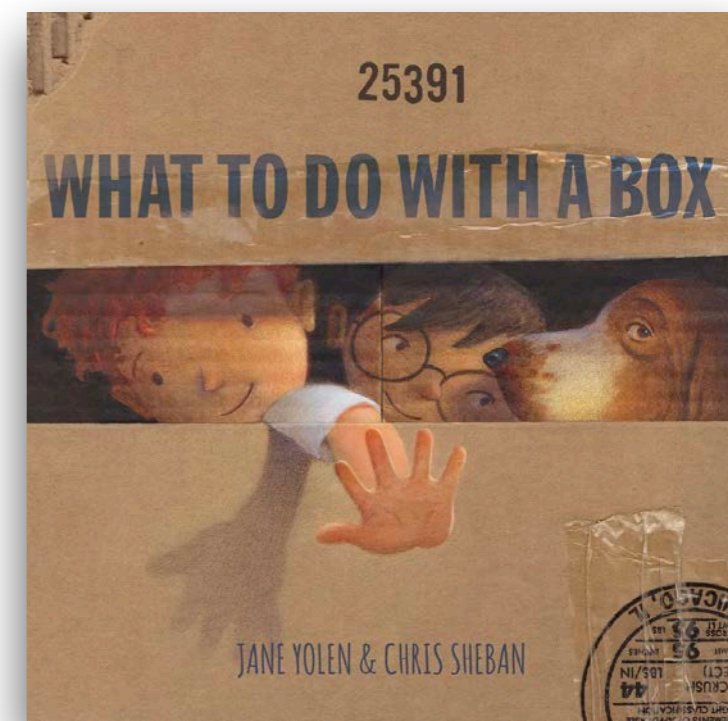
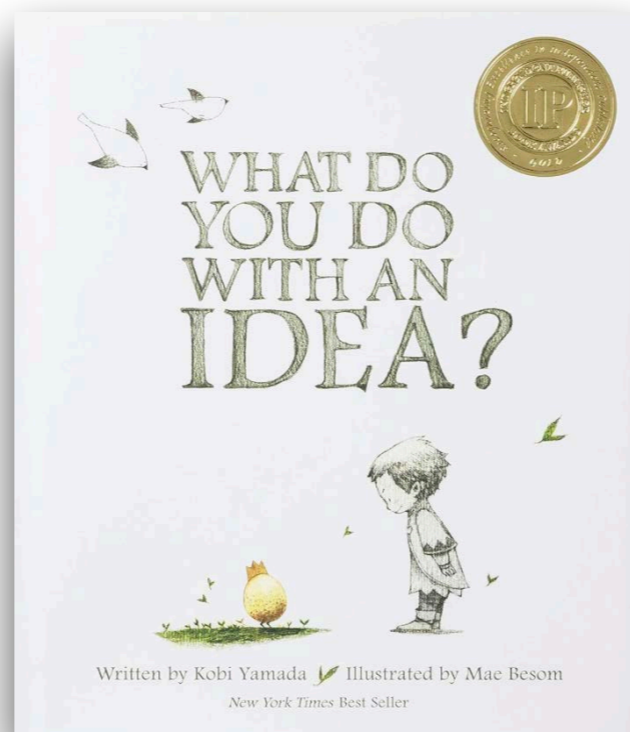
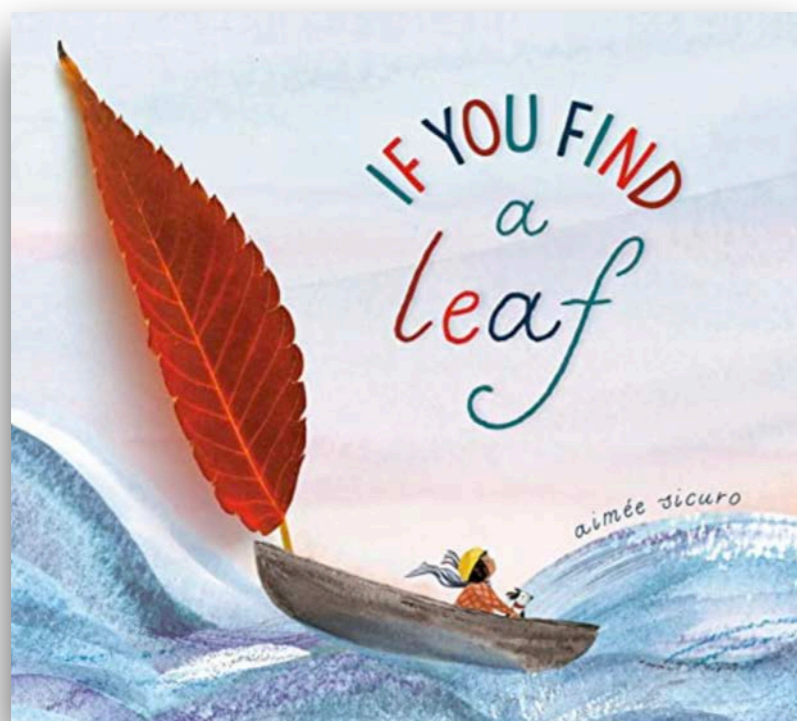


“The pinkness is I’m mad because my cheeks get pink. The redness comes out of my ears like fire coming out of your ears.”

Read alouds to launch story workshop



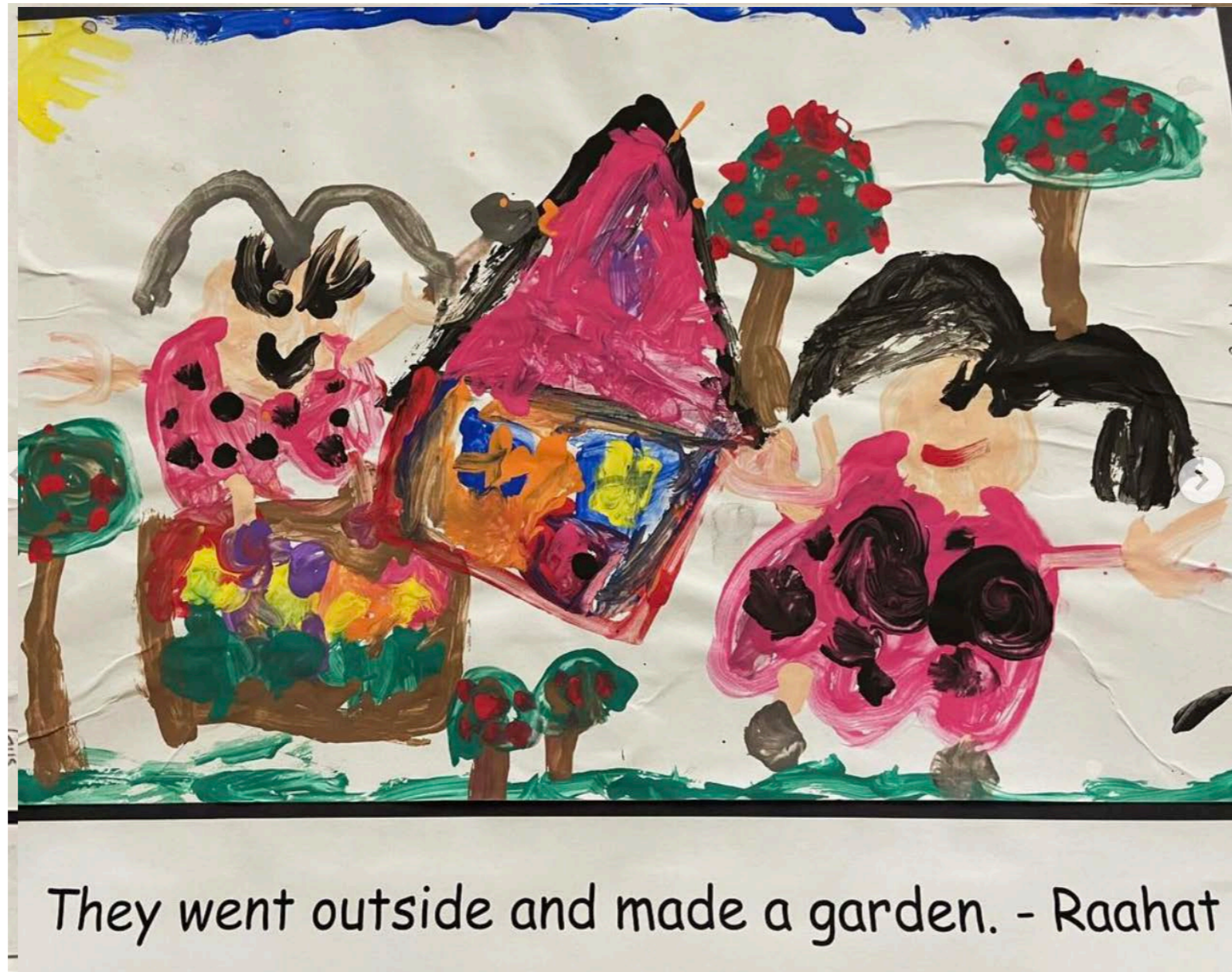
Read alouds to launch story workshop



Story workshop in Kindergarten

Mentor Text: The Napping House

Question/Invitation: What happened next in the story? Document it on paper with paint.



They went outside and made a garden. - Raahat

Story workshop in Kindergarten

Mentor Text: Snowmen at Night

The snowman went swimming with fish. The fish were swimming towards him. The fish love him. The snowman felt happy because the fish were loving him.

- Mackenzie

Question/Invitation:

What did your snowman do at night?

Build your story with materials.

Documentation: Draw a picture to tell the story that you made.





Claire Vipas-Potts
@clairevpotts



We have been looking closely at the painting The Starry Night. We shared all the different things that we see, think and wonder. We realised that we all see something different. Using mixed media we recreated our own collaborative version by painting on tinfoil. [#aismlerns](#)



Claire Vipas-Potts, Reggio Inspired International Early Childhood Educator



Students' collaborative version of Starry Night



Claire Vipas-Potts, Reggio Inspired International Early Childhood Educator



Todd Parr read aloud - Be Who You Are

QUESTION: What would your Todd Parr-style self-portrait look like?



Todd Parr read aloud - Be Who You Are

QUESTION: What would your Todd Parr-style self-portrait look like?



brave, silly, excited, fun, confused, adventuresome, pretty, super, happy

Supporting story workshop connections at home

Inspire

- read, view or listen to a book
- explore outside using your senses
- learn something new in science, socials, math or any subject
- remember an experience at school, at home, on holidays
- retell how to do something...

Create

- Using 'stuff' build a picture to explain your learning
- Move the stuff around to play out the story of your learning
- Play out the learning story one or more times adding stuff or using new stuff.
- Recreate the learning story with paints, pastels, crayons, clay, play-doh, sand, sidewalk chalk...

Share

- tell someone the story
- draw the story by copying what you have created
- label the drawing with letters and words
- write a sentence to summarize the story
- write out the whole story
- video record the story as you play it out

Story workshop & playful engagement

Play is an avenue to these vibrant engagements that is the basis of all learning. As children *engage* with the world they delve into *inquiries*, generate *new ideas*, *solve problems*, and *build theories* of *people*, *places*, and *materials*. Providing *time*, *space*, and *materials* rich with *possibilities* for *experimenting*, *imagining*, and *transforming* allows children to *create* and *explore* in *diverse* ways based on their interests.

[Opal School: Why Story Workshop?](#)

[Invitations to Play – An Introduction to the Reggio Emilia Approach](#)

[Vancouver Reggio Association – Story Workshop in the Grade 1 Classroom](#)

[Opal School – Translating Ideas Between Different Materials](#)

[Habitat Conservation Trust Fund Educational Resources](#)

[Opal School – Gallery Walks](#)

[Delta Learns – Story Studio at Home](#)

[BC Ministry of Education – ELA Curriculum](#)

[BC Early Learning Framework](#)

[Epic Books](#)

Videos

[J Allair – Kindergarten Story Workshop inspired by Opal School](#)

[Opal School: Children on Play & Learning](#)

[Rights of Children – North American Reggio Emilia Association \(NAREA\)](#)

[Opal School Video – Setting the Table](#)

Shifting the Balance – Burkins & Yates

Units of Study in Reading – Calkins & The Reading and Writing Project

Loose Parts: Inspiring Play in Young Children – Daly & Beloglovsky

Story Workshop: New Possibilities for Young Writers – MacKay

Thinking Alongside Materials to Explore Numeracy & Place-Conscious Education:
presentation by Matthew McBride, SFU, VSB

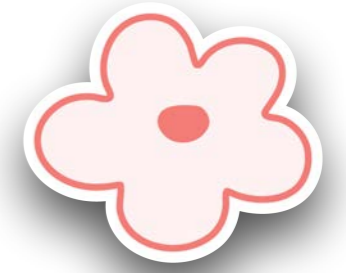
Storytelling and Story-Reading in Early Years – Medicott

Transforming Students' Perspectives of the Natural World Through Land-Based Learning:
Workshop by David Osorio & Krista Spence, Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Lab School,
OISE, University of Toronto

A Teacher's Guide to Development Across the Day – Wright



Provincial Outreach Program for the Early Years



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