



Provincial Outreach  
Program for the Early Years

## Reggio-Inspired Literacy with Story Workshop


Tuesday, January 14th

9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Workshop handouts & resources at  
[www.popey.ca/workshop-resources](http://www.popey.ca/workshop-resources)

Connect with us online!

 @POPEYBC

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Facilitator:  
Jen Kelly

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## Shape of the Day



- 9:00–10:15am
  - ✓ Check In
  - ✓ Reggio-inspired learning activity
- 10:30–12:00pm
  - ✓ Debrief
  - ✓ Presentation of learning from Reggio Emilia
  - ✓ Story Workshop
- 12:45–3:00pm
  - ✓ Continuation of Story Workshop
  - ✓ Co-planning for demonstration lessons

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## Check In



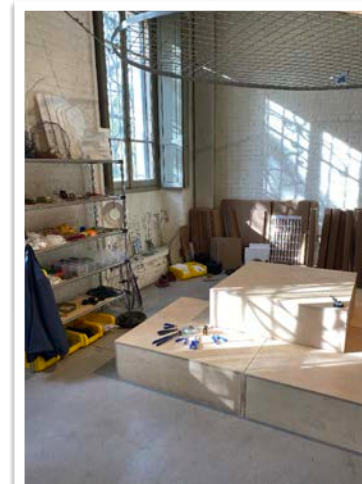
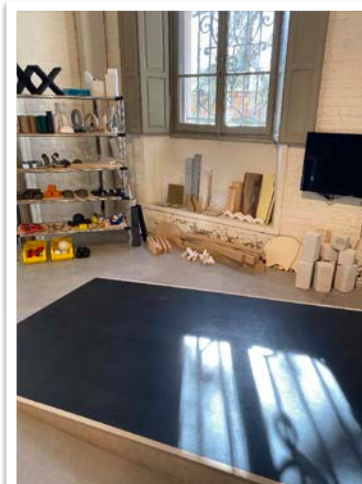
Tell someone from a different  
school...

- \* What have you tried in your classroom since our last workshop?
- \* What have you noticed about your students?
- \* What are you still wondering about?



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## Introduction to Learning Activity



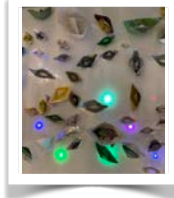
[Reggio Children International Study Group](#)

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## Continuation of Learning Activity

Next, I will go through your ideas and select one group for each station:



- \* Work on discovering the learning you wrote down
- \* Document your process either with words, photos, or graphics, or a combination

You will present your learning (discoveries) to the rest of us!

## Reggio Emilia Method



1. Documentation
2. Democracy
3. Relational Learning
4. Identity
5. Multiple Teachers in the Classroom

Pedagogical processes that puts the rights of children at the centre.

The Rights of Children - focus on the model

## Documentation

- \* The Third Educator in the Room



- \* Theory and practice must never be separated, but must always be in dialogue
- \* A system of interactions between the children and the educational experiences
- \* Exhibitions of children's work can allow the space for reflection, perspective-taking, and self-evaluation
- \* Helps educators understand how children know and how they organize their knowledge

What are the relations that exist within this space?

## Democracy

- \* Every society builds an idea of what a child is

- \* Education is an antidote to the wars happening today
- \* The whole school is a way to activate the rights of the child to represent themselves through many different ways (beyond words – although words gain power when connected to other languages).
- \* Children voices are encouraged and honoured and listened to

Children should speak out on behalf of themselves and their group.



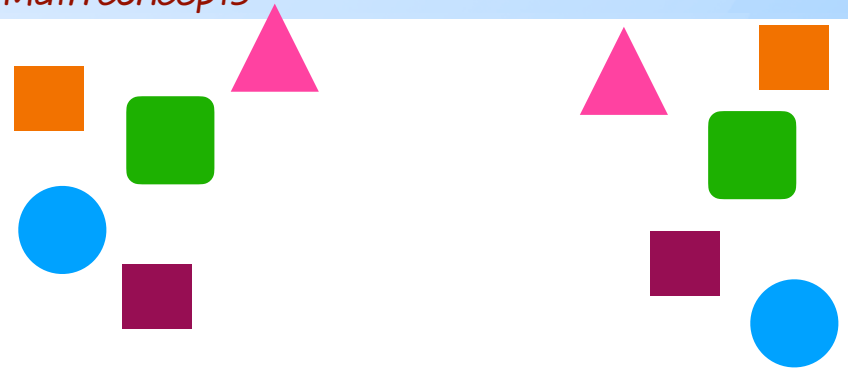


## School visits

- \* All the schools have similarities in environment
- \* Central area (similar to a piazza)
- \* Lots of glass to show transparency and circulation
- \* No hierarchy between spaces
- \* All spaces are utilized and open for to children
- \* Democratic space for meetings
- \* Atelier – the children give shape their ideas

Tidying up doesn't mean putting everything away. It means making decisions about what should be left out and why.

## Math concepts



## Math concepts

- \* Why is  $12 \times 13 = 156$
- \* Describe your strategy visually and orally
- \* Confirm your strategy by testing it out with different numbers



## Writing

- \* Children are introduced to the necessity to write through letter writing
- \* Authentic purpose
- \* Highly motivating
- \* Builds classroom community
- \* Children build their writing skills gradually
- \* They want to write in 'real' words and strive to learn how







## 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 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

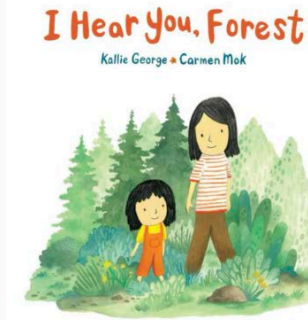
What questions do these words inspire you to ask?

Discuss & share your three words with your table group

Adapted from: Story Workshop: New Possibilities for Young Writers – Harris MacKay



## Read Aloud to Launch Story Workshop



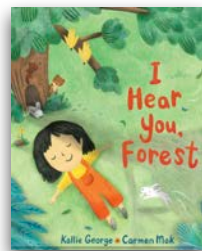
## Using mentor texts to launch story workshop

**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

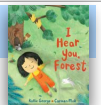
–Using the loose parts available, tell your story

–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 -

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

Questions?

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

Living things have life cycles adapted to their environment – Grade 2 Science

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

All living things sense and respond to their environment – Grade 4 Science

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## Reflect, Connect & Discuss - fiction and nonfiction

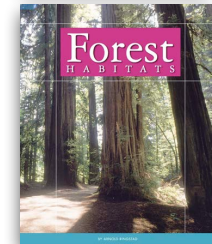
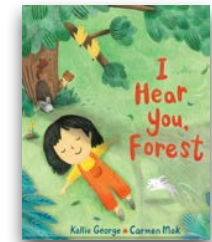
Questions:

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?



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## 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.

[Opal School – Gallery Walks](#)

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Children don't make stories so they can learn how to write.

They learn how to write so they can tell stories.

Story Workshop: New Possibilities for Young Writers – Harris MacKay

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## 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?

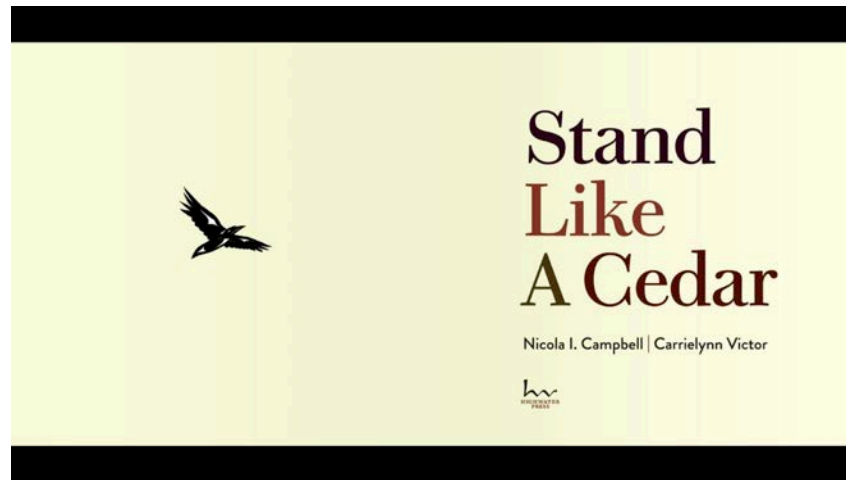






## Read aloud

Social Studies



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## 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

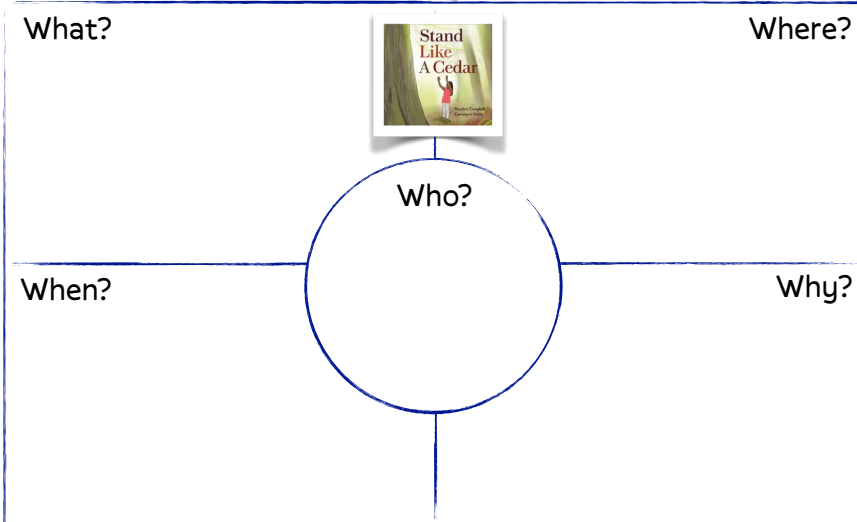


Indigenous knowledge is passed down through oral history, traditions, and collective memory.

Indigenous societies throughout the world value the well-being of the self, the land, spirits, and ancestors.

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## Graphic Organizer - documenting your story creation



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## 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

Story Workshop: New Possibilities for Young Writers – Harris MacKay

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## 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.

## The Value of Loose Parts

Reflect & Discuss

- ✓ 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



## Kate's Story Workshop

Grade 1



### 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.







## What stories live inside of these materials?



What stories live in a lake? In the ocean?

What stories live in a river or stream?

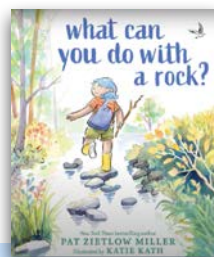
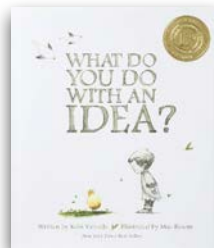
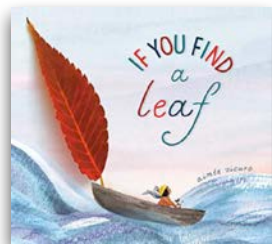
What stories live in the forest?

What stories live in our students?

## Read alouds to launch story workshop



## Read alouds to launch story workshop



## 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.

## 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

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

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## Reflections & Next Steps



Reflect on the activities & resources shared today:

- ✓ Reggio-inspired literacy activities
- ✓ 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
- ✓ 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, story sharing and documentation
- ✓ Playful learning and the benefits of loose parts
- ✓ Story workshop and connections to numeracy

Find a colleague in the room and share what resonated with you, and the ONE thing you're most likely to try in the coming days & weeks.

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## Info Links

## Sources

[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](#)

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## Books & Presentations

## Sources

Shifting the Balance – Burkins & Yates

The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Experience in Transformation

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

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