

GRADE 1 ELA AND PHE: Expressing Emotions with Loose Parts

Summary of Learning Opportunity

This busy Grade 1 class has been conducting an inquiry on emotions and feelings through picture books and class discussions. Throughout our unit, students have noticed the use of colour (e.g. red for anger, blue for sad) to represent emotions in texts. The teacher noticed this instinct and conducted an art lesson where the students created abstract art pieces using colour to express an emotion. Other regular classroom practices include a weekly story workshop (oral and beginning writing) and creating scenes with loose parts. This learning opportunity blended the students' interest in colours and emotions with the development and practice of a familiar communication format (loose parts, story workshop).

Curricular Competencies and Content	ELA 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use developmentally appropriate reading, listening, and viewing strategies to make meaning • Use personal experience and knowledge to connect to stories and other texts to make meaning • Identify, organize, and present ideas in a variety of forms • Create stories and other texts to deepen awareness of self, family, and community
	PHE 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and describe feelings and worries • Emotions and their causes and effects

Literacy Connections

Instruction and Assessment

Competencies Developed, Practiced, and/or Assessed

LITERACY: Comprehends texts—Makes connections; Applies understanding—Extracts ideas and information; Applies understanding—Synthesizes ideas and information

1. The teacher reviewed the texts from the unit and highlighted the illustrators' use of colour to reflect the emotion on each page. The class discussed the various illustrators' colour choices, as well as their own art piece representing an emotion. They identified similarities and differences between their colour choices and those of their classmates.

Book List:

- The Way I Feel by Janan Cain
- The Color Monster by Anna Llenas
- In My Heart: A Book of Feelings by Jo Witek
- Glad Monster, Sad Monster: A Book About Feelings by Ed Emberly
- My Many Colored Days by Dr. Seuss

Use developmentally appropriate reading, listening, and viewing strategies to make meaning

Use personal experience and knowledge to connect to stories and other texts to make meaning

LITERACY: Develops ideas—Generates ideas; Communicates—Expresses ideas and information

2. The teacher organized the classroom tables with bins of loose parts all of one colour. As a prompt for the learning opportunity, students chose an emotion and then a colour table. The students created loose part scenes depicting a time they felt their emotion.

Identify and describe feelings and worries

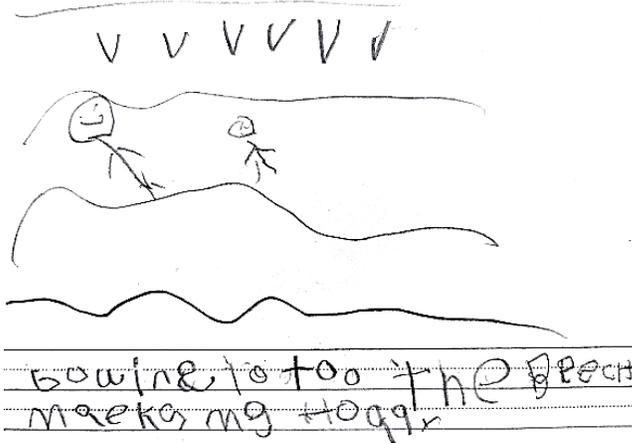
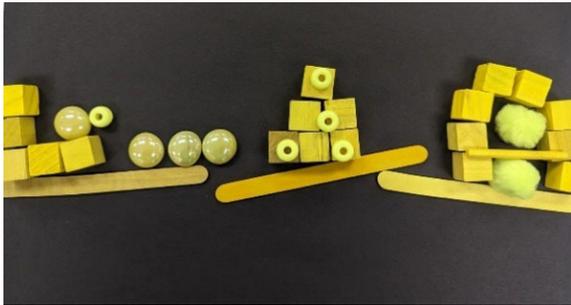
LITERACY: Communicates—Presents ideas and information

3. As in our regular story workshops, students shared their stories orally with a seatmate and the teacher. Students also wrote one or two sentences in their story notebooks.

Identify, organize, and present ideas in a variety of forms

Create stories and other texts to deepen awareness of self, family, and community

Proficient Student Work, Teacher's Assessment and Reflection



Student: "This is my picture, It's a happy picture. I chose yellow for happy, like in that book. I think yellow is for happy."

"I'm at the beach with my family. We made sandcastles and had a picnic. Going to the beach makes me happy. My family makes me happy too."

Teacher's Observations and Assessment

This student demonstrated proficiency in English Language Arts. They clearly connected to and made meaning from the learning material: "I chose yellow for happy, like in that book." They extracted ideas from the previous learning experiences in Art and PHE to create their story workshop scene and to apply and share their understanding of the emotion and connection to self and family.

Teacher's Reflection

Using the transferrable thinking embedded in the Literacy sub-aspects allowed me to plan my teaching through a cross-curricular lens. I was able to connect, bundle, and assess the Arts and the PHE curricular competencies and content, whereas before I may have solely focused on the English Language Arts curriculum.

The sub-aspects (Comprehends texts—Makes connections; Applies understanding—Extracts ideas and information; Applies understanding—Synthesizes ideas and information) support several of the ELA curricular competencies, and allowed me to focus on the competencies during my assessment, instead of only focusing on the content. So often, assessment tools guide the teacher towards only assessing the student's product, and not necessarily the process or the thinking behind the product. The Literacy Learning Pathways aspects and sub-aspects also helped to break down the curricular competencies into smaller parts, giving me the language needed to describe the student's learning.

I've been an early primary teacher for 20 years now. I am comfortable planning and assessing my students in all curricular areas, and I still feel like these new K-12 Learning Progressions have helped me with my planning and assessment this year. The pull of the content section of the curriculum documents is strong. It's easy to simply look at the content column and plan activities to help my students master the content. I also believe in a student-centred approach to learning, so I try to provide opportunities for my students to follow their interests, and for them to inform our activities and inquiries. This approach can make it difficult to assess my students' progress because the links to the curriculum aren't always obvious.

Using the K-12 Learning Progressions document has really help me with my planning and my assessment of student learning. For this particular unit, many of our activities grew from following the students' lead – planning activities that helped further their thinking and that appealed to them, wherever they were in their learning journeys. I felt confident that I would be able to utilize many of thinking and communication competencies in the Learning Progressions to help me look for, assess, and describe my students' learning.