



Unit: Building Classroom Community for Second Grade

Lesson 8: Working Together to Create a Safe Space

Read Aloud: *I Know the River Loves Me/ Yo sé que el río me ama*

by Maya Christina Gonzalez

Day 1: Read Aloud to Understand the Book

NOTE: *I Know the River Loves Me/ Yo sé que el río me ama* is a bilingual book. This lesson could also be presented effectively in Spanish. See the end of this lesson for additional English Language Learner support strategies.

Lesson Objectives (Day 1 and Day 2)

- Students will listen to *I Know the River Loves Me/ Yo sé que el río me ama* 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 whole group discussions and partner conversations (raising hands, waiting patiently, staying on topic, restating and linking to others' comments, asking clarifying questions)
- Students will review the themes of emotions, respectful communication, kindness, and problem solving in the context of working together as a community of learners
- Students will work together to create signs that communicate classroom values

Common Core Standards

- RL.2.1, RL.2.2, RL.2.3
- SL.2.1/1-A/1-B, SL.2.3

Before Reading

1. Share an example of effective problem solving that you've noticed since your last lesson. Compliment students on all they've been doing to get your year together off to a great start. They are making school a place where you love to be. Today you'll read a book in which a girl describes a place she loves to be.
2. Introduce today's book by saying, "***This story is called I Know the River Loves Me/ Yo sé que el río me ama.***" Because the book is short but challenging to understand, you'll read it twice through today. You'll read once without stopping to get a sense of the story, and a second time to stop and talk about what you've read on each page.

During Reading

1. Read the book straight through without stopping. Use lots of expression and point to aspects of the illustrations to support comprehension.
 - After the first reading, ask, "***The girl in the story keeps talking about 'she.' Who is 'she'?***" Clarify that the girl talks about a place (the river) as if it were a person and a friend.

2. Read the book a second time, stopping for whole-class discussion and partner conversations. Ask questions to help students make sense of each statement about the river. For instance:
 - ***“Is the river really a friend? What does the girl actually mean?”***
 - ***“What does the girl actually hear when she says she hears the river ‘calling’ her?”***
 - ***“What does the girl actually see when she says she sees the river ‘jump and sing’?”***
 - ***“What does the girl do in the river? What does she imagine?”***
 - ***“How does the river change?”***
 - ***“What does the girl do to take care of the river?”***

After Reading

1. Ask, ***“How does the river make the girl feel?”*** Help students move beyond “happy” to emotions such as “safe,” “peaceful,” “content,” “accepted,” “powerful,” etc. Focus on words related to how you hope students will feel in your classroom community.
2. Explain that next time you read this book, you’ll talk more about how you could make your classroom feel as good as being at the river.

Day 2: Discuss and Respond to the Book

Before Reading

1. Explain that today you’ll reread *I Know the River Loves Me/Yoséque el río me ama*. You’ll talk about what makes a place as special as the river is to the girl.

2. Ask the whole group or partners to talk about places they love. What makes those places so special? Encourage building on others’ responses and asking clarifying questions where relevant.
3. Set up a piece of chart paper with two columns, labeled “River” and “School.” Explain that as you read, you’ll write down each idea about the river and brainstorm related ideas for making school feel just as special.

During Reading

Stop at various points to note the girl’s observations of the river and discuss how school could make someone feel a similar way. For instance:

- Calls the girl/Sounds make you want to come in.
- Jumps and sings/Feel welcomed when you arrive.
- Cools the girl down/School makes you feel good.
- River holds her up and takes her in./Feel supported; get help when you need it.
- We flow together./Enjoy being with friends and teachers.
- Be low and quiet or full and loud/Be quiet or loud depending on the time of day.
- Take care of the river/Take care of the classroom and school.
- Love the river/Love your school and be proud of it.

After Reading

Review your list of generalizations on the “School” side of the list. Ask partners to brainstorm specific examples for each one (e.g., “Saying good morning and smiling at each other,” “Feeling like you have friends to talk to and play with at recess”).

Extension

1. Divide students into pairs or small groups and explain that you'll be working on reminder signs for making your classroom a safe and happy space to learn. You might show students some images of reminder signs (e.g., "Shirt and Shoes Required" from a store door, "Please turn off your cell phone" at the movies, a Work Zone Speed Limit reminder, etc.). Talk about the connection between words and visual cues on the signs.
2. Talk about different places in the room where you could post signs and ideas as helpful reminders related to your list. You could include signs related to other areas of the school, such as a sign near where you store lunch boxes about friendly lunch behavior or a sign by the door about including others at recess.
3. Help each pair/group choose a sign topic, perhaps making a list on chart paper to avoid duplicates and to ensure that any priorities you have are covered.
4. As pairs/groups work, circulate around the room and encourage respectful communication, kindness, problem solving, and collaboration.

ELL Support Strategies

Provide vocabulary and comprehension support and help spark ideas by displaying photos of your class during the "river vs. school" discussion. For instance, show a photo of students smiling and greeting one another during arrival time, a photo of one student helping another, etc.

BOOK INFORMATION

I Know the River Loves Me/Yo sé que el río me ama

ISBN: 978-0-89239-236-0

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 *I Know the River Loves Me/Yo sé que el río me ama* at www.leeandlow.com/books/2802

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