

# 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.

*strip:*  
*to take off*

*drive :move*

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

*steal:*

*sneak*

*scent:*  
*smell*

*pink: flower*

Seas I can move and ships I can sink;  
I can carry a house-top or the scent of a pink.

*rave: to be*  
*noisily*  
*angry*

When I am angry I can rave and riot;

*riot: to be*  
*wild and out*  
*of control*

And when I am spent, I lie quiet as

*spent: finished*

quiet.

**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.

Time	Text Under Discussion and Sample Teacher Dialogue	Directions for Teachers / Guiding Questions for Students

5 min.	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>(title covered)</i></p> <p>I can get through a doorway without any key,  And <u>strip</u> the leaves from the great oak tree.  I can <u>drive</u> 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 <u>scent</u> of a <u>pink</u>.  When I am angry I can rave and riot;  And when I am spent, I lie quiet as quiet.</p>	<p><b>1. Read the poem aloud as a riddle, omitting the title. Invite the students to guess what the subject of the poem might be.</b> 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.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>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.</p>
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20 min.	<b>I can get through a doorway without any key,</b>		<p><b>2. Guide the students through a second “slow” reading of the poem, evaluating student inferences against the text.</b></p> <p>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.</p> <p>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 <i>inference</i>, 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 <u>don’t</u> make sense. They are not afraid to change their ideas.</p> <p>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?”).</p> <p>When you have finished evaluating the list, ask, “Now that you have looked at the poem more carefully, what do you think this</p>
		<p>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?</p>	

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?

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



**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?

5 min.	Seas I can move and ships I can sink;		<b>3. Uncover the title, and then guide the class in an oral summary of the poem.</b> 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	
	I can carry a <i>house-top</i> or the scent of a pink.		
		What is another name for <i>house-top</i> ? 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	

**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

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

Time	Text Under Discussion and Sample Teacher Dialogue	Directions for Teachers / Guiding Questions for Students
5 -10 minutes	<p>Note: You will need one object for each student: doorway, ships, tree, towers, storm clouds, flowers, pink flower, roof, sea, garden.</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>	<p><b>1. The students use an object to represent each key detail in the text.</b></p> <p>Reread the poem aloud, encouraging the students to join you. (At this point, many of the lines will be memorized!) Explain 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.</p>
20 minutes		<p><b>2. Students group the objects to explore the relationship between key details in the text.</b></p> <p>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</p>

to explore how the parts of the poem fit together. The next activity will help us to do this.



### Day 3: Writing to synthesize understanding

4. Students reflect on their notes and orally rehearse for writing.
5. Students use evidence from the text to prove the wind is sometimes strong.
6. Students use evidence from the text to prove the wind can be gentle.

Time	Text Under Discussion	Directions for Teachers / Guiding Questions for Students
10 minutes		<p><b>1. Students reflect on their notes and orally rehearse for writing.</b>  Reread the poem together. Take out the 3 dimensional student notes and review them. Explain that the class has done some deep thinking about this 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 <u>poem</u>, 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 <i>from the text</i> will eventually be understood as a key concept in textual analysis.</p>
minutes		<p><b>2. Students use evidence from the text to prove the wind is sometimes</b>  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</p>

<p>10 minutes</p>		<p>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 <i>from the text</i> to support the point that the wind can be strong.</p> <p><b>3. Students use evidence from the text to prove the wind can be gentle.</b> 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.</p> <p>An Optional Activity: Students may complete and illustrate a final template page. “I like the wind when it is_____”.</p> <p>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!</p>
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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:

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

Sometimes the wind is  
gentle.

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Name:

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

I like the wind when it is \_\_\_\_\_

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