

<b>Topic:</b> <b>Personal Connection Writing</b>	<b>Duration: ~ 1 day</b>
	<b>Grade: 4</b>
<b>Subject Area:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English language arts</li> <li>• Social Sciences (Environment)</li> </ul>
<b>Learning Intentions or Objectives (SWBAT)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will be able to define “personal connection”</li> <li>• Students will be able to reflect and relate his/her personal experiences to a text</li> <li>• Students will be able to connect a text to a different story/text</li> <li>• Students will be able to connect a world issue with a text</li> <li>• Students will be able to write a personal connection piece</li> <li>• Students will learn to effectively work in groups</li> <li>• Students will understand the difference between text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world reading strategies</li> </ul>
<b>Subject Competency:</b>	<p><b>Competency 1:</b> To read and listen to literary, popular, and information- based texts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To construct meaning by applying appropriate reading strategies</li> <li>• To construct his/her own view of the world through reading and listening to literary, popular, and information-based texts</li> </ul> <p><b>Competency 2:</b> To write self-expressive, narrative, and information-based texts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To follow a process when writing</li> <li>• To use writing as a system for communicating and constructing meaning</li> <li>• To integrate his/her own knowledge of texts into own writing</li> </ul> <p><b>Competency 4:</b> To use language to communicate and learn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To use language to communicate information, experiences, and point of view</li> <li>• To use language for learning and thinking</li> <li>• To interact in collaborative group activities in a variety of roles</li> </ul>
<b>Essential Knowledges:</b>	<p><b>Reading Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>The four cuing systems:</u> -Prior knowledge and personal experience of the content of a text</li> <li>• <u>Self-correcting strategies:</u> - Rereading and making connections</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Response Process and Reading</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of personal, social, and cultural background and experiences to interpret texts</li> <li>• Discussion of responses with others individually, in small groups and in the whole class</li> <li>• Sharing of responses with others to clarify meaning and enrich interpretation</li> </ul> <p><b>View of the World Through Reading</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Comparison of texts that are familiar by recognizing:</u> -The same theme or idea developed in different ways in two literary or popular texts</li> </ul> <p><b>Writing Process</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Writing for a specific purpose and in different contexts:</u> -Expressing ideas and feelings -Recording experiences -Clarifying thoughts -Developing and exploring new ideas and information</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cross Curricular Competencies:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To use information</li> <li>• To exercise critical judgment</li> <li>• To work with others</li> </ul>

<p><b>Classroom Management</b></p>	<p><b>Classroom management will be carried out by:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Positive reinforcement</li> <li>2. Reinforcement of classroom rules</li> <li>3. Point system (lose points= consequence)</li> <li>4. Clapping hands to gain students attention</li> <li>5. Using “3-2-1” strategy</li> <li>6. Closing the lights</li> </ol>
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<p><b>Differentiated Learning</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pair students with a stronger student to help with organization and paying attention</li> <li>2. Provide more time for students with IEPs and learning difficulties</li> <li>3. Accommodate needs. - For students who require more help, I will make sure to re-explain instructions and/or steps of an activity.</li> <li>4. Use a variety of teaching methods to cater to different learning styles (for example: visuals, group work, individual work, and considering students’ interests.)</li> <li>5. Prepare more work for those students who finish quicker than others</li> <li>6. Be flexible!</li> </ol>
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<p><b>Teaching Skill Professional Competency (P.C)</b></p>	<p><b>P.C. #2: Language:</b> To avoid using slang terms such as “gonna”. My teaching will support this P.C. since I will be explaining and communicating with the students.</p> <p><b>P.C. #6: Time Management:</b> To make sure to monitor and effectively time classroom activities/exercises. There are a lot of steps and activities that go with this unit, so this unit will help me with this P.C (to plan, supervise, and monitor) because it will make me realize what went well and what did not and what I have to re-adjust in order for this unit to run smoothly.</p>
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# Lesson

## Personal Connection Writing

### Lesson Rational

Students will be receiving an English exam in the month of April/May. They will be required to read stories and to respond to them. More specifically, they will have to relate to the text on a personal level. This lesson is to help prepare students for this exam as well as to help them to connect to the material they are reading using different reading strategies (text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world).

### Materials

- Powerpoint presentation file, "Let's put our thinking caps on!"
- Powerpoint presentation file, "Reading strategies"
- Powerpoint presentation file, "Guidelines"
- "Canada's Eco-Report Card" from the Canadian Reader: Current Canadian Trends and Issues
- "The Lorax" by Dr. Seuss
- Canada's Eco-Report Card questionnaire sheet
- Journals
- Student checklist

### Pre-Activity (~ 35 minutes)

**\*This pre-activity has already taken place in class.**

- For this pre-activity, students will be asked to reflect on 2 photographs that will be presented/displayed on the SmartBoard. It is anticipated that each photograph will entice a certain feeling/emotion in the students. The main aim here is to have students connect to the photographs using their emotions and relating that specific emotion to a past experience.
- Display the powerpoint presentation on the SmartBoard.
- **Explain to the students**, "Boys and girls, today we will be exploring some photographs and discussing how these photographs make you feel in 1 word."
- The first photograph is of an infant who is smiling. **Ask the students**, "What kind of feelings do you get when you look at this photo?"
- **Explain to the students**, "I do not want you to tell me what you think the baby is feeling, I want to know how this picture makes you feel!"

**Note:** Make sure to write down students feelings on the smartboard

- **Responses will vary**, but here are some possible suggestions

- Happy, Satisfied, Relaxed, Calm, Peaceful, Content, etc...

- The second photograph is of a young child holding his head and looking straight ahead with a serious facial expression. **Ask students**, “What about this one? How does this photograph make you feel or think about?”
- **Responses will vary**, but here are some possible suggestions  
- Sad, Depressed, Lonely, Unhappy, Stressed, Overwhelmed, etc...
- Now that students have had the chance to explore how the photographs have made them feel, have each student take their journal out to do a “**Quick Write**”
- **Ask students**, “Take a few minutes to think about a time where you felt like any of the two children in the photographs. How can you **relate** to this picture?”
- **Explain to students**, “There is no right or wrong answer here. All that I ask of you is to be specific in explaining how you felt. Do not just tell me you felt mad that your sister ripped all of your homework. You have to really go into details explaining that past experience.
- **Tell students**, “Do not stop writing until I tell you to! You may begin.”
- Once students have completed this task, ask some students to volunteer and share his/her experiences.
- **Explain to students**, “You just made a **personal connection!** This means, you were able to look at a picture that is **not related** to your life and find a way to **connect** to it through your **past experiences**. To be able to understand the idea of making personal connections and relating to something, think of it as having two different puzzle pieces and connecting them together!”
- **Make sure to highlight to students**, “There are other ways to connect to something that is unrelated to you. Making a connection through a picture is one way to help you to relate to something on a personal level.
- **Ask students**, “Can anyone give me examples of other ways we can relate/connect to something?”
- Responses will vary, but some may include the following: **movies, music, and books**
- **Explain to students**, “When it comes to reading, we can find ways to connect to the characters and events that happen in a book. Can anyone tell me of a time where they related to something in a book?”

**Hint:** Think about the book we read in class already “Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing” and think of the book “Frindle” that we are currently reading. How can you relate to Peter, Fudge, Mrs. Granger, or Nick and how can you relate these characters to each other

- This pre-activity will help students have a basic understanding of how to make a personal connection. This will help students to explore this topic more in detail in the next class.

## Introduction (~ 5 minutes)

- **Start the lesson by asking the students**, “Last Thursday/class, we discussed the idea of making personal connections. But, what does that really mean? Can anyone give the class a brief recap of what we discussed last class?”
- **Student’s responses will vary**, but responses could be the following:
  - Examined photographs
  - Discussed how the photos made us feel
  - Did a quick write connecting a sentiment derived from the photo to a personal experience
  - Discussed how a connection does not have to literally connect to something (example: elephant crushing a peanut can remind you of a time you stepped on a tomato and how gross that was!)
- **Ask students**, “So what did we learn from this mini exercise?” (responses will vary)
  - We can make personal connections to things around us, either from a photo, book, or even a movie (etc...)
  - We can think of making a personal connection as piecing together two different puzzles
  - We can connect books to other books ( “Frindle” VS. “Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing”)

## Body (~ 1 hour)

### Step #1

- **Explain to students**, “In order to be able to effectively understand the idea of making personal connections, we will be exploring a text called, “Canada’s Eco-Report Card” and later I will be reading the story, “The Lorax” by Dr.Seuss. Using the information in both these texts and your personal experiences, you will be able to form personal connections.
- **Ask the students**, “Before we start reading the text together, can anyone explain the importance of a report card? Why do we receive report cards?”
  - Report cards let us know how well we are doing in school
  - Report cards inform us on subject areas we need to improve on
  - Report cards let our parents know on our progress
- **Ask students**, “Does anyone know what the abbreviation “eco” stands for in “ Canada’s Eco-Report Card”? Wait a few minutes, if students are still unsure, **ask**, “Do you know what ecology stands for?”
  - Ecology**: is the study of the relationship between humans and their environments. It lets people know how well people are treating their environment
- **Ask students**, “Reflecting back on the title of the article, “Canada’s Eco-Report Card, what can you predict this text will be about?”
  - The text might be about the grades Canada gets on how well or poorly Canadians treat their environment

- **Explain to students**, “This text will be introducing us to some new vocabulary and ideas I would like us to go over some terms, so we all can understand the text even better.”
- **Ask students (\*answers will vary),**
  1. What does it mean to recycle? To take an object and re-use it for something else
  2. What is air pollution? Dust particles, fumes, and other gases that are introduced in our atmosphere and make it harmful for humans and animals
  3. What is global warming? The increase temperature of the Earth’s atmosphere
  4. What are greenhouse gases? Greenhouse gases are a main reason for global warming. These are gases that are being over produced on Earth that are causing the earth to warm-up. Have you ever heard of the term, “greenhouse effect”? Think of being in a car with all the windows closed on a hot summer day. All the sunrays pass through your windows and heat stays trapped in your car, making it hotter and hotter. This is what is happening to the Earth.
- **Read the text with the students.** Have students volunteer if they want to read and as students are reading, have them highlight important passages
- **Explain to students**, “If you would like to have more information, I have some websites you can visit on your free time”
  - <http://eschooltoday.com/pollution/air-pollution/what-is-air-pollution.html>
  - <http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/articles/geography/globalwarming1.htm>
  - [http://www.ecokids.ca/pub/take\\_action/campaigns/en/act\\_for\\_the\\_planet/index.cfm](http://www.ecokids.ca/pub/take_action/campaigns/en/act_for_the_planet/index.cfm)
- Explain “Canada’s Eco-Report Card” worksheet to students (front and back)
- **In pairs**, students will be filling out a sheet that answers the following question: “How well does Canada take care of its environment?”. Using the text and with the help of their partner, students will be able to give a letter grade to an environmental aspect (i.e. keeping our water clear) and give a reason for its ranking using the text.
- Once students have finished this exercise, they will have to individually answer 5 questions on the back of the sheet
  - 1) I learned that (...)
  - 2) What surprised me the most was (...) because (...)
  - 3) It’s important to learn about how well Canada is taking care of the environment because (...)
  - 4) People who need to know this are (...) because (...)
  - 5) Reading this made me wonder about (...)
- If there is time, go over the worksheet with the class. If not, assign for homework and review the following day.

## Step #2: Story and Writing (~1 hour)

- Now that students will have a good understanding of the text, “Canada’s Eco-Report Card” and the importance of protecting and preserving our environment, read, “The Lorax” by Dr. Seuss.
- Once the story is over, ask the students the following questions (\*answers will vary):

### **1. What is the overall message of the story**

- The over-abuse of nature can have serious environmental repercussions

### **2. What did you learn from this story**

- We need to protect and take care of our environment, if we want to live in a healthy and clean environment

### **3. How can this story relate to the text we just read in class?**

- “Canada’s Eco-Report Card” talks about how well or poorly Canada is taking care of its environment compared to other countries. On average, Canada would get a C for its eco-report card. There are some areas where Canada is doing well (i.e. clean water and protecting wild life), but there are still some areas that need to be improved.

- “The Lorax” discusses how the over-abuse and over-use of our natural resources can lead to serious environmental damages.

- If you relate both texts together, they both discuss the importance of preserving our environment and taking care of it so that we do not have further problems in the near future, like global warming, pollution, or unsanitary water (etc...)

- After this brief discussion, have students take their journals out
- **Explain to students**, “ You will be writing a personal connection piece. To be able to help you write this piece, I have provided a few guidelines and questions to guide you through your writing process.
- **Explain guidelines to students (Powerpoint file, “Guidelines)**
  1. In all, you will have two paragraphs
  2. The first paragraph, you will be answering the following question(s)
    - What are three new things that you learned about our environment (positive and/or negative effects) and how does that make you feel? Be specific and make sure to clearly explain yourself using examples from the article “Canada’s Eco-Report Card”.

3. The second paragraph, you will be answering the following question(s)

-Based on your new learning discoveries, what kind of connections can you make to “Canada’s Eco-Report Card” article? For this paragraph, you must relate at least two examples from “The Lorax” to the article and use at least 1 personal connection/experience to express your ideas.

- Pass out student checklist and go over instructions and expectations

## Conclusion (~10 minutes)

- When it comes to understanding texts and writing personal connections, I would like you to think of the following reading strategies (Powerpoint file, “Reading strategies”)
  1. **Text-to-Text:** A connection between the text and another story or text that you have previously read
  2. **Text-to-Self:** A connection between the text and something in your own life
  3. **Text-to-World:** A connection between the text and something is occurring or has occurred in the world
- Ask students, “When writing your personal connection piece, how did you use these three reading strategies? Explain.”

### Evaluation

- Students participation will be taken into account
- Observations and notes
- Based on students “checklist”, I will have a rubric to grade their personal connection writing piece

### Reflective Notes (on lesson)