

TEACHERS' GUIDE



LEATHERBACK BLUES



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I. OVERVIEW

SUMMARY

Thirteen-year-old Robin Green and her family members run the Wild Place Animal Shelter. With her big maroon bag full of essential supplies, Robin excitedly goes on animal rescues with her eccentric grandma, Griff; her fearless best friend, Zo-Zo; and her jujube-juggling younger brother, Squirt, who likes to act as though he's the same age as Robin. Robin also has a teenaged sister, Ari, who is more interested in fashion and being cool than in helping to run the family business. Robin is still adjusting to life without her mother, whose spirit Robin still feels nearby on occasion.

Robin has strong, overwhelming emotions, which she struggles to manage. She feels intense anger at the apathy and cruelty of humans toward animals in the wild. She cares deeply about the welfare of wild animals, tries to be brave when performing dangerous rescues, and feels cowardly and ashamed when she doesn't flawlessly facilitate a rescue. She questions the adults around her for not being as outraged as she is by the cruelty that she sees humans inflict on animals.

One day, Robin receives a message — a desperate plea for help — from Carlos, a conservationist who finds her through the website for the animal shelter that she created. Carlos wants Robin's assistance in setting up a turtle sanctuary to protect Leatherback turtles in Costa Rica, whose eggs are being stolen by poachers. The only problem is that Robin and her family don't have the funds to afford the trip.

Over the next few weeks, Robin decides to learn as much as she can about Carlos's needs, Leatherbacks, Costa Rica, and the Spanish language. She's helping Carlos make a website about the plight of the Leatherback turtles in English and Spanish. Although she is excited about going to Costa Rica, the location where she will be staying is in an isolated spot, and she is worried about how dangerous the poachers could be.

She does everything she can to save up enough money to go on the trip — setting goals, brainstorming about money-making projects and work she could do, and fundraising. However, time flies, and suddenly the trip is merely a few weeks away. To her dismay, Robin still cannot afford the trip.

After Robin and Griff help a police officer solve the problem of a goose tapping its beak on his cruiser, while also saving another goose that was trapped in plastic, Robin is feeling conflicted about whether she should go to Costa Rica. She confides in Griff, who encourages Robin to take the risk, even if she's shaking inside. Griff's advice inspires Robin to go on the trip, even though she hasn't yet figured out how to afford it. Suddenly, Griff produces a white envelope — a cheque that allows Robin, Squirt, Griff, and Zo-Zo to afford the trip.

In Costa Rica, Robin arrives at a location that is beautiful and lush — but also dangerous. She is surrounded by unfamiliar faces, both friendly and unfriendly. Robin's bravery, spunkiness, and resourcefulness have helped her save many animal lives in the past, but this time these qualities could get her into more trouble than she bargained for.

THEMES

- Grieving death/celebrating life
- Managing emotions
- Facing fears
- Taking risks
- Demonstrating courage/bravery
- Believing in and fulfilling potential
- Personal growth
- Building resilience
- Harming wildlife through human activity
- Helping to protect endangered species
- Rescue/rehabilitation of wildlife

II. PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

HOW DOES A SPECIES BECOME ENDANGERED?

Introduce the concept of a species — a group that is capable of breeding to create offspring.

Discuss the term *endangered species* with students. Ask, “What is an endangered species?” Write the definition on the board: “A species of animal or plant that is at risk of extinction.”

Ask students to guess how many endangered species there are in the world. (According to the World Wildlife Foundation, there are 22,413 endangered species.) Ask, “Do you know of any endangered species?” Write students’ suggestions on the board. Show the students images of critically endangered species such as the polar bear, narwhal, tiger, caribou, reindeer, Atlantic cod, and beluga.

Ask, “What makes it possible for a species to become endangered?” Make a list on the board as students volunteer their answers, which may include the following:

- changes in environment due to natural causes
- climate change
- threats from existing predators
- introduction of new predators to habitat
- deforestation to make space for building agricultural or urban spaces
- pollution from littering and plastics that end up in the lakes and oceans
- poaching

This is a great opportunity for students to write in their journals, generating questions about endangered species, how a species becomes endangered, and how specific human activities threaten the survival of endangered species. These questions can be revisited and refined for later research.

Pose the following question to students: “What can we do to protect endangered species?” Have students quickly write their answers on sticky notes and then place their sticky notes on the board. Go over their responses, categorizing them as you discuss them.

LEARNING ABOUT LEATHERBACKS

Did you know that Leatherback turtles remain an endangered species due to human activity? Research the effects of human activity on Leatherbacks. What can we do to help protect the survival of Leatherback turtles?

Visit one of the following websites to learn more about Leatherback turtles and take notes in the organizer.

RESOURCE	LINK
Webpage: Leatherback Turtles in the Atlantic	dfo-mpo.gc.ca/species-especes/profiles-profils/leatherbackturtleatlantic-tortueluthatlantique-eng.html
Webpage: Leatherback Turtles (Canadian Pacific population)	dfo-mpo.gc.ca/species-especes/profiles-profils/leatherbackturtlepacific-tortueluthpacifique-eng.html
Video: CBC's Trek of the Titans	cbc.ca/natureofthings/episodes/trek-of-the-titans
Webpage: National Geographic's "Leatherback Sea Turtle"	nationalgeographic.com/animals/reptiles/l/leatherback-sea-turtle/
Webpage: World Wildlife Foundation's "Leatherback Turtle"	worldwildlife.org/species/leatherback-turtle

NOTES ABOUT LEATHERBACKS

What are ten fascinating facts about Leatherbacks?
Fact #1:
Fact #2:
Fact #3:
Fact #4:

Fact #5:
Fact #6:
Fact #7:
Fact #8:
Fact #9:
Fact #10:
What are the effects of human activity on Leatherbacks?
What can we do to protect the lives of Leatherbacks?
What can we do to raise awareness in our school community?

What questions do you have about Leatherbacks?

FAST FACTS ABOUT COSTA RICA

Here are a few interesting facts about Costa Rica (from the website costarica.com/travel/10-interesting-facts). Read these facts carefully and underline the most important ideas. Underlining as you read will help you to distinguish between essential and non-essential information, providing clarity and focus about main ideas as you read. Visit the website for the other facts.

- Today, Costa Ricans are largely of European descent and an estimated 10% of the country's population is Nicaraguan. Local indigenous tribes — Boruca, Chorotega, Guaymí, Bribri, Kekoldi and Cabécar — account for a mere 1% of the total population.
- The government made education both free and mandatory for all Costa Rican citizens in 1869. Costa Rica's education system is rated one of the best in all of Latin America and the country boasts a 96% literacy rate.
- Costa Rica's 1949 constitution guarantees freedom of religion, though the official state religion is Roman Catholicism. More than 75% of the population identifies as Catholic, though only 45% practice their faith. Evangelical Christians are the second largest religious group in Costa Rica.
- The second smallest Latin American country at 19,730 square miles (the size of West Virginia), Costa Rica hosts an incredible 5% of the world's biodiversity. From coast to coast, the country spans no more than 200 miles in length and just 70 miles at its narrowest section.

How did underlining help you to understand the text?

Look up five words that you don't know and complete the following table:

WORD	DEFINITION	SYNONYM	ANTONYM

Use each word in a sentence:

Word #1:

Word #2:

Word #3:

Word #4:

Word #5:

Choose three facts that you found most interesting (you will need to refer to the website for more facts). For each fact, make a connection to your personal experiences, to another text, or to the world.

What questions do you have about Costa Rica?

MANAGING EMOTIONS

Elementary students are learning to express, identify, acknowledge, and process a multitude of emotions — oftentimes intense and negative. Helping students learn to manage their emotions is an invaluable teaching opportunity — one that will improve body awareness, increase self-esteem, relieve stress, strengthen one's sense of identity, and enhance social skills. You will play an important role in helping students to understand, accept, and manage their emotions, setting students up for success for the rest of their lives.

Here are some suggestions for lesson topics, assignments, and class discussion:

- At any given moment, a person feels at least one emotion.
- Often, an individual can feel conflicting emotions at the same time!
- Emotions are felt in the physical body in specific locations.
- For some people, it can be difficult to pay attention to their emotions — to notice what they are feeling.
- Others might analyze their emotions too much, and that could make people miss opportunities in the present because they're stuck in their heads thinking about their feelings!
- It's okay and normal to feel strong negative emotions and to experience them for a long period. However, at some point, it's a good idea to get resourceful — to say and do things to solve a problem, especially at school or in the workplace, when there are so many projects to do during the day and only a limited amount of time to be productive!
- Emotions can be used as clues to help people understand themselves better — their likes and dislikes, what scares them and makes them proud, what hurts their feelings, and what is acceptable vs. unacceptable behaviour.
- When people are aware of their emotions, they can respond to them by making wise choices when solving problems.
- Thinking about a situation by looking at the bigger picture can help a person calm down.
- When identifying emotions, no words are needed — facial features and body language speak volumes.
- To avoid hurting someone's feelings, you can communicate in a way that is truthful but also gentle and kind.

EMOTIONS, FACIAL FEATURES, AND BODY LANGUAGE

Introduce an emotion to study each lesson or each week. Begin with the basic emotions: happy, sad, angry, and scared.

For each emotion, ask students to draw the related facial expression in their journals. Next, have them imagine and write about a hypothetical real-life situation related to the emotion. Encourage students to be resourceful in solving the problem that triggered the emotion.

Have students share their facial expressions. What did their faces have in common? Discuss as a class what universal facial features correspond to the emotion. Draw the facial features on a poster and place it on the wall for reference.

- Happy: eyes glowing, round cheeks, corners of lips upturned and teeth showing
- Sad: eyes downcast, tears falling, corners of lips downturned, face reddens
- Angry: eyes flashing, eyebrows scrunched together, skin between eyebrows bulges, nostrils flare, lips held tightly, face reddens
- Scared: eyes widened, mouth open in an “O,” face frozen

Discuss posture and body language as well. Where do students feel anger, sadness, happiness, fear, and excitement in their bodies?

- Happy: chest expands, relaxed posture, walking lightly on feet
- Sad: Head hanging forward, chest constricted, body curls into a ball if lying down, feet trudging slowly
- Angry: arms crossed, flushed face and neck, hands in tight balls at sides, feet stomping
- Scared: hairs on arms and neck standing, stomach tosses, body frozen

Have students share their hypothetical situations and provide more problem-solving suggestions for their classmates’ situations.

ROLE-PLAYING AN EMOTION

In small groups, students will role-play a scenario based on a particular emotion. Choose a few of the scenarios that the students created, adapting them if required, or create your own scenarios for the students to role-play.

After a scenario has been enacted, audience members can contribute ideas for problem-solving in a class discussion; students can develop and practise their oral communication skills in agreeing or disagreeing with an opinion and building on previous ideas.

Actors can role-play a scenario a second time, allowing audience members to stop the action, step in to replace a character, and model thinking and behaving more wisely. Encourage students to come up with better ways to express ideas truthfully while also being gentle and kind. Students will understand the concept of a “win-win” situation for all participants, and will likely begin to apply this understanding in their own lives.

Role-playing provides opportunities for students to safely explore expressing and managing their emotions, without feeling put on the spot to share their own emotions and personal lives. These scenarios will also provide inspiration for students to be resourceful in solving their problems and to empathize with others by considering the different perspectives of characters in a scenario.

Suggestions:

- Try having students act without verbal communication, or to create tableaux, so that students can focus on non-verbal communication in facial features, posture, and body language.
- Encourage exaggeration of facial features and postures so that students can more easily identify features and postures and also have some fun.
- Play a video of a group of people expressing particular emotions with the volume on silent, and have students practise identifying emotions, facial features, and body language.

“DON’T WORRY, BE HAPPY!”

Have students identify examples of positive emotions and negative emotions. Use an emotions chart to provide an easy reference.

Have students briefly reflect on these statements in a Think-Pair-Share before sharing their responses in a class discussion. (Alternatively, the questions about gender can be saved for another mini-lesson.)

- Is it bad to have negative emotions?
- Should a person try to have positive emotions all the time?
- Is it realistic for a person to always be happy?
- Can feeling intense anger be helpful?
- What emotions are girls expected to feel?
- What emotions are boys expected to feel?
- Are girls discouraged from feeling certain emotions?
- Are boys discouraged from feeling certain emotions?

Emphasize that no emotion is inherently bad, because emotions help people understand who they are as unique individuals — what hurts them, their likes and dislikes, what scares them and what makes them proud, and what is acceptable vs. unacceptable behaviour. Note that what might make one person furious wouldn’t bother another person in the least.

Ask students to write in their journals in response to the following questions:

- Do you remember a time when having a strong emotion helped you learn something about yourself?
- Why is it important to be aware of your emotions?

Write on the board:

conflict → you are upset → you are aware and you accept that you are upset → think about a solution → take action → you are a super resourceful problem-solver!

Discuss the link between awareness, acceptance, and problem-solving. Awareness of upset feelings in yourself and in others is essential in identifying that there is a problem — perhaps a personal boundary has been violated. If people are aware of what they are feeling in any situation and take action to make themselves feel better, they can't help but become super resourceful problem-solvers!

Cross out *you are aware* and *you accept that you are upset*. Ask students to consider what might happen if a person wasn't aware of his/her feelings when something bad happened. Students might say the following:

- the person wouldn't recognize that there is a problem
- the person who caused the problem might not recognize that there is a problem
- the person who caused the problem might notice weakness and bully the victim even more
- the victim wouldn't know how he feels about the problem, so he might not be able to stand up for himself

Ask students what they can do to help themselves, friends, and family members when something bad happens to them. Encourage the following answers:

- Ask them how they felt.
- Help them identify the emotion if they don't know what they felt.
- Tell them that it's okay to feel that emotion.
- Encourage them to think of a solution and take action.
- Brainstorm solutions with them — be resourceful problem solvers!

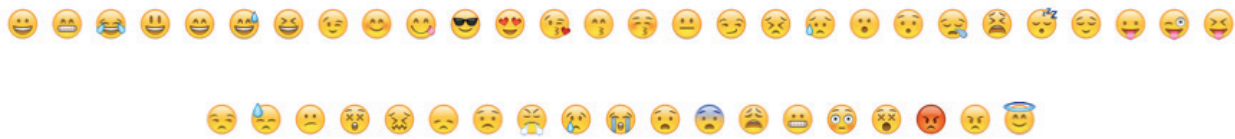
EMOTIONS, COLOURS, AND ART

Colours can be used to represent emotions. Students may enjoy creating colour-focused art associated with a particular emotion. This activity can be a bridge to discuss symbolism in the novel. Some suggested associations are provided in the following table:

COLOUR	ASSOCIATED EMOTION
red	angry, jealous, passionate
blue	sad, peaceful
orange	excited
yellow	joyful, happy
pink	loving
green	hopeful, nurturing, greedy
brown	calm
grey	confused, bored, numb
black	scared, disappointed, hateful
white	peaceful

EMOJI CHART

Use these emojis (from getemoji.com) to create an emotions chart for the class to use. These emojis can be printed out for each student to use at the beginning or end of each day or lesson, during circle time, or one-on-one consultations.



FEATURES OF THE NOVEL

FEATURES OF DIFFERENT WRITING FORMS

Ask students to brainstorm about the writing forms that they have studied in class so far. Make a list of these writing forms on the board.

Identify the main features of each of these writing forms and write them on the board. For example:

- A newspaper has advertisements and sections such as world news, local news, weather, entertainment, business, and sports, each section containing written articles with headlines and other unique features.
- A textbook has a table of contents, several units and chapters, a glossary, and an index. Each chapter usually has bolded headings and subheadings, figures (tables, charts, and images), a summary of key concepts, definitions of bolded terms in the margins, and comprehension questions.
- A poem has a title, lines organized into a particular form, meter, rhyme, and figurative language.

Ask students, “How is a novel different from other writing forms, such as a newspaper, a short story, a textbook, or poetry?”

Talk about how a novel is

- a relatively lengthy piece of writing;
- about a fictional world; and
- written in prose, or normal written language, unlike poetry.

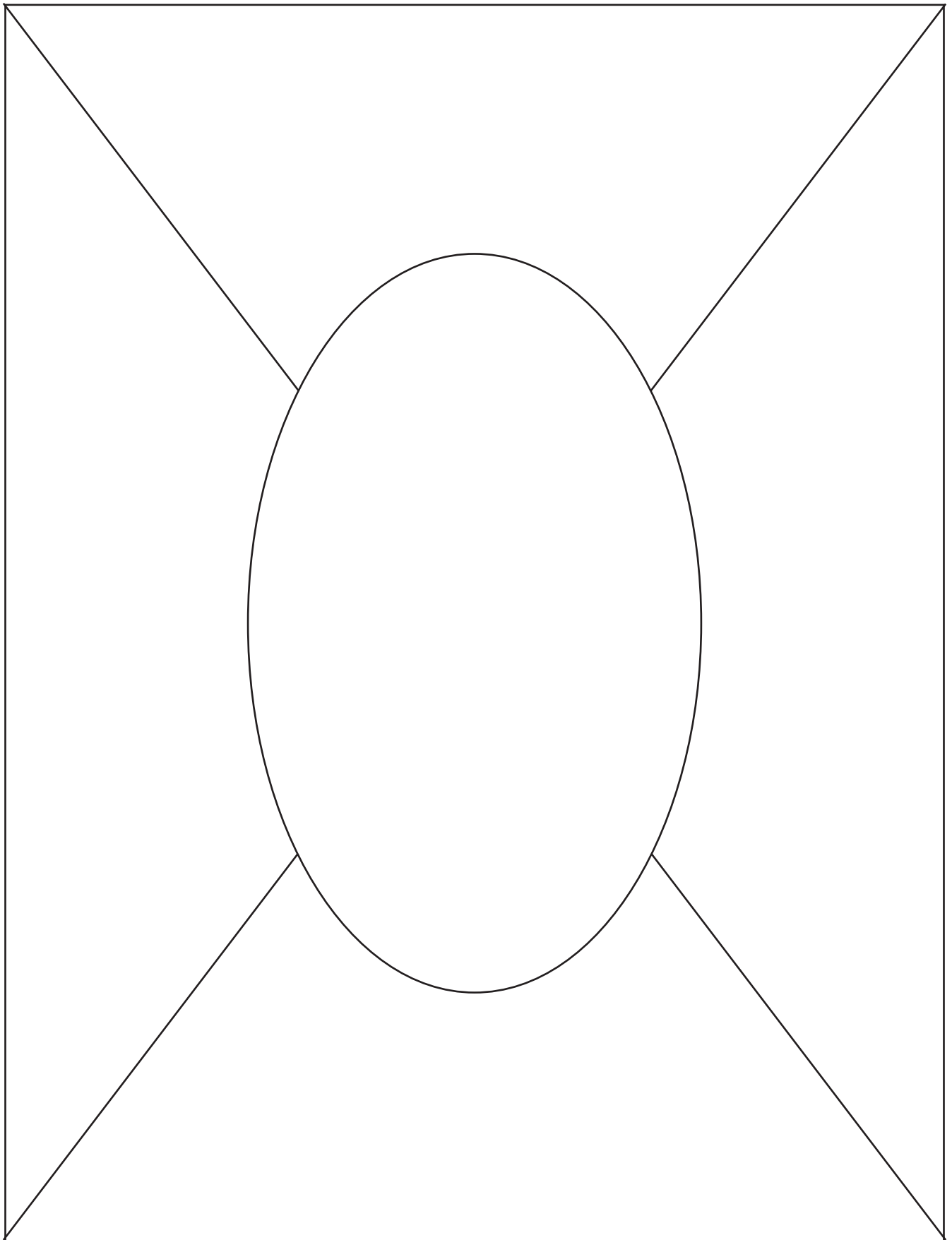
INTRODUCING FEATURES OF THE NOVEL

Discuss the organizational features of the novel:

- front cover — title, cover image, and author’s name
- back cover — synopsis, which provides a brief summary of the main plot, avoids subplots, and doesn’t give away the ending, and an author biography
- chapters — numbered and/or titled sections of the novel
- epigraph — a quotation provided at the beginning of a novel
- prologue — an introductory section that is separate from the rest of the story
- epilogue — a section at the end of the novel that concludes the story

FIRST NOVEL STUDY

If this is your students' first novel study, provide different novels for students to browse in order to learn about novel features. Ask students to find each organizational feature and make inferences about the author's purpose, the intended audience, and the elements of plot. Students can try this activity in small groups, with each student assigned at least one organizational feature to interpret. Students can record their evidence and inferences on an organizer like the one below, each student writing in a triangular piece. As a group, they can discuss their inferences and draw general conclusions about the author's purpose, intended audience, and elements of plot. These conclusions can be written in the centre of the organizer.



Alternatively, have students find and interpret the organizational features of *Leatherback Blues* (except any feature that gives away too much of the story, such as the epilogue, or any of the chapters beyond the first page of the first chapter). Teach students how to make inferences by using evidence from the organizational features, and reasoning to form a conclusion.

USING FEATURES OF THE NOVEL TO MAKE INFERENCES

Read and take notes on the features of *Leatherback Blues* in the left column of the table below. In the right column, use the evidence that you have gathered to make an inference about the author’s purpose, the intended audience, and the elements of plot.

Author's purpose: Why do you think the author wrote this novel?

Intended audience: Who do you think the author wrote this novel for?

Elements of plot: Do the features of the novel provide clues about elements of plot such as point of view, setting, characterization, conflict, symbolism, or theme?

FEATURE	INFERENCES
<p>Front cover</p> <p>Title:</p> <p>Cover image:</p> <p>Author's name:</p>	
<p>Back cover</p> <p>Synopsis:</p>	

FEATURE	INFERENCES
Epigraph:	
First page of first chapter:	
<p>What conclusions can you make about the author's purpose, the intended audience, and the elements of plot?</p> <p>Author's purpose:</p> <p>Intended audience:</p> <p>Elements of plot:</p>	

III. DURING-READING ACTIVITIES

TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

Introduce students to these essential reading comprehension strategies by explicitly teaching each of them as mini-lessons. With sample texts, model thinking out loud and making annotations or taking notes in a journal.

APPLYING A READING STRATEGY: BEFORE VS. AFTER

During student practice, have students do the following as a snapshot of their reading comprehension skills before applying a specific strategy:

1. Passively read a part of the text.
2. Recall key ideas and answer comprehension questions.
3. Apply a specific reading strategy to another section of the text.
4. Summarize main ideas and respond to reading questions.
5. Compare their reading comprehension before and after applying the strategy.

Students will discern a measurable improvement in their reading comprehension when they apply a particular reading comprehension strategy to a text.

PRACTISING READING STRATEGIES

As a kinesthetic activity to review the reading strategies that have been learned, have stations set up around the room with chart paper on the walls, titled with the relevant reading strategy, along with sections of a text. Use a variety of texts (e.g., different forms, content, purposes, audiences, and difficulty levels). Students can begin circulating around the stations, making notes on the chart paper.

READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

Read, underline, and make annotations on each reading strategy. When you have finished reading and making annotations on this handout, answer the questions below.

Which strategies are you already using?

Which strategies would you like to try?

SKIM IT!

- Before you begin a chapter, quickly skim the title and the beginning of the body to determine what the chapter could be about.
- As you read, if you find yourself losing focus or are confused about what you just read, quickly skim the page(s) or chapter again to determine the key plot points.

CHUNK IT!

- While reading a lengthy novel, pause every few paragraphs or sections of a chapter to recall and relate the events that have occurred so far.

LEARN NEW WORDS!

- For each unfamiliar word that you encounter, try to decipher the meaning with the following strategies:
 - Use context clues from other words and phrases in the sentence, from surrounding sentences in the paragraph, and from paragraphs that come before and after the paragraph that contains the word.
 - Look at parts of the word that you might already know from your knowledge of other words that have the same parts.
 - Determine the part of speech of the word.
 - Does the word “sound” positive or negative?
 - Use the word in a sentence.
- Keep a new vocabulary tracker. Look up all unfamiliar words in a dictionary, recording the definition, part of speech, synonyms, and antonyms. Use the word in a sentence. Review your vocabulary list frequently and make sure to use the word when you speak and write!

Word:	Part of Speech + Definition:
Synonyms:	Antonyms:
Sentence:	

ASK QUESTIONS!

- Asking questions will help you focus on clearly interpreting the text.
- As a collaborative activity with your classmates, pose questions in response to the text as you read, recording the page number, section of the text, and your related question in separate shared Google documents for each chapter. You can expand on, refine, or broaden your classmates' questions. You can answer each other's questions as well.

SECTION OF TEXT AND PAGE NUMBER	QUESTION	PEER RESPONSE
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on, refine, or broaden the original question • Answer the original question

VISUALIZE IT!

- Visualizing what you read can help you clarify your understanding of the text, making sense of imagery, sensory details, setting, characterization, symbolism, and theme.
- Draw sketches of new words that you learn to aid memorization.

SUMMARIZE IT!

- Take notes on the key events of each chapter in point form so you won't lose track of the plot.
- Combine, add to, or delete points in order to condense your notes.
- Organize your notes in a logical order.
- Select one main idea and three to five supporting details from your revised point-form notes, and write your summary.
- Your summary should be no more than one-third of the original text.

MAKE CONNECTIONS!

- During reading, make connections between the text and
 - your personal experiences or the experiences of someone you know;
 - other texts that you have read, viewed, or listened to; and
 - a historical or current issue going on in the world.

TEXT-TO-SELF	TEXT-TO-TEXT	TEXT-TO-WORLD

FORM AN OPINION!

- An opinion is a point or claim that you make about a topic.
- Form an opinion in response to something you felt strongly about in the text.
- Provide supporting evidence from the text and your reasoning to support your opinion.

ELEMENTS OF PLOT

Put students into small groups and assign two chapters to analyze in terms of setting, plot, and characterization.

Within each group, each student may choose to track a specific element of plot during reading.

DESCRIBING SETTING

- During reading, record details of each new setting on a cue card.
- Include the time, place, and atmosphere.

SEQUENCING EVENTS

- As you read, write each event that occurs on a cue card.
- Classify events as major or minor conflicts, if appropriate.

UNDERSTANDING CHARACTERS

- As you read, write down the name of each new character that is introduced on a cue card.
- Add descriptive details to the card, including information such as physical appearance, mannerisms, background information, motivations, beliefs, and personality traits.

IV. AFTER-READING ACTIVITIES

Introduce after-reading activities once students have completed a chapter or finished reading the novel. After-reading activities involve the novel and require students to do a close reading of the text.

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Prologue

1. Make an inference about what is happening. How do you know?
2. What is the setting?
3. Make a list of the words and phrases with negative connotations (associated meanings). What clues do these words give you about the atmosphere?

Chapter One

1. What is the first call of the season at the Wild Place Animal Shelter about?
2. Who is Relentless? Why doesn't Relentless go on rescues anymore?
3. Who is Ari? How does Ari feel about helping out with rescues? How do you know?
4. What is in the big maroon rescue bag?
5. Why is "Bug Boy" a fitting nick name for Squirm?
6. Robin thinks Zo-Zo has "guts of steel." What do you think "guts of steel" means? Why do you think so?
7. Why does Robin think that she is a "wuss"?
8. What is Zo-Zo's role in the rescue? What does Zo-Zo's behaviour tell you about her personality?
9. How is the idea of death personified (given human characteristics)?
10. What happens to the baby raccoon that Robin feeds?
11. Track the many different emotions that Robin feels in this chapter and the reasons why she feels each emotion. Record your notes in the following chart.

EMOTION	REASON

Chapter Two

1. Why doesn't Griff think it's gross for dead animals to be eaten by other animals? Do you agree or disagree? Why?
2. Why do you think Robin enjoys alone time with Griff? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
3. Robin believes that emotions "buzz her up like food in a blender." What does she mean by that phrase?

4. What happens when the sheriff comes to the shelter to take the animals? Why do you think Griff feels proud of Robin?
5. How does Griff define courage?
6. How is Robin like the acorn?
7. What are two personality traits demonstrated by Griff? Provide an example from the text to support each trait.

Chapter Three

1. What is inside the box that is left on Robin's driveway? Why does Robin grab Relentless's collar when she opens the lid?
2. What is a "D and D"? Why do people do "D and Ds"?
3. What are some reasons why Robin loves the barn?
4. Why does the shelter treat so many baby animals?
5. What does Robin's dad assume about what happened to the porcupine? Why does Robin get tense in response?
6. What is Robin's dad's "The Way Things Are" lecture?
7. What are people willing to do that scares Robin?
8. Who is Finn? What did Robin's family do with him last year?
9. What event does the author choose to end the chapter with? How does this choice affect the audience?

Chapter Four

1. What is the letter about? Who wrote the letter?
2. What information does Robin's family discover in their research related to the letter?
3. What is a poacher? Why do poachers steal and sell Leatherback turtles' eggs?
4. Why do you think Robin might feel strongly about helping Carlos save the Leatherbacks in Costa Rica? Provide evidence from the text to support your answer.
5. What does Griff really mean when she says, "Let's go this afternoon. Nothing to do around here." How do you know?
6. Why does Zo-Zo suggest travelling to Costa Rica during the winter holidays?

Chapter Five

1. Why are email exchanges between Robin and Carlos difficult? What does Robin do in response?
2. What does Robin learn from Carlos through the email exchanges?
3. What does Carlos ask Robin to help him with? Why might she be a good candidate for the job?
4. What does Carlos do to make sure the eggs are safe?
5. What does Robin put on her to-do list? What does she identify as her biggest problem?

6. What does Robin put on her list of ideas for making money? What else could she have done to raise money?
7. Robin likes to make lists when starting projects. What does this tell you about her?

Chapter Six

1. What is different about the Wild Place in the autumn?
2. Describe the rescue involving the young moose. What does Robin do to help?
3. What happens to Barney?
4. What is Griff's phone call with Officer Ryan about?
5. Robin compares her idea about going to Costa Rica to a balloon. What comparisons does she make?
6. What advice does Griff give Robin about fundraising?
7. What does Robin find when she follows the goose?
8. Why does Griff think the goose was pecking on the cruiser door?
9. What advice does Griff give to Robin about taking risks?
10. What does Griff mean by acting "as if"?
11. What does Robin decide to do at the end of the chapter? What does Griff surprise Robin with?

Chapter Seven

1. Why is Griff in a hurry?
2. What had Robin's mom started for her before she passed away?
3. Compare Robin's goodbye to Ari versus Zo-Zo's farewell to her dad.
4. What information does Squirm share about the creatures in Costa Rica?
5. What does "jumping the gun" mean? How does Zo-Zo "jump the gun"?
6. In the car, what upsetting information does Robin learn?
7. What does Robin and her dad do to help the bear with its head stuck in the honey bucket?
8. Why do you think everyone stares at Robin when she returns to the car?

Chapter Eight

1. Why is Squirm's bag so heavy?
2. What is "detour" Griff's code word for? Why do you think Griff keeps saying "detour" to Squirm?
3. What does Robin experience when she steps off the plane? What happens when Robin leaves the airport building?
4. Describe Carlos's physical appearance.
5. What does Robin notice about Carlos that makes her smile?
6. Who is Diego? What does he do? What is Robin's first impression of Diego?
7. What kinds of plant and animal wildlife does Robin discover in the forest?

8. How do Carlos and Diego work together to help the Leatherback turtles?
9. What happens when Robin puts her running shoe on?

Chapter Nine

1. Why does Griff ask Robin to stay calm?
2. How does Carlos initially react to Robin's sting? Why does he react this way?
3. How do Carlos and Squirm react when they find out about the size of the scorpion that bit Robin? Why do they react this way?
4. What does Squirm discover about the species of scorpions in Costa Rica?
5. Why does Robin get angry at Zo-Zo?

Chapter Ten

1. Why does Robin's resentment ease when Zo-Zo apologizes?
2. What information does Zo-Zo share about Benita and Diego?
3. What ideas do Robin, Zo-Zo, and Squirm share with Carlos about how he can improve his website?
4. How many eggs would make the hatchery full? How many eggs are in the hatchery now?
5. What does each person contribute to building the website?
6. How does Zo-Zo keep her hair off her face and her glasses on?
7. What does Robin see out the window as she is trying to fall asleep? What does Robin do next?
8. Make an inference about what Robin sees at the end of the chapter. Use evidence from the text to support your inference.

Chapter Eleven

1. What is Robin's plan regarding what she saw the night before?
2. How do Carlos and Zo-Zo help Robin get to the beach?
3. What does Robin see at the beach?
4. What does Robin promise herself before she falls asleep?

Chapter Twelve

1. Why does Robin flinch when Diego looks at her?
2. Why does Robin smile when she reads the first email?
3. Where are Squirm and Marcos going?
4. What is the second email about? Why does Robin get excited?
5. What problem does Carlos mention? What is Griff's solution?
6. Why do you think Griff raises her voice in response to Carlos's suggested amount of money to charge the visitors?

7. What does Robin receive when the delivery truck pulls up?
8. What does Robin find in the luggage that surprises her?
9. What does Zo-Zo suggest when Robin shares her secret? What would you have suggested?

Chapter Thirteen

1. When is the church group arriving? What is the most important task to complete to prepare for their arrival?
2. What questions does Robin have about how to take care of the church group?
3. Why does Carlos call Robin to the hatchery?
4. How many hatchlings are expected? Why are there only twenty hatchlings?
5. What does Robin tell Diego at the end of the chapter?

Chapter Fourteen

1. What does Carlos consider as proof of Diego's stealing?
2. Describe what happens when Carlos confronts Diego.
3. How does Benita feel about her husband? How do you know?
4. What kindness does Benita show to Griff?
5. What does the family decide to do to spruce up the place for the visitors?

Chapter Fifteen

1. How has the sanctuary been transformed?
2. Why does Carlos leave the hatchery unguarded?
3. What does Robin and everyone else do to help the church group get settled in?
4. What does Robin share with Lola to make her feel better?
5. According to Griff, what happens when people feel afraid?
6. What is Griff's suggestion to help lessen Lola's fears?
7. How many eggs have been relocated so far? How many do they need to relocate to reach their goal?
8. What does Mr. Hughes propose to Robin?
9. What does Robin ask Lola to do? What does Lola do afterward?
10. What does Robin wish she could do as easily as Lola does?

Chapter Sixteen

1. What happens on the church group's last day?
2. How does Robin know that the church group had a good experience?
3. List the items that Carlos wants to purchase with the donations from the church group.

4. How many more eggs does everyone need to collect to reach their goal? How many days do they have left?
5. Why do deep worry lines appear on Griff's brow?
6. Describe the conflict between Zo-Zo and Griff.
7. Why isn't Zo-Zo used to restrictions?
8. What does Griff text to Robin? How does Zo-Zo react?
9. What does Zo-Zo say to Robin that makes her decide to go on patrol?

Chapter Seventeen

1. How is Robin's body behaving?
2. Describe the kidnapping.

Chapter Eighteen

1. What information can Robin pick up despite having the blindfold on?
2. What is different about Zo-Zo's face?
3. Who shows up at the end of the chapter?

Chapter Nineteen

1. What are two personality traits that describe Diego? Use evidence from the text support each trait.
2. Who is Dead Eyes?
3. What information does Robin discover from the conversation between Diego and Dead Eyes?

Chapter Twenty

1. Summarize Day Two of Robin and Zo-Zo's captivity.
2. How does Robin know that Zo-Zo was afraid? What is Zo-Zo afraid of?

Chapter Twenty-One

1. What foods do Robin and Zo-Zo fantasize about eating once they escape?
2. What becomes a daily ritual after Robin and Zo-Zo get bored of playing?
3. What does Zo-Zo think they should do about the snake? What is Robin's reaction to Zo-Zo's suggestion?
4. What does Zo-Zo conclude about Diego and Dead Eyes's daily routine? How does Robin respond to Zo-Zo's ideas?
5. What is Robin feeling conflicted about at the end of the chapter?

Chapter Twenty-Two

1. What does Robin do for most of Day Four of their captivity?
2. What does Robin imagine her family members doing?
3. Who does Robin miss the most? Why is Robin afraid to imagine this person? What message does Robin receive from her?

Chapter Twenty-Three

1. What is Zo-Zo's plan for Day Five?
2. How does Zo-Zo respond when Robin tells her about the dream?
3. Describe what happens when Zo-Zo tries to attack Diego. What does Robin do next?
4. What does Robin's dad say to reassure her that help is on the way?
5. What happens after the phone call, before an hour has passed?

Chapter Twenty-Four

1. What have Robin and Zo-Zo been doing for the past few days since being rescued?
2. To Robin, what is the best part about being out of captivity? How does she relate this to how an animal feels when released into the wild?
3. Why do you think Robin feels good when she touches the acorn? What do you think it could mean that the energy of the acorn now matches the energy in Robin's body?
4. How many eggs still need to be collected?
5. What do the adults think will happen to Diego and Dead Eyes?
6. How did Robin's father react to seeing the eggs hatch?
7. How many eggs did they end up collecting? What reward will they receive?
8. What does Robin realize as they head back? Why do you think she is thrilled?

ELEMENTS OF PLOT

This activity is a continuation of the during-reading activity Elements of Plot.

After group members have completed the assigned chapters and tracked the elements of plot on cue cards (from the during-reading activity Elements of Plot), have all members complete each of the following tasks. Rotate tasks until everyone in the group has analyzed all three elements of plot.

DESCRIBING SETTING

1. Shuffle the cards and then organize them in chronological order.
2. Determine the importance of each setting in furthering the plot or developing characterization.
3. Next, place the cards on a plot diagram that shows how setting contributes to other elements of the story, such as characterization and plot.

SEQUENCING EVENTS

1. Shuffle the cue cards and then organize them in chronological order.
2. Next, place cards on a plot diagram that shows where tension increases and decreases between events.
3. Organize events into categories of your choice; for example, types of conflict.

UNDERSTANDING CHARACTERS

1. Shuffle the cards and then organize them in a mind map that shows relationship dynamics between characters.
2. Organize characters into categories of your choice. Compare and contrast characters based on specific aspects such as personality traits.

CARD GAME: TRIPLE-PLAY PLOT

Play a card game using the three stacks of cards created for two chapters.

1. Combine three stacks of cards together as one deck. Shuffle the deck.
2. Each player receives six cards per hand.
3. Roll a number cube. The player with the lowest number goes first.
4. The goal is to match a setting card, an event card, and a character card, and collect as many setting event-character triplets as possible. The first player can put down a setting-event-character triplet or pick up a new card from the deck.
 - If the first player puts down a triplet, three new cards must be selected from the top of the deck.
 - If the first player wants to keep the new card, a card must be placed in the discard pile.
5. Play the game for five minutes. At the end of five minutes, the player with the most triplet sets wins.
6. Each player picks one triplet set to discuss with group members. If a player didn't get to create a triplet set, choose another player's triplet set to discuss.

BEYOND THE LITERAL MEANING

What could the acorn and the Leatherback turtle represent? Why do you think so? Record your notes in the table below:

OBJECT	SYMBOLIZES	EXPLANATION
Acorn		
Turtle		

CASUAL CRUELTY

There were many examples of human cruelty towards animals in *Leatherback Blues*. Make a list of the five scenarios in which violence toward wild animals occurs. Were there any situations where the cruelty could have been prevented?

EVENT	CRUELTY TOWARD ANIMAL	PREVENTION

READY, SET, GOAL!

What goals did Robin set in the story? What was her action plan in achieving her goals? Track her progress in trying to accomplish her goals. What was the outcome?

Goals	Action Plan
Track Progress	Outcome

What could Robin have done differently to achieve her goals?

Your turn! Choose a personal or academic goal to achieve over the next month.

- Set a goal. Make it S.M.A.R.T. — specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound. For example, which goal is best?
 - Study math concepts.
 - Do better in math class.
 - Study math for two hours, six days per week, after dinner, for the next ten months.
 - Study math for thirty minutes, three days per week, before dinner, for one month.
- Make an action plan. This is your to-do list.
- Track progress made toward your goal each week.
- Did you achieve your goal?

Goals	Action Plan

Track Progress	Outcome
Week 1:	
Week 2:	
Week 3:	
Week 4:	

Reflect: What could you have done differently to help you achieve your goal more easily?

FACING FEARS

Journal: Have you ever accomplished something that initially filled you with fear?

Choose three situations where Robin felt fearful about something but faced her fears. What was the outcome of each situation?

SITUATION	WHY WAS ROBIN FEARFUL?	OUTCOME

A DIFFERENT LENS

Choose a chapter to represent from a different perspective, whether it's through the eyes of another character or retold through a different media form.

Select one of the following options:

- Rewrite a chapter from the perspective of another character.
- Replace the chapters with a one- to two-page script for a play.
- Replace the chapter with a diary entry from another character.
- Write a descriptive paragraph about a person, place, or thing in the chapter.
- Replace all one-on-one talks in a chapter with text message conversations.
- Write a chapter scene from a film adaptation of the novel.
- Make a video of a chapter scene from a YouTube series adaptation of the novel.
- Rewrite a chapter as a children's book.
- Rewrite and illustrate a chapter as a section from a graphic novel.

Brainstorm about a character's motivations, background, personality traits, values, beliefs, and fears OR about the features of the media form you have chosen.

Journal: Consider the specific changes that will occur as result of your different representation of the chapter.

Complete the writing process in creating your media text:

1. Summarize the chapter that you will be representing a different way.
2. Determine your purpose and intended audience.
3. What are the form, features, and stylistic elements of your media text?
4. Generate ideas.
5. Outline your ideas.
6. Write a first draft.
7. Self-assess your draft using the achievement chart.
8. Ask a peer to provide editing suggestions.
9. Revise your first draft.
10. Submit your final draft.

Get into groups with those who represented the same chapter through a different perspective. Share your reworked chapters.

- Compare the features of your media text.
- Discuss the similarities and differences between your works.

Reflect in your journal: How does the content change when the form changes? How does the content change when the perspective changes?

V. EXTENDING LEARNING

This section provides suggestions for learning that do not require engagement with the novel. The topics covered are related to themes from the novel.

WRITING A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Write a letter to your local or national newspaper to express a personal opinion about how we can help protect an endangered species in a particular region.

1. Complete the organizer below.
2. You need to form an opinion about a topic. Write your opinion as a topic sentence.
3. Provide three points to support your opinion. Each point requires an example and an explanation of how the example proves your point. Your concluding sentence restates your opinion another way.
4. Once you have completed the organizer, go back and add relevant transition words in order to smoothly connect your ideas and sentences.
5. Next, write the first draft of your letter.
6. Have a classmate read the draft and give suggestions for revision.
7. Revise your first draft.
8. Hand in your final copy.

Complete the following organizer:

Greeting:
Topic Sentence:
Point 1:
Example 1:
Explanation 1:

<p>Point 2:</p> <p>Example 2:</p> <p>Explanation 2:</p>
<p>Point 3:</p> <p>Example 3:</p> <p>Explanation 3:</p>
<p>Concluding Sentence:</p>
<p>Letter Closing:</p>

ENDANGERED SPECIES GALLERY

Research an endangered species and create a poster with a picture of the species along with twenty to thirty facts organized into the following categories:

- appearance
- behaviour
- relationship to their environment
- relationship to other species in their environment
- factors that contribute to endangerment
- how to protect this species from endangerment
- fascinating facts

Display the posters in the classroom and perform a gallery walk. Find space elsewhere in the school to put up the posters in order to raise awareness about endangered species.

VISIT A WILDLIFE RESERVE

Research a wildlife reserve in your area. Browse their website and take notes on the animals they rescue and rehabilitate, common types of rescue, the habitats they serve, their purpose, and other interesting information, such as how people can help and volunteering opportunities.

Plan a visit to the wildlife reserve!

You'll need to set a goal, create action steps, track progress, and determine the outcome.

<p>Goals</p>	<p>Action Plan</p>
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Track Progress	Outcome
Week 1:	
Week 2:	
Week 3:	
Week 4:	

EXPLORING CAREERS

Research one of the following careers and collect fifteen to twenty facts about the role of a professional in that career:

- environmentalist
- wildlife rehabilitator
- veterinarian

Write down five to ten questions that you would like to ask a person who works in the career you are researching.

Arrange an email, phone call, or video chat interview with someone who is working as a professional in the career you have chosen to research.

Self-assess your interview skills by using the Achievement Chart.

VI. APPENDIX

ACHIEVEMENT CHART

CATEGORIES	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Knowledge of content (e.g., forms of text; strategies associated with reading, elements of style; terminology; conventions)	demonstrates limited knowledge of content	demonstrates some knowledge of content	demonstrates considerable knowledge of content	demonstrates thorough knowledge of content
Understanding of content (e.g., concepts; ideas; opinions; relationships among facts, ideas, concepts, themes)	demonstrates limited understanding of content	demonstrates some understanding of content	demonstrates considerable understanding of content	demonstrates thorough understanding of content
Use of planning skills (e.g., generating ideas, gathering information, focusing research, organizing information)	uses planning skills with limited effectiveness	uses planning skills with some effectiveness	uses planning skills with considerable effectiveness	uses planning skills with high degree of effectiveness
Use of processing skills (e.g., making inferences, interpreting, analyzing, detecting bias, synthesizing, evaluating, forming conclusions)	uses processing skills with limited effectiveness	uses processing skills with some effectiveness	uses processing skills with considerable effectiveness	uses processing skills with a high degree of effectiveness

CATEGORIES	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Expression and organization of ideas and information (e.g., clear expression, logical organization)	expresses and organizes ideas and information with limited effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with some effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with considerable effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with a high degree of effectiveness
Communication for different audiences and purposes (e.g., use of appropriate style, voice, point of view, tone)	communicates for different audiences and purposes with limited effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with some effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with considerable effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with high degree of effectiveness
Use of conventions (e.g., grammar, spelling, punctuation, usage)	uses conventions, with limited effectiveness	uses conventions, with some effectiveness	uses conventions, with considerable effectiveness	uses conventions, with a high degree of effectiveness
Application of knowledge and skills (e.g., concepts, strategies, processes) in familiar contexts	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with limited effectiveness	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with some effectiveness	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with considerable effectiveness	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with a high degree of effectiveness
Transfer of knowledge and skills (e.g., concepts, strategies, processes) to new contexts	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with limited effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with some effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with considerable effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with a high degree of effectiveness
Making connections within and between various contexts (e.g., between the text and personal knowledge or experience, other texts, and the world outside the school; between disciplines)	makes connections within and between various contexts with limited effectiveness	makes connections within and between various contexts with some effectiveness	makes connections within and between various contexts with considerable effectiveness	makes connections within and between various contexts with a high degree of effectiveness

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VII. ONTARIO CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS FOR PRE-READING ACTIVITIES, AFTER-READING ACTIVITIES, AND EXTENDING LEARNING

SCIENCE: GRADE 4 CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

1. Analyze the effects of human activities on habitats and communities.
2. Investigate the interdependence of plants and animals within specific habitats and communities.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of habitats and communities and the relationships among the plants and animals that live in them.

Applies to: Learning About Leatherbacks; Notes About Leatherbacks; Fast Facts About Costa Rica; Casual Cruelty; Writing a Letter to the Editor; Endangered Species Gallery; Visit a Wildlife Reserve

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS FOR PRE-READING ACTIVITIES, DURING-READING ACTIVITIES, AFTER-READING ACTIVITIES, EXTENDING LEARNING

ENGLISH: GRADE 3–5 CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

Reading

1. Read and demonstrate an understanding of a variety of literary, graphic, and informational texts, using a range of strategies to construct meaning.
2. Recognize a variety of text forms, text features, and stylistic elements and demonstrate understanding of how they help communicate meaning.
3. Use knowledge of words and cueing systems to read fluently.
4. Reflect on and identify their strengths as readers, areas for improvement, and the strategies they found most helpful before, during, and after reading.

Applies to: Learn About Leatherbacks; Fast Facts About Costa Rica; Features of the Novel; Elements of Plot; Reading Comprehension Strategies; Elements of Plot: Describing Setting; Sequencing Events; Understanding Characters; Card Game: Triple Play Plot; Casual Cruelty; Ready, Set, Goal!; Facing Fears; A Different Lens; Endangered Species Gallery; Visit a Wildlife Reserve; Exploring Careers

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS FOR PRE-READING ACTIVITIES, AFTER-READING ACTIVITIES, EXTENDING LEARNING

ENGLISH: GRADE 3–5 CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

Media Studies

1. Demonstrate an understanding of a variety of media texts.
2. Identify some media forms and explain how the conventions and techniques associated with them are used to create meaning.
3. Create a variety of media texts for different purposes and audiences, using appropriate forms, conventions, and techniques.
4. Reflect on and identify their strengths, areas for improvement, and the strategies they found most helpful in understanding and creating media texts.

Writing

1. Generate, gather, and organize ideas and information to write for an intended purpose and audience.
2. Draft and revise their writing, using a variety of informational, literary, and graphic forms and stylistic elements appropriate for the purpose and audience.
3. Use editing, proofreading, and publishing skills and strategies and knowledge of language conventions to correct errors, refine expression, and present their work effectively.
4. Reflect on and identify their strengths as writers, areas for improvement, and the strategies they found most helpful at different stages in the writing process.

Applies to: Emotions, Colours, and Art; A Different Lens; Writing a Letter to the Editor; Endangered Species Gallery; Exploring Careers

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS FOR PRE-READING ACTIVITIES, AFTER-READING ACTIVITIES

ENGLISH: GRADE 3–5 CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

Oral Communication

1. Listen in order to understand and respond appropriately in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes.
2. Use speaking skills and strategies appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.
3. Reflect on and identify their strengths as listeners and speakers, areas for improvement, and the strategies they found most helpful in oral communication situations.

Applies to: Managing Emotions; Emotions, Facial Features, and Body Language; Role-Playing an Emotion; “Don’t Worry, Be Happy!”; Emoji Chart; Features of the Novel; First Novel Study; Using Features of the Novel to Make Inferences; Practising Reading Strategies; Card Game: Triple Play Plot; A Different Lens; Visit a Wildlife Reserve; Exploring Careers