

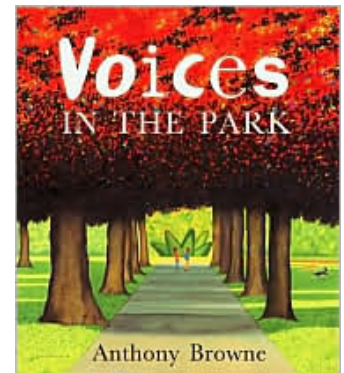
# Voices in the Park

By: Anthony Browne

**Purpose:** To help my students become better readers by making connections to the books they read.

**Goal:** For my students to enhance their understanding of characters emotions/feelings and build their EQ.

**Things to consider:** Creating inclusive lessons, assessment for learning, extensions, and texts for all levels.



## Lesson 1 - The Hook, Personalizing, and Communicating

● Open the lesson with a scenario that moves your students to think about their personal perspective. Example: Walk into class after lunch, ensuring that all (or most) of your students have their attention on you, and blatantly throw away a fine looking sandwich.

*Possible student perspectives:*

What a waste of food. I guess he/she didn't like that sandwich.

Her/his parents are going to be mad. That sandwich must be gross.

● After the skit, ask your students to fill out the graphic organizer of 'the head' with minimal instruction. The graphic organizer asks the students to draw a facial expression to show how they are feeling and to write what they are thinking in the thought bubble. Instead of communicating their thoughts in words, students may also choose to draw pictures.

● As students are completing the graphic organizer, walk around the room and get a grasp of the different perspectives. From this information, create a four-corner discussion. Each corner of the room can be designated as a specific student perspective (you may have to have a three or five cornered room!). Students are then asked to meet in their 'perspective groups' around the room. Begin facilitating a discussion around the scenario they have just witnessed. Emphasize that they all watched the same thing happen yet they have different feelings and perspectives of why it took place. Choose members from each 'perspective group' to explain either their initial feelings or thoughts.

● Wrap up the lesson by reiterating that each one of us has different life experiences and background knowledge, and therefore we often have different perspectives on situations.

## Extensions and Adaptations:

Photocopy a page of different facial expressions on the back of the organizer. This way, students who struggle with labeling emotions can have a visual guide to help them.

While students are working on their organizer, give some students a heads up that you will be asking them to share – this can be your more able or less able students. While facilitating the discussion, ask students questions that you feel they will feel excited or proud about answering – stretch their thinking!

If students are not finished sharing, go for a 'walk and talk', where they share their ideas in A/B partners while moving...great transition activity.



## Lesson 2 – Book Introduction

• Discuss yesterday's lesson. Hand back their graphic organizers and ask the students to take a look at the comments you made. How could have they improved? Explain that today they will be filling out the same organizer, only smaller. Instead of sharing their own perspectives, they will try to explain the perspective of characters in a book.

• Open the lesson with a brief discussion. "Have you ever been to a park? Why did you go to the park? Is that why everyone goes to the park?" Reveal the powerful book you are about to read. Explain the basic formatting of the book – perspectives/voices of four different people (or gorillas) will be shared. Share the assessment rubric with your students. Try to ensure they understand what is expected from them. A basic, simplified rubric may be needed for some students to feel successful.

• As you are reading, pause after each voice. Students may have the choice to fill out the graphic organizer for each voice during reading, at the pause, or both.

• After the book is read and the students have completed their four-square graphic organizer, ask the students to highlight where they think they are on their rubric. If they need to add to their organizer, they can! Partner the students up to go over one perspective together on the rubric. Have partners give suggestions on how each of them can improve.

• Compare and contrast each voice in the book. Having a better understanding of how the character is feeling and therefore acting, will give our students a deeper understanding of the book by making connections through the characters.

## Extensions and Adaptations:

No matter what level of emotional intelligence each student is at, they can be prompted to reach the next stage through your comments.

Some students are at the stage of labeling emotions in pictures, and others are able to understand emotions through speech and vocabulary. Try showing the book's illustrations on coloured overhead slides or on PowerPoint. The pictures greatly add to the voice of each character.

Students may be given the option to draw instead of writing the characters' thoughts in words.

You may wish to pair two able students, or create a more/less able partnership along the continuum. Maybe both! For accountability, you may want to share with the class what their partner told them. Or fill out a 'Give One – Get One' organizer.

## Assessment – how can I tell how much my students are learning...?

Day 1: Observe which students seem to have an understanding of perspectives. How easy was it for them to fill out the first graphic organizer? Who was comfortable sharing during '4 corners'? Who was open to listening to another perspective? Who was not? Make anecdotal notes.

Have students hand in their first graphic organizer – make only comments on this paper, instead of grades. Set aside time for students to read your comments and share with a partner how they would improve their work if they were to re-do or add to the organizer.

Day 2: Students will have the opportunity to mark their second organizer with the assignment rubric. Ensure they understand that they can always go back and add more to their work! After students have marked their own organizer, and received suggestions for their partner, have them hand in both their organizer and rubric for you to assess also.

## DIVERSE TEXTS:

- Flipped – Wendelin Van Draanen (*novel ≈ grade 6/7 reading level*)
- SeedFolks – Paul Fleischman (*skinny novel ≈ grade 6 reading level*)
- Tight Times – Barbara Shook Hazen (*picture book ≈ grade 6/7 understanding*)

## STORIES FROM DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES:

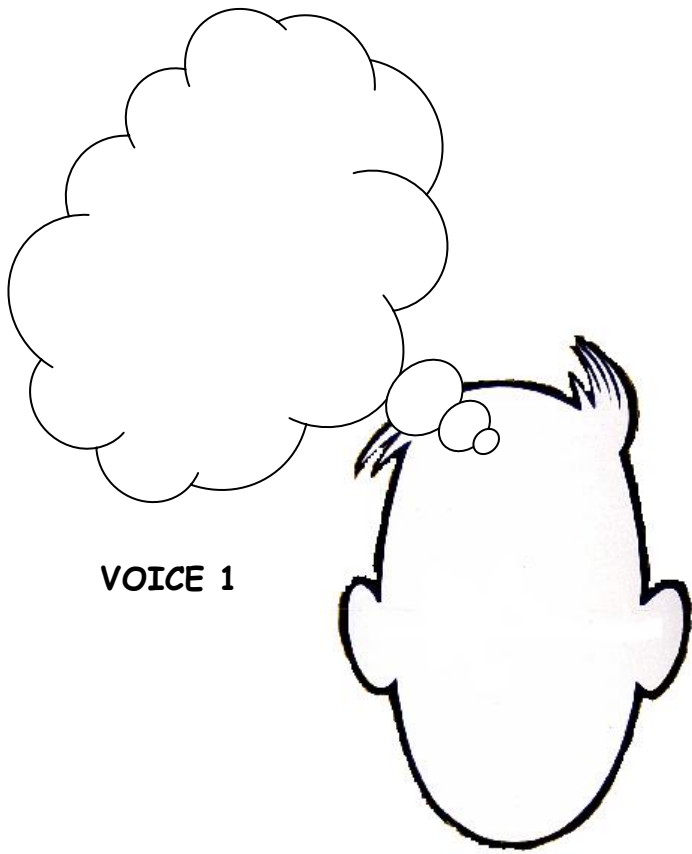
- Seven Blind Mice – Ed Young (*picture book ≈ primary level of understanding*)
- Who is the Beast? – Keith Baker (*picture book ≈ primary level of understanding*)
- Once Upon a Cool Motorcycle Dude – Kevin O'Malley (*picture book ≈ intermediate level*)
- The True Story of the Three Little Pigs – (*picture book ≈ primary or intermediate level*)

Draw a facial expression to show how you are *feeling* and explain what you are *thinking* in the bubble:



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Emotion: \_\_\_\_\_



VOICE 1

Emotion: \_\_\_\_\_



VOICE 2

Emotion: \_\_\_\_\_



VOICE 3

Emotion: \_\_\_\_\_



VOICE 4

Emotion: \_\_\_\_\_