**Common Core Reader Exemplar Grade K-2: “The Wind”**

**by James Reeves**

**Learning Objective:** The goal of this exemplar is to teach young students to read closely and critically in order to comprehend complex literary text. In this lesson sequence, the teacher uses a variety of strategies to actively engage students in searching for meaning in the figurative language and rich vocabulary of a poem. Students learn to test inferences against specific details of the text, to take three dimensional “notes” and to use those notes to more deeply understand the meaning of the poem. Discussion and a short writing exercise help students to synthesize what they have learned.

**Rationale:** From their very first school experiences, students can begin to develop habits of approaching literature that will form the foundation of close and critical reading. In this lesson, the teacher leads students through the process of asking questions, making inferences about meaning and testing those inferences against the language of the text. Developmentally appropriate teaching strategies such reading the text aloud, framing the reading task as a riddle and using simple objects to take three dimensional “notes” make this type of close reading and analysis accessible to young children.

**Reading Task:** This short poem is first read aloud, without the title, as a riddle. Students are invited to delve into the figurative language of the poem in order to “guess” (infer) what the poem is about. The poem is read multiple times and vocabulary is introduced in context. Key details in the poem are represented with concrete objects which the students manipulate as they explore the relationship between these details and the theme of the poem.

**Discussion/Language Tasks:** The text is presented and explored orally. Group discussion about the meaning of the poem forms the foundation of the lesson.

**Writing Task:** As a culminating activity, students synthesize their understanding in a brief writing piece which combines words and pictures. The balance of words and pictures in the response can be adjusted reflect the developmental needs of the students, making the lesson easy to adjust for a variety of grade levels.

Common Core Standards Addressed in This Instructional Sequence:

RLK.1, RL1.1, RL K.4, RL1.4, RL2.4, RLK.10, RL1.10, RL2.10, SLK.1, SL1.1, SL2.1, SLK.2, SL1.2, SL2.2

*Diana Leddy*

*Lesson Sequence Overview*

#### Day 1: Meeting the text

Advance preparation: Copy the poem onto chart paper for repeated reference throughout this lesson sequence.

1. Read the poem aloud as a riddle, omitting the title. Invite the students to guess what the subject of the poem might be.
2. Guide the students through a second “slow” reading, evaluating the list of student guesses against specific lines in the text.
3. Have the class orally summarize the poem by paraphrasing key details.

**Day 2: Analysis and Three Dimensional Notes**

Advance preparation: Gather objects or pictures to represent each of the things the wind can do. Label one sheet of yellow paper “rave and riot”. Label one sheet of blue paper “quiet as quiet”.

1. Students use objects to represent each key detail in the text.
2. Students group the objects to explore the relationship between key details in the text.

**Day 3: Writing to synthesize understanding**

Advance preparation: Place 3 dimensional notes (created on Day 2) in an easily visible spot. Copy student writing templates onto blue and yellow paper.

* 1. Students reflect on their notes and orally rehearse for writing.
  2. Students use evidence from the text to prove the wind is sometimes strong.
  3. Students use evidence from the text to prove the wind can be gentle.

The Wind

by James Reeves

I can get through a doorway without any key, And strip the leaves from the great oak tree.

I can drive storm-clouds and shake tall towers, Or steal through a garden and not wake the flowers.

Seas I can move and ships I can sink;

I can carry a house-top or the scent of a pink.

When I am angry I can rave and riot; And when I am spent, I lie quiet as quiet.

*strip:*

*to take off*

*drive :move*

*steal: sneak scent:*

*smell*

*pink: flower*

*rave: to be noisily angry*

*riot: to be wild and out of control*

*spent: finished*

**The Wind (A K-2 Exemplar)** *by James Reeves*

##### Day 1: Meeting the text

1. Read the poem aloud as a riddle, omitting the title. Invite the students to guess what the subject of the poem might be.
2. Guide the students through a second “slow” reading, evaluating the list of student guesses against specific lines in the text.

**4.** Have the class orally summarize the poem by paraphrasing key details.

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| **Time** | **Text Under Discussion and Sample Teacher Dialogue** | **Directions for Teachers / Guiding Questions for Students** |
| 5  min. | *(title covered)*  I can get through a doorway without any key, And strip the leaves from the great oak tree.  I can drive storm-clouds and shake tall towers, Or steal through a garden and not wake the flowers.  Seas I can move and ships I can sink;  I can carry a house-top or the scent of a pink.  When I am angry I can rave and riot; And when I am spent, I lie quiet as quiet. | **1. Read the poem aloud as a riddle, omitting the title. Invite the students to guess what the subject of the poem might be.** Copy the full poem onto a piece of chart paper, obviously and “mysteriously” covering the title. Explain to the class that you have a new poem for them to enjoy and, after listening, you would like them to guess the title, which tells the reader what the poem is about.  Read the poem straight through, with expression, using the tone and volume of your voice to help the students understand each line and to provide some context for inferring unknown words (for example, use a soft voice where the wind is being gentle, slightly increase your volume where the wind is being strong).  When you have finished reading, ask, “What do you think the title might be? What is this poem is about? ” Typical responses may lean toward the magical (a giant, a fairy, superman) or focus only on parts of the text (a mouse, a bomb). Record all student responses on the board without comment or judgment. |

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| 20  min. | **I can get through a doorway without any key**, | | **2. Guide the students through a second “slow” reading of the**  **poem, evaluating student inferences against the text.**  Read the poem again, slowly, stopping after each line to discuss its meaning and to consider the list of guesses (see sample dialogue). Are there any guesses on the list that should be eliminated? Why? (erase these) Are there some that now seem more likely than others? (put a star next to these) Are there any new possibilities we should add? Introduce vocabulary words as needed during this discussion, drawing meaning from context wherever possible.  As you narrow the list of reasonable inferences, explain that good readers do exactly what the class is doing right now. When faced with hard or tricky text, good readers use the text to make a best “guess”, or *inference*, about meaning. They reread the text carefully, looking for words that show what they are thinking could be true. Good readers also notice when their inferences don’t make sense. They are not afraid to change their ideas.  As you evaluate the list together, make it a point to compliment students who change their responses to align more closely with what they have read. Add new ideas to the list if a student is able to explain how the text supports the new inference (Ask, “What, in the poem, makes you think so?”).  When you have finished evaluating the list, ask, “Now that you have looked at the poem more carefully, what do you think this poem is about?” Call on a few students to make a final “guess” about the title, asking them to explain their choices by pointing out what, in the poem, supports their thinking. |
| How could you get through a doorway without a key? (break it down, open it, go under it, go through it) Let’s look at our guesses for the title. Could a mouse do that? A giant? |  |
| **And strip the leaves from the great oak tree.** | |
| What does it mean to *strip* leaves from a tree? Show me with your hands how you might strip leaves from a branch. What could strip the leaves from a big tree? It would have to be something pretty strong and powerful. Let’s look at our list. A mouse? Probably not (erase mouse). How about a giant? (etc.) |  |
| **I can drive storm-clouds and shake tall towers,** | |
| I’m wondering what it means to “drive” storm clouds. When you drive a car, you make it move. What makes clouds move? Are there any new possibilities to add to our list? What, in the text, makes you think so? Let’s look at the second part of that line. Is there anything on our list strong enough to shake tall towers? |  |
| **Or steal through a garden and *not wake* the flowers.** What does the word “steal” mean? Sometimes a word can mean several different things. To “steal through a garden” means to sneak  quietly through a garden, like a thief. The second part of this line is  tricky…“And *not wake* the flowers”…Do flowers really sleep? What do you think the author means by “steal through a garden and not wake the flowers”? What on our list could be quiet and gentle like that? Is there anything we need to erase? Add? | |

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| 5  min. | **Seas I can move and ships I can sink;** | | **3. Uncover the title, and then guide the class in an oral summary of the poem.**  Explain that, while there is more than one possible title that  could make sense for this poem, it is now time to find out what the author intended to write about. Dramatically uncover the title of the poem.  If “The Wind” has not already been proposed as a possible title,  take a few minutes to evaluate each line against this new information. Wrap up the lesson by exploring the question, “According to the author of this poem, what are some things the wind can do?” Encourage students to summarize their basic understanding by paraphrasing the key details in the poem. | |
| Sometimes the authors of poems put sentences together differently than we usually do. What would be the usual way of saying “seas I can move”? How about “ships I can sink”? (I can move seas. I can sink ships.) Why do you think James Reeves chose to change the order of the words? What could move seas and sink ships? Is there anything we should remove from our list? Why? |  |
| **I can carry a *house-top* or the scent of a pink.** | |
| What is another name for *house-top*? What is strong enough to carry the roof of a house? A “scent” is a smell and a “pink” is a kind of flower. Imagine that you are in a garden in the summertime. What carries the smell of a flower? Is there anything like that on our list? |  |
| **When I am angry I can rave and riot;** | |
| Does anyone know what it means to “rave and riot”? Imagine that you are angry. Without touching anyone, show with your body and face how you are feeling. To “rave and riot” means to be noisy and out of control. Do any of you “rave and riot” when you are angry? | |
| **And when I am spent, I lie quiet as quiet** | |
| Spent is another word with several meanings. How have you used the word “spent” before? When your money is spent, you have *used it up*. In this sentence, “when I am spent” means when I have *used up* all my energy. Show me what you might look like when you are “spent”. This is our final clue. **This poem is about something that sometimes lies *“quiet as quiet”* but also can *“rave and riot”*.** Let’s look at what we have left on our list. Can that last clue help us to narrow down the possibilities? | | |  |

##### Day 2: Three Dimensional Notes

1. **Students use objects to represent each key detail in the text.**
2. **Students group the objects to explore the relationship between key details in the text.**

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| **Time** | **Text Under Discussion and Sample Teacher Dialogue** | **Directions for Teachers / Guiding Questions for**  **Students** |
| **5 -10**  **minutes** | Note: You will need one object for each student: doorway, ships, tree, towers, storm clouds, flowers, pink flower, roof, sea, garden.  *Tip: Plastic building sets like Playmobile® can be a good source of plastic doorways, towers, rooftops and trees. Artificial flowers (sprayed with perfume) and cotton balls in quantity make it easy to ensure that every student has an object to work with.* | **1. The students use an object to represent each key detail in** |
| **the text.** |
| Reread the poem aloud, encouraging the students to join you.  (At this point, many of the lines will be memorized!) Explain that today you will be doing more work to understand the poem and that you have gathered some objects to help you. Show the students the objects (or pictures) that you have assembled, in no particular order. Ask them to help you locate the line or phrase in the poem that each item represents. Read each line as it is identified and have the class repeat it aloud.  Give each student one of the props (be sure everyone has an object or picture). Instruct the students to listen carefully while you read the poem again and to hold up the appropriate |
|  | object as they hear it mentioned in the poem. Read the poem |
|  | aloud slowly, with expression, cueing students as needed to |
|  | hold up the correct object at the right time. This activity can |
|  | also function as a brief formative assessment of literal |
|  | comprehension. Be sure students understand that each object |
|  | represents a line or phrase in the poem and to correct any |
|  | misunderstandings before proceeding. |
| **20** |  |
| **minutes** | **2. Students group the objects to explore the relationship**  **between key details in the text.** |
| Explain that, whenever you read a poem (or any piece of |
| writing), it is important to think about how the lines work |
| together to make meaning. Since each of these objects helps |
| us remember something that the poem says, we can use them |
| to explore how the parts of the poem fit together. The next |
| activity will help us to do this. |

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|  | Prepare to sort:  **When I am angry I can rave and riot** | | With the students, prepare two sheets of colored paper, one  labeled “rave and riot” and another labeled “quiet as quiet” (see sample dialogue). These will serve as collection mats for sorting. Lead the class in sorting their objects into these two categories. Ask students to bring their objects to the front of the room. Have the class recall the part of the poem the item represents; discuss whether the example shows that the wind can “rave and riot” or whether the wind can lie “quiet as quiet”. Then, place it on the correct mat. When all items have been sorted, guide the students in using the concrete details of the poem to understand the author’s personification of the wind (see sample dialogue).  Save these 3 dimensional “notes” for the next day’s writing. |
| At the end of the poem, the author says that sometimes the wind can “rave and riot”. Who has an object that shows how the wind can “rave and riot”? What does it mean to “rave and riot”? Let’s write those words on this yellow paper. |  |
| **And when I am spent I lie quiet as quiet.** | |
| The author also tells us that sometimes the wind lies “quiet as quiet”. Who has an object that shows how the wind can lie “quiet as quiet”? Let’s write “quiet as quiet” on a piece of blue paper. | |
| After sorting:  **rave and riot** | |
| Now, let’s look at the notes we have collected. According to the author, what are some of the things the wind does when it is “angry”? (strip leaves off a tree, shake towers, sink ships, etc.). Can wind really be angry? What did the author notice about the wind that would make it seem like it is sometimes angry? (the wind can be strong, violent, etc.) | |
| **quiet as quiet** | |
| Take a look at the yellow mat. What are some things that the wind does when it is “spent”? (blow softly through a garden, slip through a keyhole, carry the smell of flowers…) Does the wind really get tired? What did the author notice about the wind that would make it seem like it is sometimes tired? (The wind can be very gentle at times). | |
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**Day 3: Writing to synthesize understanding**

**4. Students reflect on their notes and orally rehearse for writing.**

1. **Students use evidence from the text to prove the wind is sometimes strong.**
2. **Students use evidence from the text to prove the wind can be gentle.**

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| **Time** | **Text Under Discussion** | **Directions for Teachers / Guiding Questions for Students** |
| 10 |  | **1. Students reflect on their notes and orally rehearse for writing.** |
| Reread the poem together. Take out the 3 dimensional student notes and |
| minutes | review them. Explain that the class has done some deep thinking about this  poem, and today they are going to use words and pictures to record that |
|  | thinking and explain it to others. |
|  | Take out the yellow writing template and read it through together. Explain that |
|  | in the blank space, students should use the details from the text to support the |
|  | idea that ‘Sometimes the wind is strong”. Ask for some examples of sentences |
|  | students could write and corresponding pictures they could draw to prove that |
|  | the author thinks the wind can be strong. Some children will want to stray |
|  | from the text and give familiar examples of the wind’s strength. Gently, but |
|  | firmly, pull these students back into the “notes” they have assembled, pointing |
|  | out that right now we are writing to show what we understand about the |
|  | poem, not what we understand about the wind in general. This distinction may |
|  | not yet be completely clear to students, but if it is pointed out repeatedly as |
|  | students work with different texts, the idea of supporting ideas with evidence |
|  | *from the text* will eventually be understood as a key concept in textual analysis. |
| 10 | **2. Students use evidence from the text to prove the wind is sometimes strong.** |
| minutes | Hand out 2 yellow template sheets to each student. Ask them why they think |
| you have copied the template on yellow paper (to match the color of the mat |
| you used to take “notes”) Direct them to add evidence from the text to show |
| that the wind is strong. Make sure that all students have visual access to their |
| sorted “notes” (you may need to allow students to leave their seats to check |
| them) while they write. In the primary grades, student illustrations often serve |
| as elaboration to the evidence they are choosing. Encourage the students to |
| add detail to their pictures that will help the reader to better understand the |
| evidence they have written about (i.e. lines to show the wind blowing, dark or |

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| 10  minutes |  | light strokes of color, etc.). Ask each student to write and illustrate at least 2  pieces of evidence. You can differentiate this part of the lesson by having a stack of yellow templates available and encouraging students who are able to provide additional evidence *from the text* to support the point that the wind can be strong.  **3. Students use evidence from the text to prove the wind can be gentle.** Repeat the same process using the blue writing templates (be sure to point out the connection to the blue note sheet), asking students to prove that the wind can be gentle. Writing templates can easily be adjusted to different grade levels by varying the amount of text and picture on each page and the number of supporting details required. Kindergarteners can be asked to explain a single piece of evidence for each point using pictures and a few words. Second graders can use lined paper instead of a template, beginning with a topic sentence and proving each point with several pieces of written evidence.  An Optional Activity: Students may complete and illustrate a final template page. “I like the wind when it is \_”.  To close, have students break into pairs or small groups to share what they have written. Keep the chart paper copy. Be sure to bring the poem back frequently as a shared or choral reading activity- particularly on a windy day! |

## **Appendix A: Selected Vocabulary List**

**The role of vocabulary in this lesson set:**

The chart below lists the vocabulary words the teachers who wrote this lesson identified as important to understanding the text for this lesson.

**It is important to note the high number of words recommended for instruction in these passages**, more than many of us have been used to teaching. This reflects the importance of vocabulary to comprehending the complex text called for by the CCSS. Students who are behind need to learn even more words. This can only happen if we can teach word meanings efficiently; devoting more time and attention to those words that merit it, and less to those that can be learned with less time and attention. There will not be time in the few days of this lesson set to explicitly and extensively teach all the words listed below. Many of the words, however, can be taught quickly, while others deserve explicit and lengthy examination. Teachers should make intentional choices based on professional judgment, the needs of students, and the guidance provided below.

**Inferring Meaning from Context**

The definitions of many words can be inferred in part or in whole from context, and practice with inferring word meanings is an integral part of instruction. At the same time some words in this passage have meanings, or are being used in ways, which cannot reasonably be inferred from context within the text alone. These words are printed in underline, here and in the text, and their definitions are provided in the margins of the text for student reference. In addition to these words we encourage you identify additional words which are valuable either for comprehension of this passage or more generally for vocabulary growth, but which students could determine the meaning of using the passage as context. Instead of directly providing definitions for these words draw students’ attention to these word and ask them to try to infer the meaning.

**Determining which words to spend more time on**

As mentioned above, some words must be taught extremely quickly, sometimes in mere seconds by providing a quick definition and moving on. Other words are both more difficult and more important to understanding this text or future texts and hence deserve time, study, discussion and/or practice. In using this lesson exemplar, teachers will need to determine for themselves which words from the list above deserve more time and which deserve less. Use the guidelines below to help you determine which words to spend more time on. In addition the additional vocabulary resources listed in Appendix B below can help you learn more about selecting and teaching vocabulary.

**Quicker and easier to learn** — words that are concrete, have only one meaning, or are limited to a specific topic area, such as fires or the ocean etc. These words should be addressed swiftly, when they are encountered and only as needed.

**Take more time and attention to master** — words that are abstract, represent concepts unlikely to be familiar to many students, have multiple meanings, are a part of a word family, and/or are likely to appear again in future texts. These words require more instructional time.

**Selected Vocabulary List**

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| **Vocabulary Word** | **Definition** |
| strip | to take off |
| drive | move |
| steal | sneak |
| scent | smell |
| pink | flower |
| rave | to be noisily angry |
| riot | to be wild and out of control |
| spent | finished |

**Appendix B: Additional Vocabulary Resources**

**Hungry for more vocabulary? Check out the Academic Word Finder.**

The words in the list above were selected by an expert teacher as valuable to teach **in the context of this lesson**. But these are just some of the *many* words you could draw from this passage to help your students build their vocabulary. If you are interested in a tool which can quickly help you identify more of the high-value, Tier 2 academic vocabulary words that appear in this passage, visit the free **Academic Word Finder** at <http://achievethecore.org/academic-word-finder/> (registration required).

***Please note: Some of the words you will find with this tool will not overlap with those listed above.***This is a good thing, because it points out even more words that can help your students! The list above focuses on words crucial to understanding the key points of the passage and includes both Tier 2 and Tier 3 words, whereas the Academic Word Finder focuses on high-frequency Tier 2 words which will be valuable to your students across a variety of texts, (but which may not be particularly central to the meaning of this passage). These words often have multiple meanings or are part of a word family of related words. In addition the **Academic Word Finder** provides multiple related words and the variety of shades of a word’s meaning all in one location, so teachers can see the depth and diversity of word meanings they can teach around a word. Teachers then decide how and when to expose students to different word senses to promote their vocabulary growth.

Both sources of words are valuable, but for different purposes. Ultimately you will have to rely on your professional judgment to determine which words you choose to focus on with your students.

**Eager to learn more about how to select and teach vocabulary? Check out *Vocabulary and The Common Core* by David Liben.**

This paper includes a summary of vocabulary research and practical exercises to help you learn to select and teach vocabulary. Written by classroom veteran and literacy researcher David Liben, the exercises will help you hone your professional judgment and build your skill in the vocabulary teaching crucial to success with the Common Core State Standards.

Download the paper and exercises here:

<http://achievethecore.org/page/974/vocabulary-and-the-common-core-detail-pg>

### Name:

Close Reading of “The Wind” by James Reeves (copy on yellow paper)

## “The Wind”, by James Reeves, is a poem that tells us what the wind can do.

Sometimes the wind is **strong**.

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### Name:

Sometimes the wind is gentle.

Close Reading of “The Wind” by James Reeves (copy on blue paper)

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### Name:

I like the wind when it is

Close Reading of “The Wind” by James Reeves (copy on white paper)

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