

THE MAGIC BEADS

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EDCI 305A: Drama Education as a Medium for Learning 1

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

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## The Magic Beads Story Drama

Based on *The Magic Beads*, written by Susan Nielsen-Fernlund and illustrated by Genèvieve Côté.

### Abstract/Summary:

This book is about a young girl named Lillian who is going to be attending a new school. The teacher does show and tell regularly and Lillian is anxious about what she should bring. Lillian and her mother live in a transition shelter because her father was abusive and they have little money. The butterflies in her stomach transform into bigger animals throughout the week leading up to show and tell. She ends up bringing a string of ‘magic beads,’ which surprisingly, the other students adore. The students accept Lillian because they are fascinated by her imagination when using the magic beads, and they want to play with them as well.

(Nielsen-Fernlund, 2007). The activities below allow students to explore anxiety/nervousness and use their imagination to put themselves in Lillian's shoes.

### Description of the Book Cover:

The book cover has a young girl on the front (Lillian) who is holding a string of beads. It also shows butterflies flying around her, with the title near the top.

### Why did we choose this book?

We chose this book because anxiety is something nearly everyone experiences, regardless if they have an anxiety disorder. The new curriculum focuses more on mental health than the old curriculum. For this reason, we thought that this book was a good example of a student who battles with mental health.

- This story raises awareness about diversity and shows that a classroom is a place where children of all socioeconomic statuses come together to learn and play.
- The protagonist displays some anxiety, which all children can relate to.

- The story shows a different perspective that some children may not have experienced before. It could demonstrate to those of higher socioeconomic status that not everyone is fortunate enough to not worry about having a roof over their head.

#### Key Understandings and Questions

- Anxiety is recognized and an acceptable medical condition.
- How can we use our imagination to make things exciting?

#### Focused Drama Learning Outcomes (Grade 3/4)

- “Participate in a variety of drama forms” (BC Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 23).
- “Engage actively in drama presentations” (BC Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 25).
- “Express a variety of ideas and perspectives through drama” (BC Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 26).

#### Cross-Curricular Outcomes

- Health Education
  - Mental Health (anxiety)
- Social Studies
  - Marginalized Children, Socioeconomic Status, Diversity
- Language Arts
  - Writing in Role

#### 1. Exploring Words

10 minutes

**Grouping: Whole Class**

**Strategy: Class Discussion/Building Lists**

**Administration: Whiteboard and Markers**

**Focus: Finding connections to words/themes from the text**

*Divide the whiteboard in two. Write the words anxiety and home in the two sections.*

Teacher: We are going to do an activity to help us get familiar with some words that relate to the story we are going to read today.

As a class, we will be discussing two words:

ANXIOUS and HOME

I want you to share what these words mean to you and how they make you feel. I will record your thoughts on the board. [*They share and you record*]

*After sharing, go through and highlight some of the key thoughts. Allow for student explanations of what they said if necessary.*

Teacher: Are there any other comments or thoughts anyone wants to share? [They share].

2. Transition/Delving into to the story 5 minutes

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**Grouping: Whole class**

**Strategy: Story Reading**

**Administration: Text of *The Magic Beads***

**Focus: To reflect and listen**

Teacher: The words we just brainstormed have connections to the book that we are going to start reading now.

As we read, I want you to pay close attention to where the words we talked about connect to the story.

Teacher Reads From: The beginning to “you know that” (Nielsen-Ferland, 2007).

3. Improv Pairs 5 minutes

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**Grouping: Pairs**

**Strategy: Improvisation**

**Administration: None**

**Focus: To put oneself in the role of the characters.**

Teacher: On the last page we read, we learned that Lillian doesn't have any of her own toys and also doesn't have enough money to buy one. Lillian is now anxious about what to bring on Friday for show and tell.

You are going to put yourselves in the shoes of either Lillian or her mother. Are there any volunteers that would like to demonstrate this activity with me? [They volunteer]

*Model the activity with a student volunteer.*

Teacher: Find a partner and choose who is going to be partner A and partner B [they do].

Partner A, you will be Lillian's mother and partner B, you will be Lillian. You know that Lillian wants a new toy, but her mother said no. I want you to continue this conversation in role. How do you think each character is feeling? What else do you think they might say?

This is called improvisation. You need to find a space with your partner [They do].

Decide who will speak first [They do].

*Depending on the ability of the students, it may be helpful to suggest a few opening lines to get the conversation started.*

Teacher: Is everyone ready to start? Okay, you may play out your scene [They do].

*After the scene.*

Teacher: How did the conversations go? What ideas did you come up with? [They share].

4. Reading the Story

1 minute

**Grouping: Whole Class**

**Strategy: Story Reading**

**Administration: Text of *The Magic Beads*, student journals, and pencils**

**Focus: To listen and pay attention to Lillian's feelings.**

Teacher: As we read, I want you to pay attention to how Lillian is feeling in the story. In your journals, write down any emotions you notice Lillian feeling in the book.

Teacher reads from: "That night" to "taken her away" (Nielsen-Fernlund, 2007).

5. Conscience Alley

5 minutes

**Grouping: Whole class divided into two groups**

**Strategy: Conscience Alley**

**Administration: None**

**Focus: To reflect on Lillian's emotions.**

Teacher: After reading this section of the story, we can see that Lillian is struggling with her emotions. She understands why her mother and her live in the shelter, but she has mixed feelings about it.

I want you to think about a word or phrase that describes how Lillian is feeling. You are going to be split into two groups and line up on either side of me. Then you will take turns saying the word or phrase you came up with to describe Lillian's feelings. We are going to imagine that Lillian is going to be walking down the hallway in the shelter.

Can we all agree that when I turn around I will be playing the role of Lillian and walk through the hallway you have created? [They do].

Teacher in role as Lillian: I have been feeling sad about moving and starting a new life.

*Walk through the alley and the students on either side of you take turns reciting what they came up with.*

Teacher coming out of role: Thank you for expressing Lillian's emotions. She clearly has a lot on her mind.

Is there anything else anyone would like to share? [They do].

6. Reading the Story

1 minute

**Grouping: Whole Class**

**Strategy: Reading Aloud**

**Administration: Text of *The Magic Beads***

**Focus: To listen and observe Lillian's imagination.**

Teacher: Now it is Lillian's turn to do show and tell. I want you to pay attention to how she uses her imagination.

Teacher reads from: "On Friday" to "the class was silent" (Nielsen-Fernland, 2007).

### 7. Tableaux

6 minutes

**Grouping: Groups of 5**

**Strategy: Tableau**

**Administration: Strings of beads**

**Focus: To use one's imagination.**

Teacher: Now we will all get into groups of five. I will give each group their own string of magic beads. After your group receives their string, you will create a tableau that displays something you would do with Lillian's magic beads.

The student who you nominate as the main character (Lillian) will hold the string of beads when you are presenting.

Just to remind you all, Lillian imagined her beads as a leash for her elephant, a snake, a magic wand, and a tightrope at the circus. As a group, you will choose the most creative thing for your beads to be. It can be something that Lillian already did with her beads, or you can come up with a new idea.

You will have about 2 minutes to come up with a tableau. When I call you back, you will present your tableau to the class.

*After the students come up with their tableaux.*

Teacher: Now each group will show their tableau to the class. The rest of the class will close their eyes until the group that is presenting is ready and I will let you know when that is [The class shares].

### 8. Moulding the Show and Tell

10 minutes

**Grouping: Pairs**

**Strategy: Moulding**

**Administration: None**

**Focus: What would you bring to show and tell?**

Teacher: Now, we are going to explore what you would bring to show and tell. You are going to be in partners, and one partner will be the sculptor who moulds the other into what they would bring for show and tell. The partner who is being moulded will be like clay and shift their body based on what the sculptor says. Does someone want to volunteer to demonstrate the activity with me? [They volunteer].

*You will be the sculptor and mould a student, so they can see what you would bring to show and tell.*

Teacher: Now that I have demonstrated, get into pairs [They do]. Choose who is going to be the sculptor and the clay. Practice the activity so you can show the class [They do].

*Give students about three minutes to get ready (more if needed).*

Teacher: Who would like to share with the class? [They share].

*If there is time, have students switch roles, so the clay can become the sculptor and vice versa.*

9. Miming the animals

10 minutes

**Grouping: Individual work**

**Strategy: Miming**

**Administration: A hat and paper slips to write animal names**

**Focus: To bring animals to life**

Teacher: Let's think back to the parts of the book where Lillian felt anxious. We remember that when Lillian felt anxious, she could feel different animals running around in her stomach. Lillian felt butterflies, grasshoppers, bunny rabbits, donkeys, and buffalos.



*Go through each of the animals and demonstrate how you would mime it to give students an example. Have students 'warm-up' for the activity by rubbing their hands together.*

Now, it is your turn to become those animals. You are going to mime the animal that I call when I draw their names from the hat.

We don't make any noise because this is miming, and mimes are silent. You are going to use your bodies to mimic what each animal might do.

*For each animal, give the students about a minute to mime it.*

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10. Finishing the Story 1 minute

**Grouping: Whole Class**

**Strategy: Reading Aloud**

**Administration: The text *The Magic Beads***

**Focus: To listen.**

Teacher: Now we are going to finish reading our story.

Teacher reads from: "Then suddenly" to "the end" (Nielsen-Fernlund, 2007).

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11. Writing in Role 10 minutes

**Grouping: Individual**

**Strategy: Writing in role**

**Administration: Paper and pencils**

**Focus: To reflect on Lillian's emotions**

Teacher: Now I want you to think about how Lillian is feeling after the show and tell. How does it compare to what she felt at the beginning of the story? Did the show and tell go better or worse than she expected? I want you to write down your response.

*Give the students roughly five minutes to do this or more if they are struggling to come up with ideas.*

Teacher: I want you to underline the word or phrase that best describes Lillian's feelings after the show and tell. Would anyone like to share with the class? [They do].

*After they share*

Teacher: Clearly, Lillian was nervous, but her classmates found her magic beads interesting and she was able to make a friend. She overcame some of her nervousness and her classmates were more understanding than she thought.

*Allow the class to pose any additional questions or make more comments about the work they did.*

**Materials:**

Activity 1: White board and markers

Activity 2: Text of *The Magic Beads*

Activity 4: Text of *The Magic Beads*, student journals, and pencils

Activity 6: Text of *The Magic Beads*

Activity 7: Strings of beads (one per group)

Activity 9: A hat and paper slips to write the names of animals on

Activity 10: Text of *The Magic Beads*

Activity 11: Paper and pencils

## A Rubric for Drama Participation

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

	Limited	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
<b>PARTICIPATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appears to enjoy, and is committed to, drama</li> <li>• works well in a variety of groupings</li> <li>• investigates possibilities and contributes ideas</li> <li>• supports the contributions of others</li> </ul>				
<b>COMMUNICATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communicates ideas and feelings orally and/or in writing</li> <li>• interprets ideas physically (movement, still image, dance)</li> <li>• adopts the attitudes and point of view of role</li> </ul>				
<b>PERFORMANCE AND CREATIVE WORK</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• uses a variety of drama conventions</li> <li>• selects, shapes, and presents ideas and feelings</li> <li>• is aware of audience, adopting appropriate tone and means of presentation</li> </ul>				
<b>CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND APPRECIATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reflects on personal learning</li> <li>• interprets and analyzes the work of others</li> </ul>				

(Swartz, 2014, p. 127).

This assessment tool will be useful to gauge students' participation in the story drama. The performance and creative work section will help us evaluate how well students can convey a specific structure and how well they understood what was being taught.

## Bibliography

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