

BACK TO SCHOOL WEBCAST AND WORKSHOP SERIES

INTRODUCTION

To assist members returning to schools this fall, four webcasts have been uploaded to the ETFO website with three accompanying lessons plans for each. The topics of the webcasts include: Virtual Learning 101 for Occasional Teachers, Mindfulness, Community Building – Early Years/Primary and Community Building – Junior/Intermediate.

In addition, six virtual workshops are available to locals from September to December. Some of these workshops have been revised from the offerings in the spring. Like the webcasts, three accompanying lesson plans are available to workshop participants which have also been uploaded to the ETFO website. The topics of the workshops include: Environmental Action/Climate Change, Now What? Tips for using primary learners' identities to enhance learning, Re-energizing Your Early Years/Primary Class with Practical Projects, Re-energizing Your Junior/Intermediate Class with Practical Projects, The ART of Getting Through! and What is PLAY: Shifting Experiences in the Kindergarten Learning Environment.

Three of the lessons are included in this issue of *Voice*. All lessons are available at etfo.ca

(etfo.ca/resources/classroom-resources/back-to-school-webcasts-and-workshop-series/overview)

LESSON #1: CREATING COMMUNITY IN THE JUNIOR/INTERMEDIATE YEARS

Learning Goal(s): To create a positive and welcoming learning space using a traditional sharing circle and co-create a community agreement

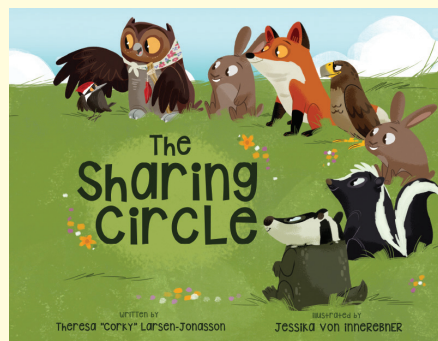
Success Criteria:

- I understand and can participate appropriately in a sharing circle.
- I can listen attentively to others and respond with respect and understanding.

Skills Focus: Communication, collaboration, self-regulation, expression of emotion

Prep/Materials:

- Book: *The Sharing Circle* by Theresa “Corky” Larsen-Jonasson
- Talking piece



Minds on:

1. Read aloud *The Sharing Circle* and follow up with a general discussion surrounding sharing circles (How do they work? What are the expectations of participants?). Educator prompts: How would you describe a sharing circle? Describe the

expectations of those participating in a sharing circle. Consider why this structure is a circle rather than a square or triangle and explain your thinking.

Actions:

2. Invite learners to participate in a sharing circle, each learner brings their chair to form a circle and the educator introduces the talking piece and reminds learners that a talking piece allows

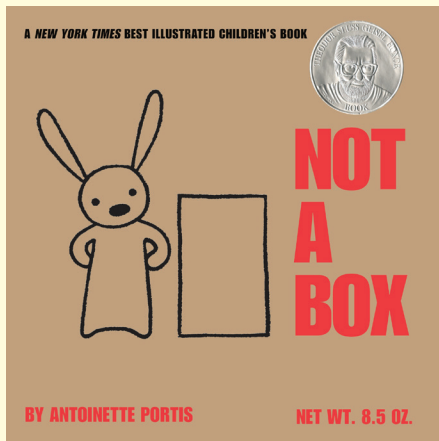
the speaker to speak their truth and speak from the heart without interruption.

3. The educator reminds learners about the purpose of the circle: to share, communicate, and/or make decisions. When passing the talking piece to others, we pass it clockwise, the direction

of the sun rising and setting, as in a custom from the Anishinaabe tradition.

4. Practice the structure with learners using the following prompts: Introduce yourself and something you are looking forward to this year. How would you describe an ideal learning environment? What does it feel like to be in a space of belonging? How do you demonstrate respect to others?

5. Thank learners for participating in the sharing circle



Consolidate:

6. Direct teaching: Sharing circles are an essential part of oral traditions in multiple Indigenous communities and are used to learn more about the customs and cultures from Elders, family members and the community. They are frequently used when decisions need to be made. The circle is a very important structure in Indigenous cultures and worldviews because it allows everyone to face one another equally while keeping everyone interconnected at the same time. It symbolizes unity which is also the foundation for building a strong community.

Apply:

7. Allow learners “thinking time” to consider what they need in their environment to learn (e.g., flexible workspace, quiet setting, etc.) and what they need to feel safe and brave (emotional needs). In small groups, have learners discuss and present their ideal workspace.

8. The educator consolidates learners’ ideas to create a community agreement.

Extensions/Additions:

- Continue to use this sharing circle throughout the year as a way for the group to meet, discuss and make decisions.
- Have learners or staff members introduce themselves, identifying their preferred pronouns.
- Beyond the community agreement, have learners identify the rights and responsibilities within a learning community (e.g., I have the right to learn in the environment, I am responsible for staying on task and not disrupting other’s learning, etc.).

LESSON TITLE: NOT A BOX

Suggested Division and Grade: K–3

The book *Not A Box* by Antoinette Portis is a story about a rabbit who presents a box and shares how it can be transformed to become an apartment, a rocket ship and more.

Lesson Rationale: Learners will be invited to be creative thinkers and express themselves in multiple ways. Learners will have an opportunity to share their ideas and collaboratively create a text with educator support.

Learning Goals:

- To co-construct a text that communicates a specific message
- To engage in purposeful play that invites learners to think creatively

LESSON PLAN

Minds on:

- Divide the learners into groups and offer each group a box.
- Pose the following question: What might you do with this box?
- Give learners time to think in groups and meet back to share their ideas.

Working on it:

- After the educator has recorded ideas, explain to the learners that the little rabbit in the story *Not A Box* shows how they might use a box in creative ways. Invite learners to consider the different ways that the character uses the box.
- Read the text, highlighting some ideas that might connect to ones shared by the learners.
- After reading the text, invite learners to share how the rabbit used the box. Record their ideas.

Consolidation:

- The educator can offer tinker trays with a variety of loose parts and learners can show and share what the items they have selected can become.
- The educator can work in small groups to document and record learners’ ideas to be supported with illustrations and text in a book they will co-create.
- Another option is to have learners work in small groups and/or independently to create their own stories.

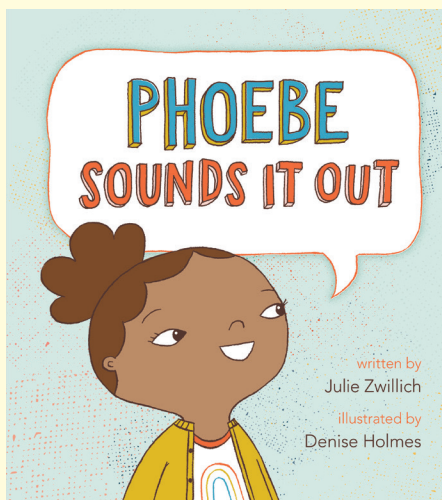
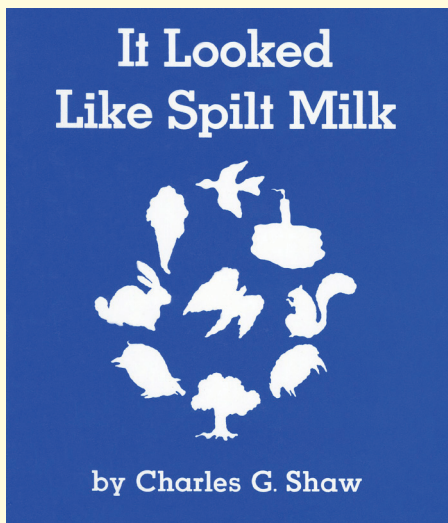
Materials:

- A few boxes of different dimensions
- Trays with various loose parts (e.g., stones, sticks, shells, sea glass, ribbon, paper tubes, metal rings, etc.)
- Chart paper
- Markers

Lesson Extensions

(could include a suggested announcement or cross-curricular connection):

- The co-created book can be used for shared reading with the learners.
- Read additional books like *Not A Stick* by Antoinette Portis; *It Looked Like Spilt Milk* by Charles G. Shaw; *Boxitects* by Kim Smith; and *The Magic Beads* by Susin Nielsen.



LEARNING EXPERIENCE 1: WHO AM I?

LEARNING GOAL: We will learn about our names and how they are part of our identities. (*Note: It is important to already have an understanding of our learners and their families before beginning this lesson. Being aware of feelings throughout this work is essential because it might bring up shame, guilt and/or trauma for some learners.)

GATHER

Possible read-alouds:

- *Phoebe Sounds it Out* by Julie Zwillich
- *The Name Jar* by Yangsook Choi
- *Alma and How She Got Her Name* by Juana Martinez-Neal
- *My Name is Elizabeth* by Annika Dunklee
- *My Name Is Yoon* by Helen Recorvits
- *Your Name Is a Song* by Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow

SYNTHESIZE

Use questions to guide inquiry about names:

- What do we already know about our names? What questions can we ask our families to find out more?
- What are some cultural naming traditions in our class?
- How do our names represent our identities?

Using a piece of paper or a T-shirt template, learners can create a T-shirt on which they write their name and add designs that represent their identity.

TRANSFER

Reflection questions/statements:

- What colours did you use on your T-shirt? Why?
- Why did you write your name the way you did?
- Why did you choose to include the images/design on your T-shirt?
- Share your T-shirt with a partner and discuss your name and identity.
- What have we learned about our names?
- Are there any parts of your identity that you didn't include on your T-shirt design that you want to talk about?

LEARNING EXPERIENCE 2: WHO ARE WE?

LEARNING GOAL: We will learn more about ourselves and each other.

GATHER

Possible read-alouds:

- *One Love* by Cedella Marley
- *Every Little Thing* by Cedella Marley
- *It's Okay To Be Different* by Todd Parr
- *All Are Welcome* by Alexandra Penfold
- *Be You!* by Peter H. Reynolds
- *Sometimes I Feel Like a Fox* by Danielle Daniel

SYNTHESIZE

Discuss the word "identity." Have a working definition of identity that is clearly visible for the class throughout this work.

Use questions to guide inquiry about who we are:

- Think about the things that make you who you are. What are parts of your identity that you would like to share with others? Are there parts of your identity that you would not like to share?
- Who are you? How can you show others who you are?
- Who are members of your family?
- What are things that you like to do at home?
- What are things that you like to do at school?
- How can we share our identities?

Using a puzzle pieces template, provide each learner with a piece of a puzzle. Ask learners to write a sentence or to draw an image/design that represents a part of their identity on their puzzle pieces. The teacher/facilitator should also complete a puzzle piece. The puzzle pieces can be enlarged to create a mural for the classroom environment.

TRANSFER

Reflection questions/statements:

- Why did we use puzzle pieces? How did we connect them together? What does it represent?
- What colours did you use on your puzzle piece? Why?
- Why did you choose to include the images/design on your puzzle piece?
- Share your puzzle piece with a partner and discuss parts of your identity.
- What have we learned about ourselves?
- What have we learned about each other?
- Are there parts of your identity not included?

