

Unit: Building Classroom Community for Second Grade

Lesson 2: Our Families and Having a Partner Conversation

Read Aloud: *Grandfather Counts*
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Day 1: Read Aloud to Understand the Book

Lesson Objectives (Day 1 and Day 2)

- Students will listen to *Grandfather Counts* and accompanying teacher comments to build understanding of the key ideas and details of the text
- Students will demonstrate understanding of the text by answering questions about key details and character responses to events and challenges
- Students will follow agreed-on rules for discussion (raising hands, waiting patiently, staying on topic, restating and linking to others' comments, asking clarifying questions)
- Students will begin to apply knowledge of discussion behaviors to partner conversations
- Students will interview others about their families; by learning about one another, students will make connections to peers, contributing to the development of a classroom community

Common Core Standards

- RL.2.1, RL.2.3
- SL.2.1/1-A/1-B, SL.2.3

NOTE: See the end of this lesson for additional English Language Learner support strategies.

Before Reading

1. Gather your class and compliment their work on having group discussions. Briefly review the photo you labeled in Lesson 1. Today you will continue to practice having a whole-group discussion about a book.
2. Introduce the book by saying, ***“This book is called *Grandfather Counts*. Helen’s grandfather comes to stay, and he only speaks Chinese. Let’s read to find out how he and Helen talk to each other.”***

During Reading

1. As you read the first several pages, model noting the key events in the text and characters' responses. After each comment, encourage practice of your target discussion behaviors. Ask a student to restate what you said, link another idea to your comment, or ask a clarifying question. For instance:
 - ***“It says Gong Gong is surprised that Helen doesn’t speak Chinese. Can anyone link to this idea? What does Helen wish she could explain?”***
 - ***“Helen’s mom wants the house to be quiet and wants things to be just right for Gong Gong. Can anyone link to this idea? What else is Helen’s mom thinking about?”***
2. Ask questions focused on characters' actions and responses to events. For instance:
 - ***“Why does Helen say that her mom is in a bad mood? What else is making Helen upset?”***

- **“What is Gong Gong like so far?”**
- **“What is starting to happen between Helen and Gong Gong?”**
- **“Why does Gong Gong say, ‘Three xiao hi?’”**
- **“What does Gong Gong teach Helen about names?”**

3. Continue to prompt for restating, linking comments, and asking clarifying questions.

After Reading

1. Ask, **“Why is the train important in this story?”** After a student responds, ask someone to restate what she or he said. Ask if anyone has any other comments to link to the idea shared. Ask additional questions, as needed, to facilitate a short discussion about how Helen and Gong Gong’s shared interest in the train helps them begin to connect with each other.
2. Explain that you’ll read this book again another day. You’ll talk more about the family in the book and also about your families.

Day 2: Discuss and Respond to the Book

Before Reading

1. Explain that today you’ll reread *Grandfather Counts*. You’ll also be practicing a different way to have a discussion: having a conversation with a partner.
2. Ask a student to be your partner. Model the basic behaviors you’d like to see during partner conversations (e.g., turn knee to knee, look at each other, take turns talking and listening, etc.) by discussing the question “Helen and Gong Gong watch trains go by. What can you

see outside your home?”.

3. Tell students how you’d like them to find a partner quickly and practice answering the same question in pairs.
4. Compliment the behaviors you observe.

During Reading

1. Stop at a few places for partners to turn and talk about straightforward questions. For instance:
 - **Who is in this family?**
 - **How does the family try to help Gong Gong feel welcome?**
2. Share an example of a conversation you overheard in which partners managed to share the responsibility for answering the question (e.g., one partner gave a response and another partner added to it). This can be a challenging aspect of partner work. Then increase the complexity of your questions, focusing on family relationships. For instance:
 - **How do Helen and Gong Gong teach each other to count?**
 - **How do Helen and Gong Gong teach each other about writing their names?**
 - **What is special about the kids’ names?**

After Reading

1. Give a few specific examples of successful partner conversations you overheard.
2. Ask, **“Does this story remind anyone of something in your own family?”**

Extension

1. Explain that you will do a partner activity to learn more about one another’s families. Explain the word *interview*. An interview is a type of partner conversation in which one person asks questions to learn about the other.

Students will take turns interviewing each other. (See student interview sheet at the end of the lesson plan.)

2. Model deciding who will be the interviewer first and complete the first question with a student partner. Give tips for streamlining the writing so the focus can be on the partner conversation (e.g., asking your partner how to spell a name, writing in list format).
3. As students work, scaffold and compliment target partner discussion behaviors.
4. Reconvene and ask, **“What was one interesting thing you found out about your partner’s family?”** Model asking a few clarifying questions or highlighting links among comments to remind students explicitly of these behaviors from Lesson 1.
5. To close, once again ask the group, **“What is something you found out you have in common with someone else in our class?”** Compliment students on their partner work and ask them to keep practicing during future discussions.

ELL Support Strategies

Adapt the interview activity to fit your students’ needs. You might pair speakers of the same language together and encourage them to complete the interview in their native language. The primary goals are to practice partner conversation behaviors and connect regarding content. Or you might eliminate the written component and scaffold the interview with the whole group, providing sentence starters for each question as you go.

BOOK INFORMATION

Grandfather Counts

ISBN: 978-1-58430-158-5

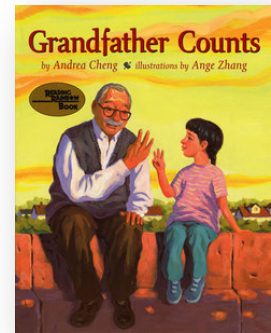
RESOURCES ON THE WEB

Check out the complete **Building Classroom**

Community Unit for Second Grade at

<https://www.leeandlow.com/collections/280>

Learn more about **Grandfather Counts** at www.leeandlow.com/books/2399

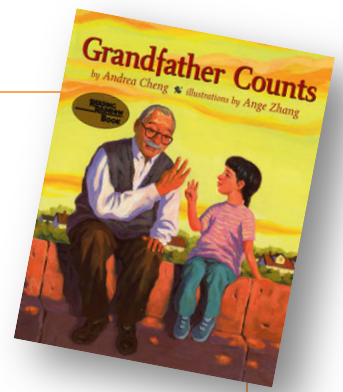


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Name: _____

Partner Interview

1. What is your name?

2. Do you have any brothers?

- How many?

- What are their names and ages?

3. Do you have any sisters?

- How many?

- What are their names and ages?

4. What adults are in your family?

5. Do you have any pets?

- What kinds?

- What are their names?

6. Do you have any family members who live far away?

- Who are they, and where do they live?

7. What language or languages do you speak with your family members?

8. Ask your own question here: _____

Partner's answer: _____
