



# Education Program

(Grades K-1)



# Lesson Four



In this lesson, students will practise making inferences

- before reading, using details from the cover of a book,
- during reading, using key words from a story to predict the main idea
- after reading, revisiting an initial decision and deciding if it is still the best statement to represent the main idea from the book.

## Lesson Question:

What is the main idea from the story?

## Lesson Challenge:

Choose the statement that best describes the main idea from the story.

## Big Ideas

- Stories and other texts can be shared through pictures and words. (K, Grade 1 English Language Arts)
- Curiosity and wonder lead us to new discoveries about ourselves and the world around us. (K, Grade 1 English Language Arts)

## Suggested Materials

- Any picture book relating to wildfires, such as the following:
  - The Fox and the Forest Fire (Danny Popovici)
  - Firefighter Duckies (Frank W. Dormer)
  - WildFire (Ashley Wolf)
  - Little Smokey (Robert Neubecker)
- A collection of 12–16 words from the selected story. They should be words that are important to the story and/or are likely to be unfamiliar to the students.



## Start the Thinking



1. Before reading, show students the cover of the selected book. Explain that you would like them to predict the main idea from the story.
2. Remind students that a prediction is not a guess—a thoughtful prediction uses clues and what we already know for a likely answer. Encourage students to use two criteria for thinking of thoughtful predictions.  
A thoughtful prediction
  - considers all the clues and details
  - fits with what we know to be true
3. Invite students to offer their thoughtful predictions about the main idea using the title and details from the cover, reminding them to use the criteria to guide their thinking.
4. Introduce the lesson question and challenge, and then offer four possible predictions for the main idea of the story. These predictions should range in their thoughtfulness.
  - For example, if the selected story is *The Fox and the Forest Fire*, four possible predictions for the main idea could include the following:
    - Wildfires are very scary for foxes.
    - Hope and friendship are important for recovering from a wildfire.
    - During a wildfire, the colour of the sky is the same as the colour of a fox.
    - Foxes hide in caves during wildfires.
5. Encourage students to share their prediction with the class. Consider noting the predictions for use later in this lesson.

## Grow the Thinking



1. Share a collection of words (and phrases) from the story with students. These should be words that are important to the story and/or are likely to be unfamiliar to the students. Explain that all of the words come from the story they are going to read or listen to. Review each word and ask students to identify any words that are unfamiliar to them.
  - For example, if the selected story is *The Fox and the Forest Fire*, the selected words and phrases could include dams, destroyed, bugs and plants, warn, forest, nights, hike, mornings, house, friends, go home, strangely quiet, trip, safe, discover, plume of smoke.
2. Encourage students to define some of the words or to use examples to demonstrate understanding. For words or phrases that are unfamiliar, such as plume of smoke, provide an image or a description that will help children understand them in context.



3. Guide students in making connections between the words. Encourage them to think of connections between words that seem unrelated.
  - For example, if the selected story is *The Fox and the Forest Fire*, guide students in thinking of possible connections between words and phrases such as house, plants, plume of smoke, and destroyed.
4. After students have had a chance to think about how the words might fit together, ask them to revisit the four predictions from earlier in the lesson: Would they keep their original decision or would they now choose differently? Encourage students to share their decision and thinking with the class.
5. Read the selected story with the class. As you read the story, pause to model how you might use pictures or words in the story to help you think about the main idea and ask students to reflect on the four possible predictions. Similarly, show how a detail from the story might make you think of something about the main idea.

## Reflect on the Thinking



1. Return to the cover of the book being used and the four predictions that were shared at the beginning of the lesson. Ask students to make a final decision on the statement that best describes the main idea from the book.
2. Encourage students to connect images on the cover to the main idea and decide whether the cover of the book is a good fit for the story. Consider inviting students to suggest an alternative cover for the book that they believe would better fit with the main idea.

