

Lesson 2: Reading, Writing, and Emotion: *Love That Dog*, Pages 68–72



CCS Standards

- **RL.4.1:** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **RL.4.3:** Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions).
- **W.4.10:** Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- **SL.4.1:** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 4 topics and texts*, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
 - a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.
 - b. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.
 - c. Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others.
 - d. Review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.



Daily Learning Targets

- I can reflect in writing about my thoughts and feelings after reading “My Sky.” (W.4.10)
- I can describe what inspired Jack to write the poem “My Sky.” (RL.4.1, RL.4.3)
- I can show empathy and compassion for my classmates during a discussion of “My Sky.” (SL.4.1)

Ongoing Assessment

- What Inspires Poets to Write Poetry? note-catcher (RL.4.1, RL.4.3)

Agenda

1. Opening

A. Reviewing Learning Targets (10 minutes)

2. Work Time

A. Preparing to Read: Writing and Emotion (10 minutes)

B. Reading and Reflection: The Emotional Impact of “My Sky” (15 minutes)

C. Rereading and Discussion: What Inspired Jack to Write “My Sky”? (15 minutes)

3. Closing and Assessment

- A. Reflecting on Learning (10 minutes)

4. Homework

- A. Accountable Research Reading. Select a prompt and respond in the front of your independent reading journal.
- B. Optional: Think of a time you experienced a strong feeling such as happiness, sadness, anger, or another emotion. Write a poem about this experience in the “My Poems” section of your poetry journal.

Teaching Notes

Purpose of lesson and alignment to standards:

- In this lesson, students read the poem “My Sky” in the book *Love That Dog* by Sharon Creech. This poem is likely to affect some students emotionally, because it details the death of Jack’s dog. This lesson is designed to help students cope with the strong emotions that reading and writing can illicit.
- Some students may have read ahead of the class. Consider pulling these students aside in advance and asking them not to tell the class about the events on pages 68–72 in the novel. Explain that it will be important for everyone to learn about these events through the text first.
- The beginning of this lesson helps prepare students for the emotional nature of this section of the text. Then, after the text is read aloud, they are given time to reflect and process their response to the text in writing. (Some classes and/or students may require more or less time for written reflection.) To protect students’ privacy and give the class a sense of emotional safety, these reflections are not shared aloud. After students have time to reflect, they discuss the events outlined in the poem and consider why the character Jack was moved to write this poem.
- Students practice their fluency in this lesson by following along and reading silently as the teacher reads excerpts from *Love That Dog* in Work Time B.
- The research reading that students complete for homework will help build both their vocabulary and knowledge pertaining to poetry and what inspires people to write. By participating in this volume of reading over a span of time, students will develop a wide base of knowledge about the world and the words that help describe and make sense of it.

How it builds on previous work:

- In Unit 1, students began thinking about what inspired Jack to write poetry. In this lesson, they consider what inspired him to write the poem “My Sky.”
- Throughout Unit 1, the habit of character focus was on working to become ethical people. In this lesson, students continue thinking about this focus and “collect” the following characteristics on the Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart: empathy and compassion. Then they read the poem “My Sky,” which could cause strong emotional reactions from their peers.

- Throughout Unit 1, students were introduced to various total participation techniques (for example, cold calling, equity sticks, Think-Pair-Share, etc.). When following the directive to “Use a total participation technique, invite responses from the group,” use one of these techniques or another familiar technique to encourage all students to participate.
- Continue to use Goal 1 Conversation Cues to promote productive and equitable conversation.

Areas in which students may need additional support:

- This lesson is intended to give teachers guidance on reading this section of the text with students. However, the needs of students should dictate how this lesson unfolds. It is important to support students’ emotional needs as they read this section of the text; therefore, teachers should use their professional judgment as they plan their instruction.
- For most of this lesson, students work whole group or individually; however, there will be times when they talk with a partner. Consider placing students with a partner they know and feel comfortable with.
- Consider students who may find it particularly difficult to read about the death of a pet due to personal circumstances and seek support of family members or a school counselor.

Assessment guidance:

- Listen to student book discussions to identify common issues that can be used as whole group teaching points against the criteria recorded on the Discussion Norms anchor chart.

Down the road:

- Students will plan an informative paragraph about what inspires Jack to write poetry in the next lesson, and write the paragraph as part of the Mid-Unit 2 Assessment in Lesson 4.

In advance:

- Review the Thumb-O-Meter protocol. See Classroom Protocols.
- Post: Learning targets, Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart, and Discussion Norms anchor chart.

Technology & Multimedia

- Work Time B: For students who will benefit from hearing the text read aloud multiple times, consider using a text-to-speech tool such as Natural Reader (www.naturalreaders.com), SpeakIt! for Google Chrome (<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/speakit/pgeolalilifpodheeocdmbhehgnkbbak?hl=en-US>), or the Safari reader. Note that to use a web-based text-to-speech tool such as SpeakIt! or Safari reader, you will need to create an online doc, such as a Google Doc, containing the text.
- Work Time C: Students complete note-catchers using word-processing software—for example, a Google Doc—using Speech to Text facilities activated on devices, or using an app or software such as Dictation.io (<https://dictation.io/speech>).

Supporting English Language Learners

Supports guided in part by CA ELD Standards 4.I.A.1, 4.I.A.4, 4.I.B.5, 4.I.B.6, and 4.I.B.7

Important points in the lesson itself

- The basic design of this lesson supports ELLs by establishing a safe environment for reading and discussing a particularly emotional text and allowing students to reflect silently and to process their feelings through writing. This lesson also continues the analysis of what inspires Jack to write poetry.
- ELLs may find it difficult or uncomfortable to discuss powerful emotions because of traumatic or painful experiences, such as having to leave a family member behind in their home countries. In addition, it is important to be aware that expressing powerful emotions may be inappropriate in some cultures. Be sensitive to the emotional needs of students and consider checking in with students individually before and during the lesson.

Levels of support

For lighter support:

- During Work Time B, challenge students to generate questions about the key chunk from “My Sky” before asking the prepared questions. Example: “What questions can we ask about this chunk? Let’s see if we can answer them together.”

For heavier support:

- During Work Time A, prepare sticky notes with pre-written words or drawings based on the gist of different sections of “My Sky.” As students listen to the poem, they can match the gist represented on the sticky notes with each section of the poem.
- During Work Time C, copy “My Sky” and display it side by side with the “The Tiger” and “Love That Boy” from Unit 1. Invite students to draw lines to show the similarities between the three poems. Invite them to use contrasting colors to underline portions that are different.

Universal Design for Learning

- **Multiples Means of Representation (MMR):** This lesson focuses on emotion as it is expressed through poetry. Some students may need additional support with recognizing social norms around emotional expression. Provide multiple representations of emotion to help students visualize the emotion (e.g., provide images, video clips, or text examples of various emotional responses or create scenarios for students to act out that require showing empathy or compassion).
- **Multiples Means of Action and Expression (MMAE):** After reading “My Sky,” students are asked to describe what they are thinking and feeling. In the body of this lesson, this is written as a general statement. Consider breaking down this task into less complex components by selecting specific quotes that students can respond to from the poem. Ask targeted questions or provide sentence starters (Examples: “How does this line make you feel?” or “This line makes me think ____.”)

- **Multiples Means of Engagement (MME):** Build engagement around poetry by reminding students that poetry is a way to make sense of emotions—even ones that are painful. It also helps us understand how others are feeling and become more empathetic and compassionate people. This is one of the special powers of poetry and why it is an important form of written expression.

Vocabulary

Key:

(L): Lesson-Specific Vocabulary

(T): Text-Specific Vocabulary

(W): Vocabulary Used in Writing

- reflect, empathy, compassion, inspire (L)

Materials

- ✓ Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart (begun in Unit 1, Lesson 2; added to during Opening)
- ✓ Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart (example, for teacher reference)
- ✓ Paper (blank; one piece per pair)
- ✓ *Love That Dog* (from Unit 1, Lesson 2; one per student)
- ✓ What Inspires Poets to Write Poetry? note-catcher (from Unit 1, Lesson 10; one per student and one to display)
- ✓ What Inspires Poets to Write Poetry? note-catcher (example, for teacher reference)
- ✓ Discussion Norms anchor chart (begun in Unit 1, Lesson 1)

Opening

A. Reviewing Learning Targets (10 minutes)

- Remind students that throughout Unit 1 they have been considering what inspires Jack to write poetry. Tell them that today they will read another poem written by Jack, called “My Sky,” and infer why Jack wrote this poem.
- Direct students’ attention to the learning targets and select volunteers to read each of the learning targets to the class:

“I can reflect in writing about my thoughts and feelings after reading ‘My Sky.’”

“I can describe what inspired Jack to write the poem ‘My Sky.’”

“I can show empathy and compassion for my classmates during a discussion of ‘My Sky.’”

- Underline the words *reflect*, *empathy*, and *compassion*.
- Invite students to turn and talk with an elbow partner:

“What does each of these words mean?” (reflect = think deeply or carefully about; empathy = understand and share the feelings of another; compassion = concern for how someone or something else feels)

- Point to *empathy* and *compassion* and explain that these words will be especially important in today's lesson.
- Focus students to the **Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart**. Remind them that *ethical people* treat others well and stand up for what is right.
- Read aloud the habits of character recorded:
 - “I show empathy. This means I understand and I share or take into account the feelings, situation, or attitude of others.”
 - “I show compassion. This means I notice when others are sad or upset and try to help them.”
- Invite students to turn and talk with an elbow partner:
 - “Using the anchor chart as a guide, what does empathy mean in your own words?” (understanding and sharing the feelings of another)**
 - “What does empathy look like? What might you see when someone is showing empathy?” See Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart (example, for teacher reference).**
 - “What does empathy sound like? What might you hear when someone is showing empathy?” See Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart (example, for teacher reference).**
- As students share out, capture their responses in the appropriate column on the Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart.
- Repeat this process with *compassion*.
- Record *empathy* and *compassion* on the Academic Word Wall. Invite students to add translations of the words in their home languages in a different color next to the target vocabulary.
- Tell students that “My Sky” is a sad poem and that it will be important for them to show empathy and compassion toward one another during this lesson.
- Invite students to turn and talk with an elbow partner:
 - “What might this look or sound like?”**
- As students share out, capture their responses in the appropriate column of the Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart.

Meeting Students' Needs

- To activate students' prior knowledge, ask what has inspired Jack to write poetry in previous lessons. Chart responses for an additional visual cue. (MMR)
- Consider preparing with images, video clips, or book excerpts that convey the meaning of empathy and compassion in case students need additional support with describing what it looks like. (MMR)
- To increase comprehension, invite students to role-play situations that would require empathy or compassion. Present scenarios and have the students act them out (e.g. my pet died, my friend is angry with me, I hurt my leg, etc.). (MMR)
- For ELLs: Ask students about this sentence from the learning target: “I can show empathy and compassion for my classmates during a discussion of ‘My Sky.’” Examples:
 - “What is *empathy* in our home languages?” (*empatija* in Bosnian) Invite all students to repeat the translation in a home language other than your own.
 - Repeat with the word *compassion*.

- “Who will you show empathy and compassion?” (my classmates)
- “When will you show empathy and compassion?” (when we discuss “My Sky”)
- “Can you say the sentence in your own words?” (I will show my classmates empathy and compassion when we read “My Sky.”)
- For ELLs: Consider adding simpler synonyms for *empathy* and *compassion* in parentheses next to the target vocabulary on the Word Wall and on the learning target. (Examples: *empathy* = understanding, thoughtfulness; *compassion* = kindness, care.)

Work Time

A. Preparing to Read: Writing and Emotion (10 minutes)

- Distribute **paper** and invite students to partner up.
- Invite students to work with their partner to brainstorm and record words on their paper. Ask them to think of words that describe powerful emotions.
- Select volunteers to share out. As students share out, capture their responses on the board or a piece of chart paper.
- Listen for words such as: happiness, sadness, fear, and anger. Under students’ list, write additional words used to describe emotion, such as: frustration, anxiety, joy, excitement, contentment, grief, and confusion.
- Briefly discuss the meaning of unfamiliar words and note words that have similar or opposite meanings.
- Tell students that today they will read a poem written by Jack in the novel *Love That Dog*, called “My Sky.” Explain that this is a powerfully emotional piece of writing. Go on to explain that it is emotional for two reasons, the first being that Jack is describing an emotional experience. His emotion is captured in his writing of this poem. Explain that the second reason it is an emotional piece of writing is because it is likely to evoke strong emotions from those who read it. Tell students that you would like them to reflect on the following question in writing in the “My Reflections” section of their poetry journal:
 - “Describe a time you read something that made you feel a strong emotion. Why do you think writers write about emotional experiences?”
- After 5 minutes of silent reflection, invite volunteers to share their reflection with the group. If students do not offer to share, consider sharing your own reflections on this question.
- Remind students of their work with the term *inspire* in the previous unit and in Lesson 1. Explain that writers can be inspired by strong emotions. They may want to write about an emotional experience for a variety of reasons, including to communicate an idea or to send a message to their readers, or even to help themselves understand or process an emotional event in their lives.
- Tell students that the author, Sharon Creech, was inspired to describe her character Jack’s emotional experience in the poem “My Sky.” Explain that she likely knew this poem would evoke strong emotions in her readers, too. Ask students to take a moment to think about how they will respect the feelings of their classmates after reading this poem.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For students who may need additional support with concretely expressing their feelings: Consider providing images of different emotions and asking students to match the emotion to the image. (MMAE)
- For students who may need additional support with complex vocabulary: Provide a thesaurus tool that gives alternative words for more simplistic emotions, such as *grief* for sadness or *elation* for happiness. Offer specific praise for students who use the tool appropriately and provide complex examples. (MMAE)
- For students who may find a blank page overwhelming: Consider providing a graphic organizer with individual sections for each emotion, as well as lines to add more complex vocabulary. (MMR, MMAE)
- For ELLs: Monitor reactions during the discussion of powerful emotions and support students as needed. Consider checking in with students about their reflections at another time.
- For ELLs: Consider displaying an illustrated emotions chart and inviting students to share emotional responses they had to Jack's poems and other poems in previous lessons.

B. Reading and Reflection: The Emotional Impact of "My Sky" (15 minutes)

- Ask students to retrieve their copies of *Love That Dog* and turn to page 68. Invite students to follow along, reading silently in their heads as you read the poem "My Sky" aloud.
- Afterward, if necessary based on the needs of your class, reassure students that feelings of sadness after reading about the death of a pet are natural. For some, these feelings may be quite strong due to life experience. Explain that writing often helps people deal with strong emotions and that you would like students to take some time to reflect in writing. Let them know their writing will not be shared unless they decide to share it privately, and that it will not be graded.
- Post the following reflection question, emphasizing that whatever students choose to write in response to this question is fine:
 - "What are you thinking or feeling after reading this poem?"
- The time needed for reflection will vary by class and individual. Circulate to support students who may need additional support as they write.

Meeting Students' Needs

- Consider providing a more scaffolded version of this activity by having a worksheet with more directed questions. For instance, include a line from the poem and ask:
"What did I feel after I read this line from the poem?" or "This line made me think ____."
Repeat this format with several important lines from the poem. (MMAE)
- For ELLs: Ask students about the meaning of chunks from a key sentence of "My Sky." Write and display student responses. Example:
 - "Place your finger on the chunk *and Sky closed his eyes and he never opened them again ever.*" Read the chunk aloud as students follow along.

- “What is the gist of this chunk? (Jack’s dog died.)
- “Can you write this chunk as two sentences?” (Sky closed his eyes. He never opened them again.)
- “Which is better for poetry, the long chunk or the two sentences? Which is better for prose? Why?” (The long chunk is better for poetry because it makes the words flow like the rest of the poem. The two sentences are better for prose because we write prose in complete sentences.)
- “What happens if we remove *and* and *ever*? Does the chunk have the same meaning?” (The meaning doesn’t change.)

C. Rereading and Discussion: What Inspired Jack to Write “My Sky”? (15 minutes)

- Refocus whole group. Discuss the following question as a class or have students discuss with their partner then share out their thoughts:
“Why did Jack write ‘My Sky?’”
- Listen for students to make connections to previous lessons about the meaning of the word *inspiration*. Consider prompting students with the following questions during the discussion:
“On pages 7 and 13, Jack told his teacher, ‘I don’t want to write about that blue car that had miles to go before it slept’ and ‘Yes, I used to have a pet, and no I don’t want to write about it.’ Now that you have read ‘My Sky,’ what can you infer about why he said these things?”
“After reading ‘My Sky,’ we know that Jack did end up writing about the blue car and his dog. What can you infer from the novel about why he changed his mind?”
- If productive, cue students to expand the conversation by saying more:
“Can you say more about that?” (Responses will vary.)
- Display and invite students to take out their **What Inspires Poets to Write Poetry? note-catcher**.
- Invite students to turn and talk with their partner, and cold call students to share out:
“What inspired Jack to write this poem?” (his dog Sky and reading poems by other poets)
- As students share out, capture their responses in the “What inspired the poet?” column and invite students to do the same on their copies. Refer to **What Inspires Poets to Write Poetry? note-catcher (example, for teacher reference)** as necessary.
- Invite students to turn and talk with their partner, and cold call students to share out:
“Where can you see evidence of this in the poem?” (Jack’s poem has “blue car blue car splattered with mud,” which is similar to a line from “The Tiger”; Jack’s poem has “Hey there, son!” which is from “Love That Boy”; Jack’s poem is about when his dog was hit by a car.)
- As students share out, capture their responses in the “Where can you see evidence of this in the poem?” column and invite students to do the same. Refer to **What Inspires Poets to Write Poetry? note-catcher (example, for teacher reference)** as necessary.

Meeting Students’ Needs

- For students who may need additional support with fine motor skills: Provide pre-written sticky notes or matching options on their note-catcher so that they may place the appropriate response in its correct column. (MMR, MMAE)

- For ELLs: To provide lighter support, invite intermediate students to create sentence frames to bolster participation during the discussion about what inspired Jack to write “My Sky.” Invite students who need heavier support to use the frames. (Example: “There is some evidence that ____ [famous poem] inspired Jack to write ‘My Sky.’ If you look on line ____ of ____ [famous poem], you’ll see ____.”)

Closing and Assessment

A. Reflecting on Learning (10 minutes)

- Tell students they are now going to use the Thumb-O-Meter protocol to reflect on their progress toward the learning targets. Remind them that they used this protocol in the previous lesson and review as necessary. Refer to the Classroom Protocols document for the full version of the protocol.
- Guide students through the Thumb-O-Meter protocol using the learning targets. Note students showing a thumb-sideways or thumb-down, so you can check in with them.
- Repeat, inviting students to self-assess against how well they showed empathy and compassion.
- Refocus whole group.
- Reread the third learning target and invite students to turn and talk to an elbow partner:
“How did our class perform overall with this learning target?” (Responses will vary.)
- If productive, cue students to expand the conversation by giving an example:
“Can you give an example?” (Responses will vary.)
- Remind students that this question is not about how individuals performed, but rather the class as a whole.
- Direct students’ attention to the posted **Discussion Norms anchor chart**. Ask:
“Is there anything we can add to our Discussion Norms anchor chart to help us remember to respect one another’s feelings during discussions in the future?” (Responses will vary; add patterns in student thinking as appropriate.)

Meeting Students’ Needs

- Build engagement around poetry by reminding students that poetry is a way to make sense of emotions—even ones that are painful. It also helps us understand how others are feeling and become more empathetic and compassionate people. This is one of the special powers of poetry and why it is an important form of written expression. (MME)
- For ELLs: Display and repeat the question. Ask:
“How did our class perform overall with this learning target?”
Rephrase the question. Ask:
“What is one way we met this learning target?”
“What is something we can do better?”

Homework

- A. Accountable Research Reading.** Select a prompt and respond in the front of your independent reading journal.
- B. Optional:** Think of a time you experienced a strong feeling such as happiness, sadness, anger, or another emotion. Write a poem about this experience in the “My Poems” section of your poetry journal.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with writing: Students may benefit from discussing and responding to their prompt orally, either with a partner or family member or by recording their response. (MMAE)
- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with reading and writing: Refer to the suggested homework support in Lesson 1. (MMAE, MMR)