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Kenn Nesbitt Poems

Information for students

Kenn Nesbitt is the author of many funny poems and books for children. We will look at two of his poems that have similar themes and styles, but slightly different rhyme patterns. It's a good idea to read each poem more than once. You may even want to read them out loud to really hear the rhymes and rhythms. After reading each poem, look at the questions that follow and, if possible, discuss your answers with a friend or family member.

1. Read the first poem.

Running Late

I overslept. I'm running late.
My mom is making such a fuss.
If I so much as hesitate
I probably will miss the bus.

I grab my socks and underwear
and quickly pull on all my clothes.
I haven't time to comb my hair
or brush my teeth or blow my nose.

I wolf my breakfast, kiss my mom,
and barrel madly out the door.
I'm feeling anything but calm.
I've never been this late before.

I run like crazy down the street.
I check my watch. It's almost eight.
I wish I'd had some more to eat,
but, man, I simply can't be late.

I barely make it there in time.
To miss the bus would not be cool.
I wouldn't mind except that I'm
the guy who drives the kids to school.

— Kenn Nesbitt

Nesbitt, K. (2010). *When the Teacher Isn't Looking: And other Funny School Poems*. Running Press Book Publishers. <https://www.poetry4kids.com/poems/running-late/>

Do you like this poem? What is your favourite part of the poem? Were you surprised by the ending? What part or parts of the poem made you think you were reading about a child?

2. Now read the second poem.

I’m Staying Home From School Today

I’m staying home from school today.
 I’d rather be in bed
 pretending that I have a pain
 that’s pounding in my head.

I’ll say I have a stomachache.
 I’ll claim I’ve got the flu.
 I’ll shiver like I’m cold
 and hold my breath until I’m blue.

I’ll fake a cough. I’ll fake a sneeze.
 I’ll say my throat is sore.
 If necessary, I can throw
 a tantrum on the floor.

I’m sure I’ll get away with it.
 Of that, there’s little doubt.
 But, even so, I really hope
 my students don’t find out.

— Kenn Nesbitt

Nesbitt, K. (2007). *Revenge of the Lunch Ladies: The Hilarious Book of School Poetry*. Running Press Book Publishers. <https://www.poetry4kids.com/poems/im-staying-home-from-school-today/>

Do you like this poem? Who is this poem about? Were you surprised by the ending or did the first poem give you a clue that there could be a surprise ending again?

3. Use the chart below to compare the two poems. Which one is your favourite? Why do you like that one best?

	Running Late	I’m Staying Home From School Today
Write a ✓ or x under each column. ✓ = true x = false		
This poem is related to school.		
This poem has a surprise ending.		
This poem is written in rhyme.		
Write your answer under each column.		
Who is this poem about?		
What part of the story made you think it was about a student (child)?		
Is the rhyme pattern ABCB or ABAB? (ABCB = line 2 and 4 rhyme; ABAB = line 1 rhymes with line 3 and line 2 rhymes with line 4)		

English Language Arts

4. Use the information above to tell someone about the similarities and differences of the two poems. Here are some phrases that can help you.
- These poems are both about school. The author makes you think they are about students but actually, the main characters are _____ and _____
 - The author included some funny parts like _____ that make the reader think the poems are about kids
 - These poems are both written in rhyme but, _____
5. Now it's your turn to be creative. Write a funny poem, story, or comic strip about someone else who works at school and give it a surprise ending like Kenn Nesbitt did.
- First, think about all the people you know who work in a school. Here are some ideas: secretary, principal, custodian, lunch monitor, librarian, daycare educator, aide, etc. Choose one as your main character.
 - Next, decide if your character will be running late or simply does not want to go to school that day. Make a list of all the reasons why your character is feeling that way. Use exaggerated excuses like Kenn Nesbitt did to make it funny. Think about ideas that relate to a child, so your reader will believe the story is about a student.
 - Decide if you want to write a poem, short story, or comic strip. See the tips on the next page to get started.

Tips for creating a poem	Write it as a list poem. Your poem does not have to rhyme. If you choose to make it rhyme, you can use the ABCB pattern, the ABAB pattern or a different pattern like the AABB pattern, where two lines together rhyme. Remember to use exaggerated excuses to make it humorous. End your last line by revealing who the character really is.
Tips for creating a story	Give your story a beginning, middle, and end. The beginning will tell us about the character's problem, but in this surprise story, it will not tell us who the character is. The middle will be full of hilarious, exaggerated excuses. The story will end with a surprise conclusion where the reader discovers who the character really is.
Tips for creating a comic strip	Draw about six squares where you can draw pictures of your character. Use speech and thought bubbles to show what the character is thinking and saying. Remember to use exaggerated excuses so that it is comical. In the last square, reveal who the character really is.

Materials required

- Pencil and paper
- A printout of the activity, if possible

Information for parents

About the activity

Children could:

- read more of Kenn Nesbitt’s poems on his website at <https://www.poetry4kids.com/poems/>
- not all of his poems rhyme or have surprise endings, but they sure are entertaining!

Parents should:

- read the instructions and the poems with your child, if necessary
- help your child decide if they will write a poem, story, or comic strip

Nos amies les abeilles

Information for students

Nos amies les abeilles travaillent très fort pour fabriquer du bon miel doré.

Lis le texte sur les abeilles et réponds aux questions à l'aide du texte. Tu vas apprendre plein de belles choses sur le travail important de chacune des abeilles.

Instructions

- Comme première étape, lis le texte qui est en annexe.
- Surligne l'information importante : les nouveaux mots.
- Réponds aux questions à l'aide du texte.

Pour aller plus loin

Tu peux construire une grille de mots cachés avec les nouveaux mots de vocabulaire que tu as appris. Tu pourrais aussi observer une abeille qui butine sur les fleurs de ton jardin ou de ta cour. Illustre ce que tu vois !

Materials required

- Crayon et papier
- Surligneur

Information for parents

About the activity

Children could:

- read the text on bees, highlight the important information and read the text a second time
- answer the questions in the appendix and talk about the bees' lives inside the beehive
- write down three things they have learned from the text
- observe a bee at work in the garden or the backyard

Parents should:

- read with their child
- have a discussion about the various jobs for bees in the beehive
- help their child conduct a word search for new vocabulary in the text

Appendix – Nos amies les abeilles

Information for students

- Lis le texte
- Surligne les mots importants
- Réponds aux questions à l'aide du texte

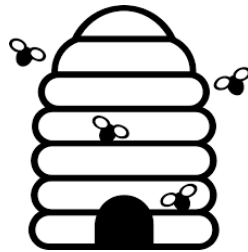
Nos amies les abeilles!

Petites abeilles

Votre ruche est une merveille !

La reine est le chef et la maman

D'une grande famille remplie d'enfants.



Vous êtes organisées

Vous avez des tâches spécialisées.

Vous travaillez jour et nuit

Vous vivez en colonie.

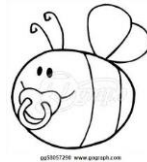


Les nourrices s'occupent des petits,

Les ventileuses aèrent l'abri.

Les architectes et les maçons,

Construisent l'intérieur de la maison.



Les ouvrières explorent le ciel.

Les magasinieres fabriquent le miel.

Les butineuses visitent les fleurs,

Les gardiennes protègent contre tous visiteurs!



Trois parties forment votre corps

Tête, thorax et abdomen, vous êtes des insectes forts!

Dans vos petites poches vous cachez

Le pollen que vous ramassez

Pour faire du miel bien doré !



French as a Second Language

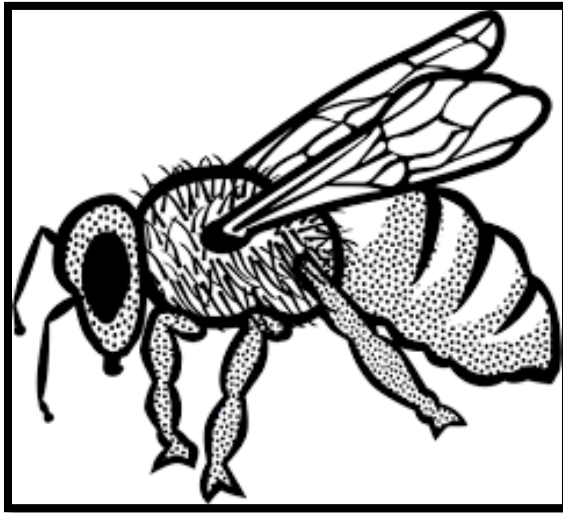
NOS AMIES, LES ABEILLES!



1. Comment s'appelle le chef de la colonie ? _____.
2. Les abeilles qui vont chercher le pollen et le nectar se nomment _____.
3. Qui construit l'intérieur de la maison ? _____.
4. Les trois parties du corps de cet insecte sont : _____, _____, _____.
5. Je prépare le miel, je suis une _____.
6. Trouve, dans le texte deux mots qui riment : _____ rime avec _____.
7. Comment s'appelle la maison des abeilles ? _____.
8. Les abeilles qui s'occupent des petits sont les _____.
9. Nous gardons la ruche propre et en ordre, nous sommes les _____.
10. La reine n'aime pas avoir chaud alors nous travaillons pour lui donner du vent. Nous sommes les _____.



Écris toutes les parties que tu connais sur cette abeille :



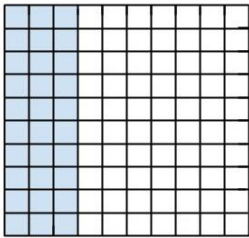
Écris trois nouvelles choses que tu connais maintenant sur les abeilles :

Comparing with a 10 x 10 Grid

Information for students

Decimals extend the place-value system to represent parts of a whole. A big difference between whole numbers and decimals is the strategies we can use to compare them. With whole numbers, you can rely on the number of digits to provide a sense of relative size. When comparing decimals, the number of digits is not important; it is the place value of the digit that matters.

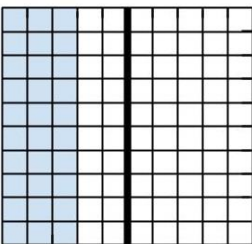
- To help you get a sense of the relative size of decimal numbers and to help you compare numbers written in decimal or fractional notation, you can use a 10 x 10 grid.
- For example, the fraction $\frac{3}{10}$ could be modelled by shading three of the ten columns in the 10 x 10 grid.



- The same image could be used to model 0.3 and 0.30. Can you explain why? (*Hint: How would you read these numbers?*)
- How could the 10 x 10 grid help you compare different decimal numbers?
- Could it also help you compare decimals and fractions?

Another strategy to help us determine the relative size of decimals and fractions is to compare them to certain benchmark numbers, like 0, $\frac{1}{2}$, and 1.

- In the 10 x 10 grid below, there is a thicker black line that represents $\frac{1}{2}$.



- Is 0.3 closer to 0, $\frac{1}{2}$ or 1? How does the representation in the 10 x 10 grid help you answer the question?

Materials required

- Pencil
- Coloured pencils (optional)
- Appendix A (task)

Information for parents

About the activity

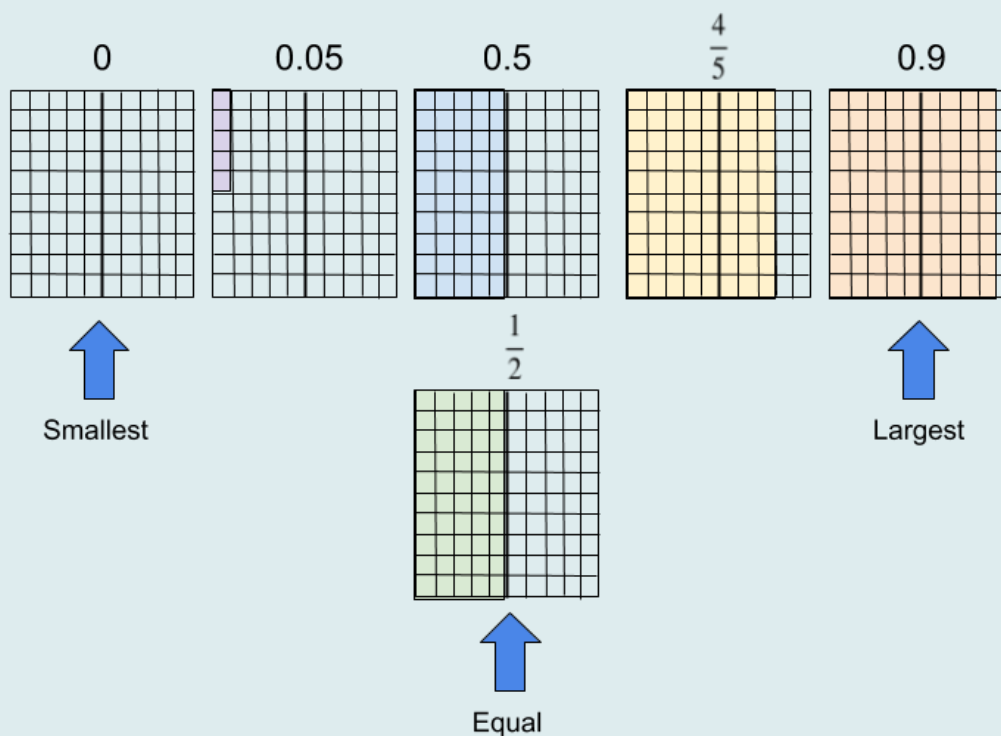
Children should:

- use the example above to help them get started, if necessary
- colour in the 10 x 10 grid for each number before answering the questions

Parents could:

- read through the instructions with their child, if necessary
- print Appendix A with the activity and the 10 x 10 grids
- encourage their child to justify their answers
- check their child's answers against the solutions below and help them identify possible reasons why their first solution may look different from the solutions below
- encourage their child to revise their solutions, if necessary

Solutions:



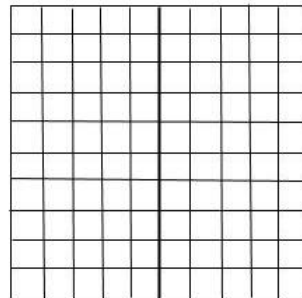
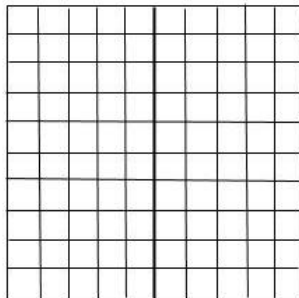
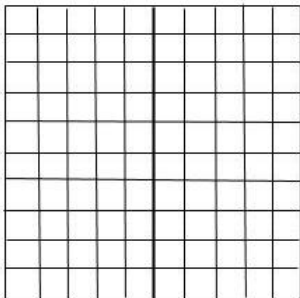
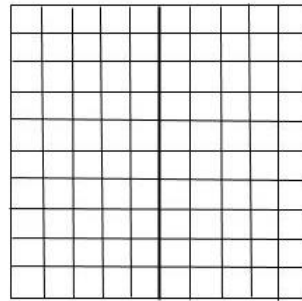
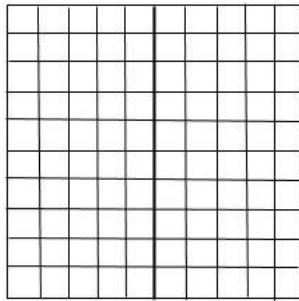
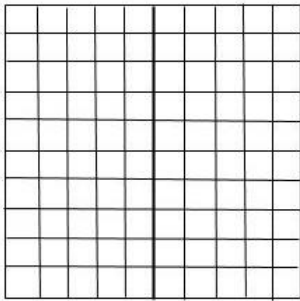
Appendix A – Comparing Decimals

Consider these 6 numbers:

$$0.5 \quad \frac{4}{5} \quad 0.9 \quad \frac{1}{2} \quad 0 \quad 0.05$$

Using the 10 x 10 grids to represent your thinking, answer the following questions:

- Which number is the largest, and which number is the smallest?
- Which number is closest to zero, and which number is closest to one?
- Which numbers are less than five tenths, and which numbers are greater than five tenths?
- Which numbers are equal? Closest together? Furthest apart?



Earth's Rotation

Information for students

Ask yourself these questions:

- Does the sun travel across the sky, from morning to night?
- How do we get day and night?
- Which way should you face to see the sun in the morning? In the middle of the day? In the afternoon? As it is setting?
- Are you always facing the same direction or a different direction?
- Where is the sun when it is nighttime?

Watch [video](#)

Materials required

- Paper
- Pencil
- Colour pencils (black, red, blue, yellow, and green)
- Device with Internet access
- A watch or clock
- Sidewalk chalk
- Appendix A: Day and Night
- Appendix B: Time to reflect
- Appendix C: Create a Human Sundial

Information for parents

About the activity

Children should:

- pair up with another person and model the earth (student) rotating in front of the sun (another person)

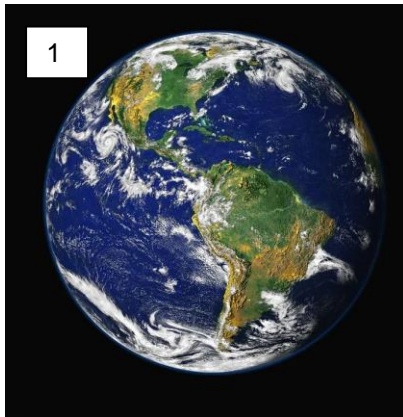
Parents could:

- help their child with the questions in Appendix B (for example, by asking: How many days are there in a week, in the month of June, and in a year?)
- help their child create a human sundial

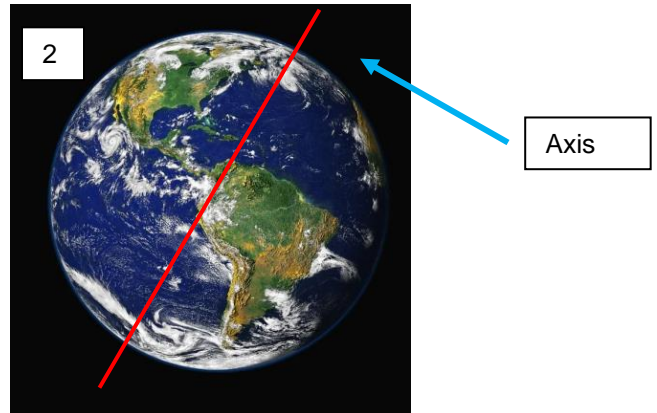
Appendix A: Rotation – Day and Night

Information for students

This is Earth.¹



The earth is tilted. The red line represents the earth's axis. The **axis** is an imaginary line that runs from the North pole through the center of the earth to the South pole.



This is a toy top.²



- What is the top doing? Can you find its axis?
- The earth rotates or spins like the toy top. However, the earth is tilted, as you can see by the axis in picture 2 above.

Rotation: when something turns around an axis or centre.

- Can you think of other things that rotate?
- To see the Earth rotate on its axis, watch this [video](#)

Let's return to the first question asked above: Does the sun travel across the sky, from morning to night?

- The answer is no, it does not. It just looks that way. It is the earth's rotation that makes the sun look like it is moving across the sky, but it is not moving.

The sun does not travel across the sky. It looks as if it does because the earth rotates or spins on its axis.

¹ Wiki Images, "Earth Blue Planet Globe Planet World Spce" December 14, 2011, PNG, Pixabay.com <https://pixabay.com/photos/earth-blue-planet-globe-planet-11015/> Retrieved May 25, 2020.

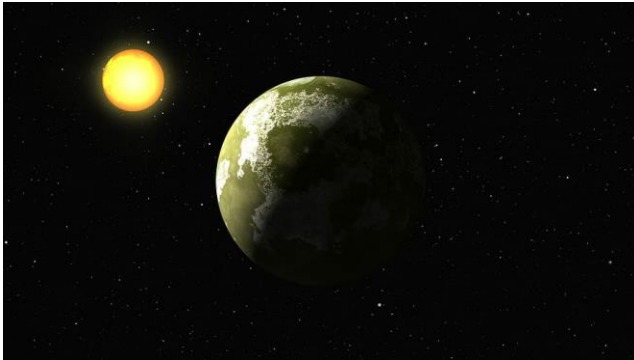
² "Blue and green spin top spinning on brown surface" (n.d.). JPEG, Pikrepo.com, <https://www.pikrepo.com/fvmdl/blue-and-green-spin-top-spinning-on-brown-surface>, retrieved May 26, 2020.

Science and Technology

- The earth spins one full turn on its axis every 24 hours. How many hours are in a day? That is right—24 hours!

Therefore, the earth completes one full rotation each day. 1 rotation = 24 hours (1 day)

- In this picture, you can see the earth in space, near the sun.³



- One side of the earth faces the sun while the other side does not. Since the earth rotates, every area on earth experiences daylight and nighttime during one rotation.
- When you are in your science class, Canada is facing the sun. When you are sleeping, Canada is no longer facing the sun (it is another country's turn!).

The earth's rotation causes daytime and nighttime to happen.

To see an animation of how the Earth's rotation creates day and night, watch this [video](#).

³ "moon, sun illustration, Planet, Cosmos, Sun, Universe, star, solar system, galaxy, night," (n.d.) JPEG, Pxfuel.com, <https://www.pxfuel.com/en/free-photo-exgve> retrieved May 29, 2020.

Appendix B: Time to Reflect

Information for students

Directions: Answer the questions below.

Using the information 1 rotation = 1 day, can you answer these questions?

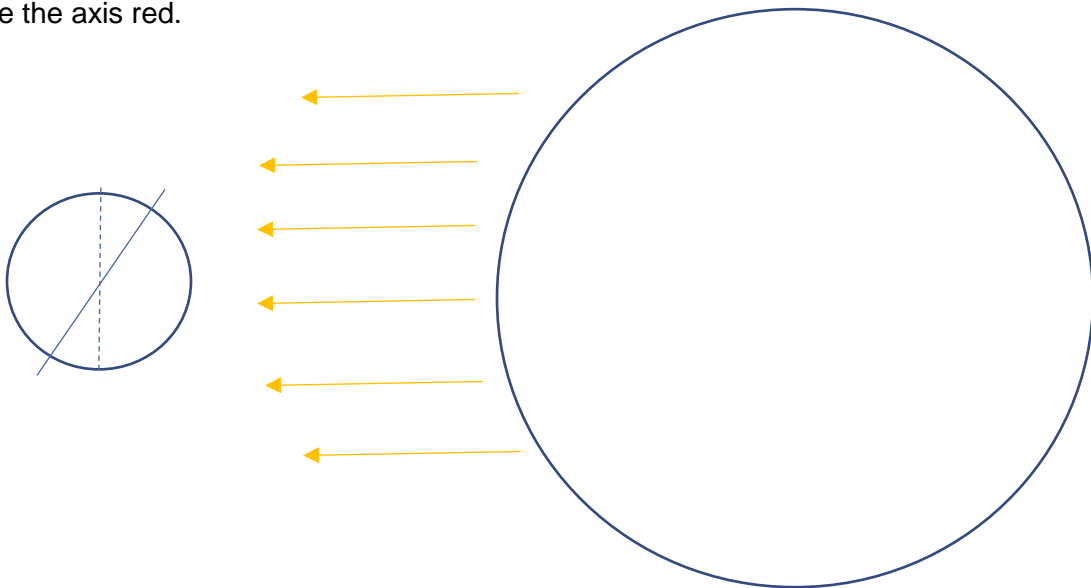
1. How many times would you have to turn around to simulate one week?
2. How many times would you have to turn around to simulate the month of June?
3. How many times would you have to turn around to simulate a whole year?

What do you think?

4. What would happen if the earth stopped rotating? Think of all the possible changes.
5. Would this situation be a problem? Explain.

The earth and Sun are shown below:

1. Colour the sun yellow.
2. Colour the side of the earth closest to the sun green and blue.
3. Colour the opposite side of the earth black.
4. Trace the axis red.



Appendix C: Create a Human Sundial

Information for students

The earth's rotation puts the sun in different positions in the sky at different times of the day. As a result, if you were to stand in the same place outside, from sunrise to sunset, you would see your shadow change position each hour. Watch this 20 second [video](#).

Guess what? You can use this situation to create a sundial. A sundial is a tool that tells time by using shadows cast by the sun. You can create a human sundial. The first day, you will need to use a watch to create your sundial. However, afterwards, you can use your human sundial to tell time.

Curious? Watch this short [video](#).

Jump Your Way to Gratitude

Information for students

Activity 1: The importance of gratitude

- Watch the following video to learn about the gratitude practice:
 - Video: [Gratitude Affirmations Practice](#)
- Discuss what you learned about gratitude with a member of your family.
- Reflection idea: You could make a graffiti design on a piece of paper to illustrate your gratitude. You can choose a few words that represent your gratitude and design them on the paper in bright, bold letters.
- Look at [this activity page by PHE Canada](#).

Activity 2: Kneel jump

- Watch the following video and attempt the “Kneel Jump:”
 - Video: [Arctic Winter Games: Kneel jump requires strength, dexterity, flexibility](#)
- Look at [this activity page by PHE Canada](#)
- Give it a try!

Materials required

- Measuring tape

Information for parents

About the activity

Children should:

- learn about the importance of gratitude
- try the Kneel Jump

Parents could:

- ask their children about what they have learned about gratitude
- support their children by engaging with them in any way they can in the Kneel Jump

Functions of an Object: Imaginary or Utilitarian?

Information for students

Learn the difference between imaginary and utilitarian objects. This drama workshop is fun for everyone and gives you the opportunity to showcase your creativity and improvisational skills!

- In order to better understand the difference between the two functions, watch the following video: <https://youtu.be/xHINVUAZkyU>.
- Play along by following the simple steps below:
 1. Find any object and at least one partner.
 2. As stated in the video, make sure the object is harmless.
 3. Define the object's utilitarian function with a gesture.
- Now you can start!
 1. Using only gestures, show an imaginary function for that object. Do this quickly, without thinking too hard. This is improvisation: you are being creative and having fun!
 2. Once successfully guessed by the other participant(s), pass the same object to the next person. If you are out of ideas, don't stall, just pass it on to the next person. Stalling will disrupt the rhythm. Besides, you'll come up with another idea soon.
 3. Continue until all the participants are out of ideas.
 4. Find a different utilitarian object and repeat the steps.
- REMEMBER: Do not say what the imaginary object is. Just show it!

Materials required

- Device with Internet access for watching the video
- Random household objects
- Drama vocabulary to express appreciation, choices and process

Actor: A person who is interpreting the role of a dramatic character.

Actress: The feminine term for actor.

Attitude: The physical and emotional way a character holds their body throughout a performance.

Direction of gaze: the direction in which a dramatic character shows the audience where he or she is looking. Controlled by the actor, it is typically intended to maintain coherence and audience engagement.

Dramatic character: An invented person that can be interpreted by an actor or actress.

Gesture: A passing action performed with the body (usually head and/or arms) that says something. A gesture can be accompanied by words or sounds but, can also stand on its own.

Interpret: Giving life to a dramatic character.

Imaginary function: Pretending an object is something else. For example: using a tennis racket for a guitar.

Utilitarian function: Using an object for what it was intended to do. For example: using scissors to cut out paper.

Information for parents

About the activity

The purpose of this activity is to allow the participant to be a quick, creative thinker and to have fun and laugh.

Parents should:

- encourage the student to be creative and imaginative
- make sure the student selects harmless objects for this activity
- encourage the student to use the proper dramatic vocabulary when differentiating between imaginary functions of an object, utilitarian functions of an object, gestures, rhythm, improvisation and creativity
- offer to be a participant in this activity

Should We Always Tell the Truth?

Information for students

Think about what you already know on the importance of telling the truth. Now ask yourself, "Have I ever told a lie?" The answer is probably yes. Why do you think that is? In this Ethics and Religious Culture lesson, you will reflect on ethical questions about lying and telling the truth as you read three classic fables that were written over 2000 years ago, by a storyteller named Aesop.

- Take time to reflect on the ethical questions listed below before you read the fables.
 - Why is honesty valued?
 - Is it always necessary to tell the truth?
 - Is lying acceptable if one doesn't get caught?
 - Is lying acceptable if it's to protect someone?
- Read each fable one at a time.
- At the end of each fable, reflect again on the ethical questions. Did your thoughts or opinions change? Did you think of something that you hadn't thought of earlier?
- Discuss your thoughts and opinions with someone in your home.

Materials required

- The three fables in the Appendix: The Golden Axe, The Dog and the Wolf, and The Boy Who Cried Wolf

Information for parents

About the activity

Children could:

- remember a time when they told the truth and it was helpful. Discuss why
- remember a time when they felt that the truth would cause more harm than good. Discuss why

Parents should:

- using the stories, support their child in examining how telling the truth and lying contribute to or detract from group life
- through discussion, encourage their child to identify some of the values and norms that guide group life

Source: This lesson is an excerpt taken from LEARN Québec, Ethics and Religious Culture: Learning and Evaluation Situation; Truth & Lying, Elementary Cycle Two (June 2011).

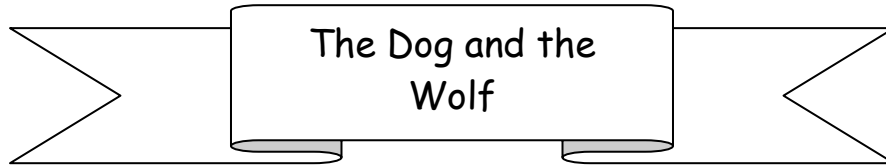
Appendix – Should We Always Tell the Truth?



One day a woodsman was cutting down a tree when his axe flew off and sunk into the river nearby. The god Mercury appeared to the man and seeing that he was so sad over his loss dived into the river and brought up a golden axe. The woodman said that it wasn't his axe. Mercury went down into the river again and came up with a silver axe. The woodman again said that it wasn't his axe. For a third time Mercury dived into the river and returned with an ordinary axe. This time the woodman said that it was his axe and that he was very grateful. Mercury admired the man's honesty and rewarded him with the golden and silver axe as well.

When a friend of the woodman heard the story, he decided to do the same thing as the woodman had done. He went to the river and threw in his old axe. Once again Mercury appeared and dived in the river to recover the axe. When he came up with a golden axe, the man reached for it saying it was his. Mercury was not very happy with the man's dishonesty; he kept the golden axe, and refused to recover the man's own axe.

~Adapted from Aesop's Fables



One day a dog was lying in the sun in front of the farmyard gate. Along came a wolf and pounced on him ready to devour him. The dog begged for his life. He said "Right now I am very thin and bony and I would make a wretched meal for you. If you let me go and wait a few days my master is going to give a feast. I will get all the leftover scraps to eat. This will make me very fat and juicy and then you can enjoy a sumptuous meal."

The wolf thought about it and decided that it was a very good plan. He would wait until the dog was fattened up.

A few days later, the wolf showed up at the farmyard once again. The dog was lying out of reach high on the barn roof.

"Come down from there," called the wolf. "It is time for me to eat you. Remember our agreement?"

The dog gave the wolf a cool glare and said, "My good friend, if you ever catch me lying down by the gate again, don't wait for any feast."

~Adapted from Aesop's Fables



THE BOY WHO CRIED
WOLF

A shepherd boy was watching the village sheep on a hillside, when he began to feel bored and lonely. Although no wolf was in sight, he called out, “Wolf! Wolf! A wolf is after the sheep!” in order to bring the villagers out of their houses.

The villagers came running to help; the shepherd boy laughed when they found no wolf.

A while later, feeling bored once again, the boy again called out, “Wolf! Wolf!” A second time the villagers came running to help; once again, they found no wolf.

Finally a real wolf appeared, drawing close to the sheep. Terrified, the boy screamed, “Wolf! Wolf!” But the villagers, thinking he was simply bored again, did not come.

The boy could not stop the wolf from scattering all the sheep. “Why didn’t you come when I called?” he asked the villagers.

They answered, “A liar is never believed . . . even when he tells the truth.”

Adapted from Aesop’s Fables