

Lesson Plan

Virginia Wolf

By Kyo Maclear

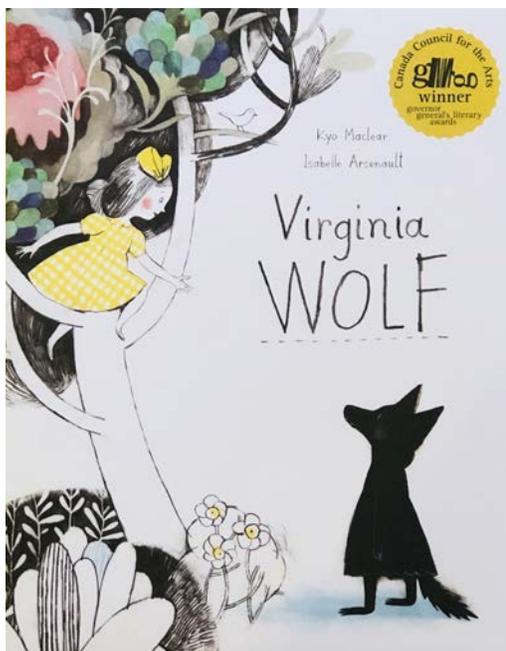
Illustrated by Isabelle Arsenault

Lesson: How to help a friend who is feeling down by bringing happiness to them, listening to nuances and acting on them.

Curriculum Connection: Language Arts

Grade Level: Grades 3 - 5

Time: Approximately 50 minutes



About the Book

Vanessa's sister, Virginia, is in a “wolfish” mood — growling, howling and acting very strange. It's a funk so fierce, the whole household feels topsy-turvy. Vanessa tries everything she can think of to cheer up her sister, but nothing seems to work. Then Virginia tells Vanessa about an imaginary perfect place called Bloomsberry. Armed with an idea, Vanessa begins to paint Bloomsberry on the bedroom walls, transforming them into a beautiful garden complete with a swing and ladder “so that what was down could climb up.” Before long, Virginia, too, has picked up a brush and undergoes a surprising transformation of her own. Loosely based on the relationship between author Virginia Woolf and her sister, painter Vanessa Bell, *Virginia Wolf* is an uplifting story for readers of all ages.

Success Criteria

Use any co-created success criteria that would be relevant during your guided reading lessons. Or you can generate new criteria based on your Learning Goals for the lesson as guided by your Course Outlines or Long-Range Plans.

Curriculum Expectations

See side-by-side Selected Reading Expectations Chart for each grade level.

Materials

- 5 copies of *Virginia Wolf*
 - iPad or laptop
 - Chart paper, markers, glue sticks, sticky notes, pencils, 'Placemats'
- Optional: Kids Can Press 'teaching PDF for this text featuring comprehensive lesson plans.

Lesson Snapshot

The lesson will invite students to read *Virginia Wolf* and enjoy this story about sisterhood, overcoming sadness and sometimes constructing our own reality - one that will make us happy. Finding ways to recognize, accept and tolerate our emotions, eventually move through them and offer self compassion is an important skill. As Kyo Maclear states herself, “...Is there not a little wolf in everyone? Have we not all, at some point, been immobilized by sadness?”

Lesson Details

BEFORE READING

1. Share the Learning Goal for today's lesson and develop Success Criteria.
2. Show students the cover of Virginia Wolf. Slowly leaf through the pages so that students can see the pictures. Ask students to respond to some of the illustrations by asking the following questions:
 - a) This picture reminds me of...
 - b) This picture looks like...
 - c) The title of the book makes me think of...
3. Share with students that in this book they will notice many different types of emotions from the main characters, Vanessa and Virginia. Ask students to name some emotions. As they respond, record their responses on chart paper.

DURING READING

1. The **Watch For New Vocabulary** section in the Student Workbook is a place for students to record new terms before or during reading. Students can record unfamiliar words on sticky notes or write them directly into the space provided.

Assign routine 'Word Work' activities your students are familiar with using the new terms from the text as you cycle through your literacy centres or reading program schedule.

Possible new vocabulary from the text: wolfish, moaned, racket, gloom, smudgy, llama, atlas, excellent, absolutely, Bloomsberry, Burlington, Buffalo, growled, blossoms, attention, confetti, turquoise, lollipops, sheepish.

2. Using your selected reading strategy(s) or explicit reading instruction for each group, read through the book with students, making anecdotal notes on a document for tracking and assessment purposes.

The Student Workbook has **Decoding, Comprehension** or **Expanding Meaning** charts. During your lesson, have students record what strategies they are using to help them become more strategic and effective readers.

3. Depending on the age group, ask students to record the emotions they feel as you read the book (one emotion per sticky note), and post the sticky notes on a chart for the class for other classmates to see later. This will allow students to see what emotions have been evoked in their classmates. **NOTE:** Be sure to review all of the emotions that have emerged on the sticky notes. Depending on the age group, facilitate a conversation about the emotions and where they emerged. Or, you may want to have students do this in small groups.

4. Ask students to listen to the book a second time to discover feelings that did not occur to them the first time, but may have been pointed out by their classmates.

NOTE: It is important to mention that different people will feel different emotions because we each see the world through our unique cultures, biases, perspectives and everything else that informs our existence—sort of like a pair of glasses. This is okay and should be validated.

AFTER READING

1. Assign students to write a summary using the pages of the 'Summary Section' in the Student Workbook. (See examples provided for both fiction and non-fiction, or use anchor charts your students are currently using for this skill.) Sticker "Badges" can be given after students complete their summary. **Your classroom kit provided a sheet of sticker badges/student (each book has a specific badge.)**

2. Have students define "wolfish" on a large sheet of chart paper. Post and read the definition of depression from "Supporting Minds: An Educator's Guide to Promoting Students' Mental Health and Well-being," p. 41.

"In general, depression is the term we use to describe a feeling of sadness, irritability, or loss of interest in activities that the person has typically enjoyed. Most children and youth will, from time to time, experience feelings of sadness as they move through life. These feelings may be related to temporary setbacks, such as receiving a bad mark, having a disagreement with friends, or not making a sports team. Feelings of this type usually do not last long and, as children and youth mature, they learn a range of coping strategies to deal with and adapt to such difficulties. However, when sadness, irritability, or lack of interest are associated with more long-lasting issues, such as sustained conflict with peers, lack of engagement in activities, ongoing academic struggles, or difficulties at home, there may be a need for supports or intervention."

Supporting Minds: An Educator's Guide to Promoting Students' Mental Health and Well-being

Ontario Ministry of Education (2013) p. 41

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

1. Have students draft a response to ReadAble's Twitter campaign #CanYouImagine for each book. You can choose to collect student responses and make posts yourself, or if students have access to your class Twitter account, can make the post according to your classroom policy. Feel free to take pictures of your students engaging with each title.
2. Ask students to think about how their definition of "wolfish" compares to the definition of depression in the quotation from Supporting Minds: An Educator's Guide to Promoting Students' Mental Health and Well-being.
3. Ask students to research depression using the resources available in your school library as well as a strategy to use if you are feeling sad.
4. Ask students to research other famous people who have battled depression. Have students select one person and engage in deeper research about their experience of depression. (e.g., Selena Gomez, Ellen Degeneres, Lady Gaga, J.K. Rowling, Kendrick Lamar, etc.).
5. Make copies of the 'Glad Day Box' page for students to create their own strategic feel better plan so Gloom Can Become Glad. (See page 4 of this document)

THE READABLEFEST WEBSITE LINKS TO "OTHER STORIES"



**Meet the Author
Recording with
Isabelle Arsenault**



**Virginia Wolf: a picture book
by Kyo Maclear and
Isabelle Arsenault**



**What causes Anxiety
and Depression:
Inside Out**

DRAW PICTURES OF WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO INCLUDE IN YOUR...

GLAD DAY BOX

The 'GLAD DAY BOX' is a large rectangular frame divided into several smaller, empty rectangular sections. On the left side, there are two columns of three boxes each. The top two boxes in each column are tall and narrow, while the bottom one is wider and shorter. On the right side, there is a single vertical column of three boxes. The top box is tall and narrow, and the two boxes below it are taller and wider. All sections are currently empty, intended for children to draw pictures of things they would like to include in their 'Glad Day'.

From *Virginia Wolf* by Isabelle Arsenault & Kyo Maclear; Kids Can Press, 2012.

MAY GLOOM BECOME GLAD