



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
2010 Volume II: The Art of Reading People: Character, Expression, Interpretation

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## Character Investigations

Guide for Curriculum Unit 10.02.11  
by Melissa B. McCarty

My unit is geared towards second-graders who are learning comprehension strategies during the reading block. This unit could be altered for first grade as well as third, fourth and fifth. I will be using Arthur stories by Marc Brown to model and scaffold the lessons. The students will be able to infer/figure out how the character is feeling in regards to scenarios in the story. The students will use their prior knowledge and connect that with what is happening in the story to draw their conclusions.

My students have had difficulty in the past learning how to infer and how to get in touch with their thinking. I ultimately want them to be able to explain and communicate how they know the character is feeling a certain way. The students will be grouped based on their learning styles and either use different Arthur books, books on tape, or films. The groups will be separated by reading level according to the DRA2 reading assessment, as well as learning styles; i.e. visual learner, auditory, and/or tactile. When the groups are separated, they will be able to identify how the character is feeling as well as be able to explain how they know. Each group will have a writing slip to fill out and will draw pictures of Arthur exhibiting different feelings. Arthur stories are good for teaching this skill because kids at this age can identify, and identify with, the characters in the story. Arthur the character is a student in an elementary school who faces problems that most kids face in school and at home. He has friends and family who could be labeled as "stereotypical," which helps with the connections.

(Recommended for English Language Arts, grades 1-4)

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