

Picture Books and the Alberta Curriculum

Activities and Ideas

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There are many activities and ideas that can be used when you are using picture books with social studies, science, and language arts lessons. Picture books also are ideal for using in the library to supplement a unit or lesson. Below are just a few of these suggestions. Some are very general ideas that could be used with just about any book; some are ideas for a specific book.

A. General Ideas:

1. Design a new book jacket for your book.
2. Make a life size picture of your favourite character.
3. Analyze the plot and characters of a book and design a board game around it.
4. Write a diary entry for your favourite character the day before (or day after) the story takes place.
5. Analyze the illustrations—consider things like mood, colour, perspective, content (see attached worksheet).
6. Research the type of illustrations used in the book (watercolour, plastecine, etc.) and create an illustration using the same method.
7. Create a storyboard outlining the main events of the book.
8. Ask students to read the story from different perspectives and write a new story from one of these different perspectives.
9. Write a biography of the illustrator of the book; find information in print or electronic sources. Complete the attached sheet as you find information about this person.

10. Use Molly Bang's book *Picture This: How Pictures Work* to help student analyze the illustrations in the book. "Picture This" talks about colour, perspective, size, etc. and how these elements create mood and atmosphere in an illustration.
11. Have students create their own alphabet book on a particular topic (e.g. Grade 1: Community or Grade 5: Weather or Grade 5: Canada)
12. Working in groups, have the students create puppets for the characters in the story, design backgrounds, and re-write the story as a puppet show. Each group can then stage their show for their classmates (or other students in the school).

Activities related to a specific book:

1. Read *City Colors* and take a walk through your own community looking for different colors. While you're walking, take pictures with a digital camera of the colours you find. When you come back to the school, print the pictures and make a class book of your own community's colours.
2. For the various books for grade 3 social studies (*Communities in the World*) have the students do research on the countries represented in these books. Have the students research these countries using print and electronic resources. The students can then present the information they discover as posters and an oral presentation to the rest of the class.
3. After reading *Lucy's Secret* provide the students with the supplies to plant their own seeds (bean seeds in styrofoam cups work particularly well, but you can experiment with different seeds). Instead of styrofoam cups, you could provide each student with a small clay pot and for art, the pots could be painted prior to planting the seeds. Have the students keep track of their plant's growth on a chart (see attached sheet).
4. After reading *Recycle Everyday!*, Grade 4 students could help with the school's recycling program (e.g. juice boxes/cans/etc) by collecting recyclables from the various drop off points around the school.
5. After reading *Bridges*, provide students with a variety of building material and have them design and build their own bridges.

6. After reading one (or many) of the books about Canada for Grade 5 Social Studies, have the students work on a scavenger hunt using a variety of print and electronic resources. Similarly, a scavenger hunt about Alberta could be used in Grade 5 Social Studies. A sample scavenger hunt is attached.
7. After reading *Bug Safari* have the students go on their own 'bug safari'. Students can walk around the school yard (or their own neighbourhoods, if this is an after school project) and observe the different kinds of bugs they find. In a notebook, students can record the kinds of bugs they see, as well as descriptions of each bug. Use these observations to create a research report about the bugs in your community.
8. After reading *See Saw Saskatchewan* have the students create their own Canadian poems.
9. After reading *Flags* by Maxine Trottier, have the students read more about the Internment of Japanese-Canadians during the World War II. Ask students to think about this event from a variety of perspectives and complete the attached chart.
10. After reading *On the Town: A Community Adventure* ask the students to brainstorm with you about the people and places that make up their own community. Ideas might include stores, families, churches, babysitters, service people, etc. Once the children have completed brainstorming, ask them to draw a picture of 'their community'. Pictures can then be labeled (ask the children to dictate to you and copy down their statements) and hung on a bulletin board to share with others in your school community.
11. This activity will work best if you pair your grade 1 class up with a class of older (grade 5 or 6 students). If you don't want to pair up with another class, simplify the project somewhat by having the students do research individually and then prepare a poster with the relevant information. Read *Out on the Prairie: A Canadian Counting Book* with your students. Split the class into groups and assign each group one of the animals from the book. Each group will then be asked to research their animal, using the attached organizer. When the research is complete, each group should use PowerPoint to create a presentation about their animal, which will then be shared with the class.
12. Read *A Cool Drink of Water* with your class. Invite someone from the local water treatment plant to speak to the class about where the drinking water

in your community comes from and how it is made safe to drink. At the end of the book, there are a number of quotes about water:

- We live by the grace of water. (National Geographic, November, 1993)
- Filthy water cannot be washed. (West African Proverb)
- When the well's dry, we know the worth of water. (Benjamin Franklin, 1746)
- Water is the best of all things. (Pindar, CA 476, BC)

Write these quotes (one or all of them) onto the board and, as a class, discuss them. What do they mean? Why are they significant today? Conclude by asking the students to draw a picture (or write a story) about the significance of water in their lives. Or, students could write a story about how their life would be different if they did not have access to clean running water everyday.

For more information about water, go to Environment Canada's website of links: http://www.ec.gc.ca/water_e.html.

13. Read *Rain Tonight* with your class. Check out Environment Canada's website about Hurricanes, just for kids: <http://www.ns.ec.gc.ca/weather/hurricane/kids.html>. This website contains a word search that can be printed out and completed, as well as answers to many of your questions about hurricanes. For more weather information for kids, check out: http://www.ec.gc.ca/youth/weather_e.html.

Analyze the Illustrations

Read the assigned picture book from start to finish, paying attention to both the text and the illustrations. Read the book a second time, looking only at the illustrations. Then, consider each of the following categories as you look at the illustrations a third time:

<p>Mood: How does the illustrator convey the mood of the story through the pictures?</p>	<p>Colour: What colours are dominant in these illustrations? Why is colour important in the illustrations? How do the colours make you feel?</p>
<p>Perspective: From what perspective are the illustrations drawn? How would changing the perspective of the illustrations change the story or your interpretation of the story?</p>	<p>Layout: Where are illustration and text placed on the page? To what effect? Is there a consistent pattern or is there variation? Why? Is there any significance in the choice of typefont?</p>

Texture: How does the illustrator create texture in these pictures? What effect does this texture have on you as a reader?

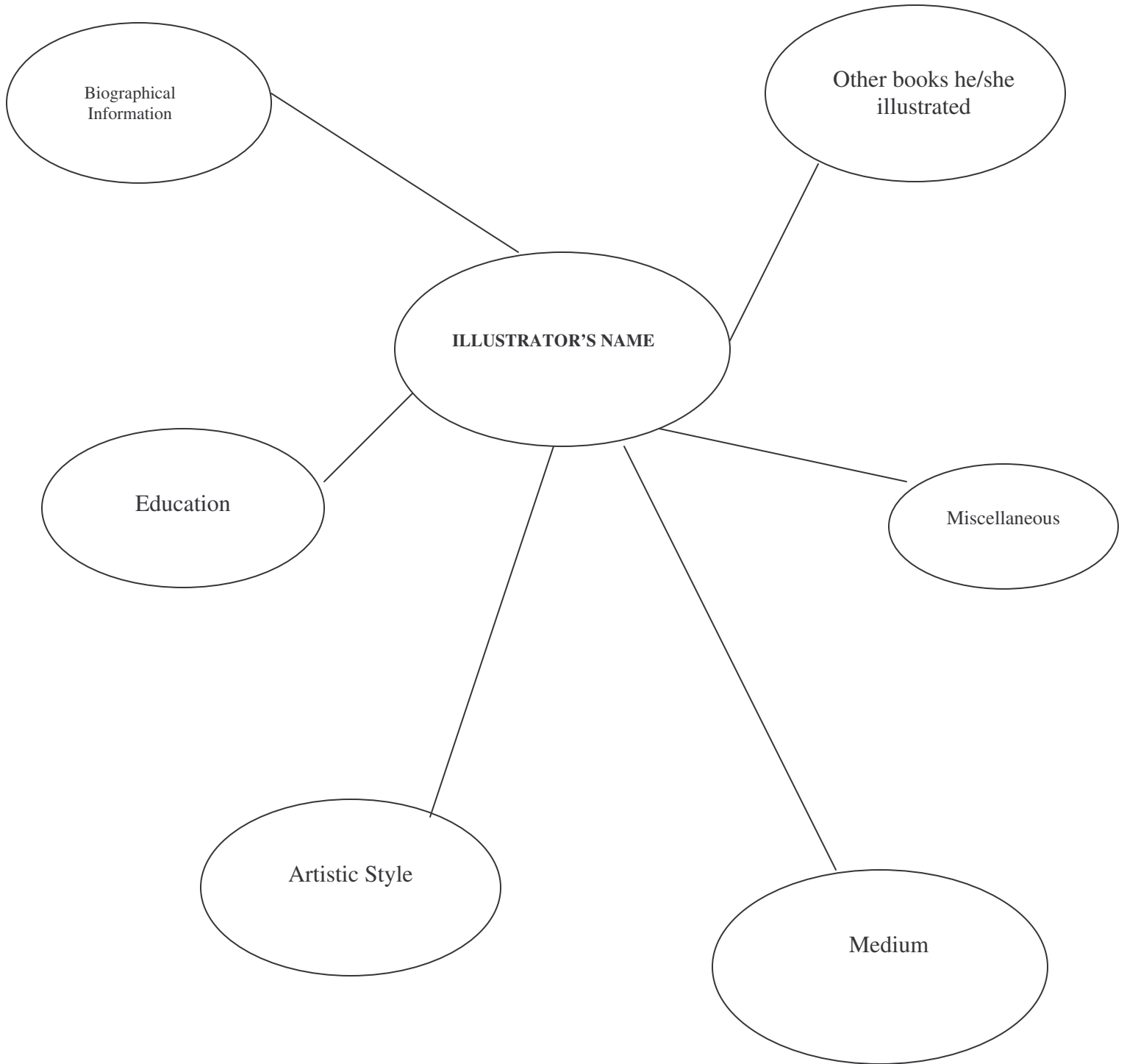
Line and Shape: How does the illustrator's use of lines or shapes make you feel about the way things look in the book?

Size: How does the size of the illustration affect your interpretation? Does the illustrator change the size of certain parts of the illustration? To what effect?

Medium: What medium was used to create these illustrations? How were the illustrations created?

Illustrator Biography

For your assigned illustrator, locate information about the following, using a variety of print and electronic sources. Be sure to record where you found the information on a separate sheet.



Plant Growth Observation

Day	Height (cm)	Observations
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		

13		
14		
15		
16		
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22		
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24		
25		

Grade 5 Social Studies Canadian Scavenger Hunt

Name: _____

Use a variety of resources, both print and electronic, to locate the answers to the following twenty questions about Canada.

1. Who is the premier of Prince Edward Island?

2. What are the coordinates for Iqualuit, Nunavut?

_____ Latitude _____ Longitude

3. What is the name of the major highway that crosses Canada?

4. What is the capital city of Newfoundland and Labrador?

5. Who is the Leader of the Official Opposition in the House of Commons?

6. Where is Biggar?

7. What is the provincial symbol of Manitoba?

8. How many Senators sit in the Senate?

9. When did Canada adopt the red and white maple leaf flag?

10. Who is the Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta?

11. What is Canada's longest river?

12. What is the distance between St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador and Victoria, British Columbia?

13. What is the largest land animal native to Canada?

14. Canada's tallest mountain, Mount Logan, can be found in which province or territory?

15. Who won the gold medal in men's triathlon at the 2000 Summer Olympics in Sydney, Australia?

16. In what year was the Canadian Constitution signed into law?

17. Who is the *Governor General* of Canada?

18. What two Canadian provinces joined Confederation in 1905?

19. What is the largest land animal native to Canada?

20. The largest National Park in Canada is partly in Alberta and partly in the Northwest Territories. It contains the largest herd of free-roaming bison in the world. It is the only nesting site of the endangered whooping crane. It protects one of the world's finest fresh water deltas: that of the Peace and Athabasca Rivers. What is the park's name?

Internment of Japanese Canadians in World War II
An Activity to accompany the reading of
***FLAGS* by Maxine Trottier**

After reading the book *Flags* and completing additional research into the event, consider how each of the following people view the relocation of Japanese Canadians during World War II.

<p><u>Mary—the main character</u></p>	<p><u>Mary's Grandmother</u></p>
<p><u>Mr. Hiroshi</u></p>	<p><u>The soldiers</u></p>

The couple who bought Mr. Hiroshi's House

The politicians who made the decision to relocate Japanese Canadians

Worksheet for Activity B. (11)

Animal Research Organizer

Animal: _____

Appearance

1. This is how our animal looks:

Colour:

Skin, Fur, Scales, etc.:

Size:

Weight:

If your animal has a special physical feature or can do something special, describe it.

This is a picture of our animal:

2. Our animal is sometimes called by a special name

Male: _____

Female: _____

Young: _____

3. Our animal can live this long: _____

Habitat

1. Our animal lives:

2. If your animal builds a shelter, describe it:

3. Our animal needs to protect itself from:

4. Our animal protects itself from enemies by:

Food

1. Our animal eats:

Plants (Herbivore) _____ Both Plants and Animals (Omnivore) _____

Animals (Carnivore) _____

2. This is what our animal eats:

Interesting Facts:

Here are 3 more interesting facts about our animal:

1.

2.

3.