



Number the Stars: A Lesson about Setting

Resource ID#: 63234 Primary Type: Lesson Plan

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This close reading lesson will take students on a journey through a brief historical fiction account of the Holocaust, *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry. In the targeted passage the students will determine if and how the setting changes. The students will have opportunities to respond to and discuss several thought-provoking, open-ended questions about the setting. The students will also be given the opportunity to reflect and discuss ideas about the events of the historical account.

Subject(s): English Language Arts	Grade Level(s): 4
Intended Audience: Educators	Suggested Technology: Document Camera, Computer for Presenter, Microsoft Office
Instructional Time: 2 Hour(s)	Freely Available: Yes
Keywords: setting, characters, Holocaust, description, close reading, Number the Stars, Lois Lowry, historical fiction	Instructional Component Type(s): Lesson Plan , Worksheet , Assessment , Text Resource , Formative Assessment
Instructional Design Framework(s): Direct Instruction , Writing to Learn	
Resource Collection: Levy ELA Leaders	

ATTACHMENTS

- [Number the Stars Text Excerpt.docx](#)
- [Graphic Organizer for Setting_Number the Stars.docx](#)
- [Graphic Organizer for Setting ANSWER KEY_Number the Stars.docx](#)
- [Summative Rubric for Number the Stars.docx](#)

LESSON CONTENT

Lesson Plan Template: General Lesson Plan

Learning Objectives: What should students know and be able to do as a result of this lesson?

Students will be able to:

- Determine the setting(s) of a passage.
- Identify why the setting is important to the story.
- Use details from a passage to describe the setting of a story.
- Understand that multiple settings can be present within the same passage.
- Write an opinion based piece in response to a text-based prompt.
- Describe a character's thoughts and feelings within a particular setting.

Guiding Questions: What are the guiding questions for this lesson?

- Why is the setting important to the development of a story?
- How does the author create multiple settings within a passage?
- How does understanding the story elements in a story help the reader better understand the story?
- How does the setting influence the character's thoughts and feelings?

Prior Knowledge: What prior knowledge should students have for this lesson?

Students should:

- have an understanding of the elements that constitute setting.
- be able to use a text to provide evidence for text-based questions.
- be able to write an opinion piece using grade-appropriate organization, grammar, and punctuation.
- be able to identify and describe story elements.

Teaching Phase: How will the teacher present the concept or skill to students?

First Reading

Hook or Introduction: Begin the lesson with a review of the elements of setting. Create a chart that you can refer to during the lesson phase. Your chart should include elements such as time, date, place, season, and environment. The teacher can also provide background knowledge on the Holocaust. (There are several websites that will help you freshen up your background knowledge on the topic. Do a Google search with the key word of Holocaust.)

1. Display the [text excerpt](#) from *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry. Give each student a personal copy of the text. Provide background knowledge about the author and

display the book that the excerpt comes from. Tell the students that they are going to listen and follow along as the text is read aloud and their task is to identify what is happening.

2. Read the text. Ask these guiding questions to determine if the students have an overall understanding of this event in the text:

- Who are the characters?
- What are the characters doing?
- Overall, what is happening in this portion of the text?

Guided Practice: What activities or exercises will the students complete with teacher guidance?

Second Reading

1. Review the setting anchor chart. Ask and discuss:

- Why is the setting important to the development of a story?
- How does the author create multiple settings within a passage?

2. Review text marking procedures. Tell students that they are going to reread the excerpt and the task is to look for key details that describe the setting. Direct students to mark the text by circling (or highlighting) any statement, phrase, or word choice that indicates a possible setting change. Allow students to read the text with a partner while marking the passage.

3. Discuss and chart students' responses, having them explain their thinking when sharing the text they marked.

4. Display the attached [graphic organizer](#) and model how to complete one section based on one character. Then direct students to complete the graphic organizer. You may choose to allow students to work with a partner or independently. The students will be directed to use the information they marked in the text as the basis for their responses. (See [possible responses](#).)

5. As closure, ask, "Did the setting actually change or did the setting only change in the narrator's mind?" Discuss.

Third Reading

1. Ask and discuss:

- How does understanding the story elements in a story help the reader better understand the story?
- How does the setting influence the character's thoughts and feelings?

2. Explain to the students that they will reread the excerpt one more time to help them understand how the author is using story elements to help them better understand the event in the text. Have the students read the text independently, then follow up by asking several text-dependent questions, such as:

- Describe Annemarie's actions.
- Describe Annemarie's thoughts.
- Based on her thoughts and actions, how is Annemarie feeling in this moment? How do you know?
- How does the author use Annemarie's thoughts to help you better understand what is going on in the story?
- Where is Annemarie?
- Where are the other characters and how do you know where they are?
- How are Annemarie's thoughts and actions impacted by her setting and the setting of the other characters?

Independent Practice: What activities or exercises will students complete to reinforce the concepts and skills developed in the lesson?

1. Display or distribute the attached [rubric](#). Discuss and review it before assigning the summative assessment so the students understand the expectations.

2. The author speaks of several characters in this passage and creates a setting for each one. Using the completed graphic organizer from the second reading and considering the information in the graphic organizer, write an opinion piece in response to this question: Why did the author use multiple settings in this text excerpt? Cite evidence from the text to support your opinion.

Closure: How will the teacher assist students in organizing the knowledge gained in the lesson?

Allow students time to share their writings and review the guiding questions from the lesson and perhaps the other text dependent questions listed here:

- Why is the setting important to the development of a story?
- How does the author create multiple settings within a passage?
- How does understanding the story elements in a story help the reader better understand the story?
- How does the setting influence the character's thoughts and feelings?
- Which character is the narrator?
- Where is the narrator?
- What is the narrator doing during this part of the story?
- Who are the other characters mentioned in this passage?
- Where are the other characters?
- Is the narrator with the other characters?

ASSESSMENT

Formative Assessment:

Students will answer text-dependent questions and complete graphic organizers to demonstrate their understanding of the text and targeted skills. The teacher will be able to ascertain understanding based on students' responses and provide support as needed.

Feedback to Students:

First reading feedback: The teacher will conduct a classroom discussion and provide verbal feedback.

Second reading feedback: After the students determine and mark the text indicating sections where the setting changes for the reader, the teacher will place several student papers under the document camera and discuss the highlighting and student reasoning for choosing those particular sections of text.

Third reading feedback: Verbal feedback will be provided during the discussion of the text-dependent questions.

Summative Assessment:

Students will write an opinion piece in response to the following prompt:

Why did the author use multiple settings in this text excerpt? Cite evidence from the text to support your opinion.

Student writing will be evaluated using the attached rubric.

ACCOMMODATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Accommodations:

- Provide struggling readers with a taped reading of the excerpt for opportunities to hear the passage as needed while they work on the specified assignments.
- Provide struggling students with close teacher proximity and guidance when doing small group or independent work.
- Provide struggling writers with a planning sheet or writing frame for the opinion writing activity.
- Define words in the passage as needed for struggling students.
- Allow students to complete the graphic organizer with a partner.

Extensions:

- Students can research the period of the Holocaust.
- Students can create a written report of the Holocaust.
- Students can create a PowerPoint presentation of facts related to the Holocaust.
- Students can research and locate other historical fiction texts that focus on the Holocaust.

Suggested Technology: Document Camera, Computer for Presenter, Microsoft Office

Special Materials Needed:

- Number the Stars by Lois Lowry
- Copies of excerpt from Number the Stars
- Securing an appropriate video about the Holocaust for the beginning of the lesson
- Chart paper
- Sticky notes
- Graphic Organizer
- Summative Rubric

Further Recommendations:

It would be best if the entire book Number the Stars was read by the teacher before the presentation of this lesson. It would also be of value for the teacher to read over the lesson in its entirety before presenting it to students.

PUBLIC REMARKS

By Author/Submitter

Number the Stars by Lois Lowry is rated by Accelerated Reading at the 4.5 level. Lexile.com rates the book as a 670L. The targeted excerpt from the book has a Lexile level of 820L.

As a close reading activity, this lesson focuses on application of targeted skills, not as an introduction.

SOURCE AND ACCESS INFORMATION

Name of Author/Source: tammy crosby

Is this Resource freely Available? Yes

Access Privileges: Public

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Related Standards

Name	Description
LACC.4.RL.1.1:	Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LACC.4.RL.1.3:	Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).
LACC.4.W.1.1:	Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer's purpose. Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details. Link opinion and reasons using words and phrases (e.g., for instance, in order to, in addition). Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.

