

A Common Core State Standards-Aligned
Discussion & Activity Guide for Grades K-2

BEARS MAKE THE BEST WRITING BUDDIES

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Written by Carmen Oliver
Illustrated by Jean Claude
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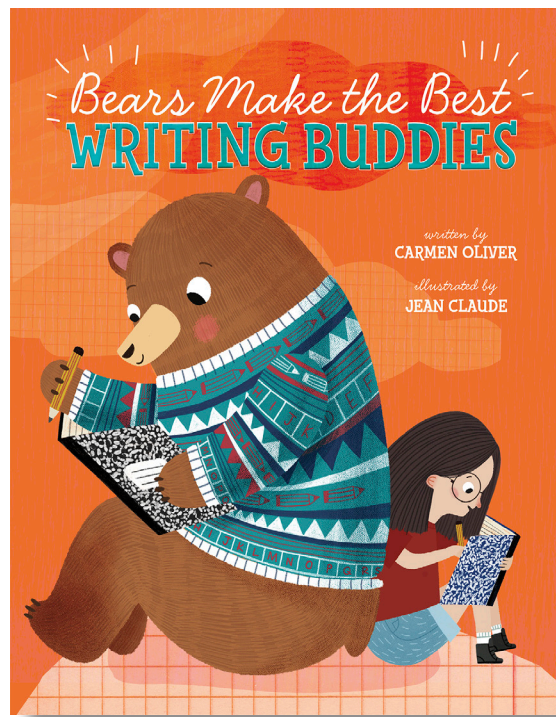
Adelaide loves writing. Bear loves writing. But Theo does NOT love writing. Thankfully, Adelaide and Bear are ready to team up and persuade the entire class, including Mrs. Fitz-Pea, that Bears make the best writing buddies. After all, who better to teach you how to fish and forage for new ideas than a bear?

Guide created by
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Table of Contents

Pre-Reading Discussion	3
Post-Reading Discussion	4-5
Vocabulary Crossword Puzzle	6
Vocabulary Crossword Puzzle Answers.....	7
Making a Heart Map	8
The Heart Map	9
A Sensory Poem.....	10
The Sensory Poem Template.....	11
Common Core State Standards Alignment:	
• English Language Arts Standards » Reading: Literature	12
• English Language Arts Standards » Reading: Foundational Skills	12
• English Language Arts Standards » Writing	12-13
• English Language Arts Standards » Speaking & Listening	13



Pre-Reading Discussion

Consider the illustration on the cover of the book:

- Look closely at the girl featured in the illustration. Describe what she is doing.
- Observe the boy's expression. Tell how he is feeling. How do you know?
- Notice that the bear has his arm around the boy, and that his paw is covering the booklet placed before the boy. What does this action suggest about the bear's relationship with the boy?
- Determine why the boy is gazing toward the girl's hand holding a pencil. Consider reasons why he is not holding a pencil.
- Predict what BEARS MAKE THE BEST WRITING BUDDIES is going to be about.

Meet the Author – Carmen Oliver:

- Carmen grew up loving to read books. Do you think that her childhood passion for reading has anything to do with her desire to write books for children? Explain your answer.
- On her website, Carmen explains that being a parent served as inspiration for her desire to write for children. Tell how raising her own family might present Carmen with ideas to write about...important topics such as learning to write stories, asking for help, and learning to find friends that might become great writing buddies.
- To learn more about Carmen and her many interesting projects and events, access her website at www.carmenoliver.com.



Meet the Illustrator – Jean Claude:

- Illustrations are pictures that tell stories. Consider the illustration on the front cover of the book. What is the story this illustration is telling?
- Analyze Jean Claude's expert artistic techniques. Notice how the careful placement of small lines and shapes suggest the emotions that the characters are experiencing. Gather some markers or crayons and try to replicate Jean Claude's techniques. See what you can come up with.
- Jean Claude is a *self-taught* illustrator, which means that, rather than attending an art school, he independently practiced and developed his own style of illustration. He worked very hard to become the successful illustrator that he is today. How about you? Are you willing to focus and develop your artistic skills in the same way? Or, are you more interested in digging deep enough to become a skilled writer, such as Carmen Oliver? Explain your answer.



Post-Reading Discussion

During writing time, Adelaide noticed Theo staring at his blank paper. He tapped his pencil. He fanned the pages. He pushed his notebook away with a giant sigh.

- In this spread, Adelaide notices that Theo is having a problem during writing time. His behaviors suggest that he is *frustrated*, which means that he feels stuck, defeated, or blocked. Explain why the act of writing could cause Theo to feel this way.
- Have you ever felt frustrated as a writer? Explain your answer.
- Read the note Adelaide gave to Theo. What does her willingness to help Theo reveal about her character?

“If your ideas burrow and hibernate, Bear takes you fishing and foraging for new ones. Before you know it, your beehive is buzzing and bursting with topics.”

- To *hibernate* means to hide or fall into a very deep sleep. Bears hibernate the entire winter long. They sleep so soundly, nothing wakes them for months and months! Imagine if ideas or inspiration for writing projects hibernated in the same way that bear does. How would it be possible to wake them?
- To *forage* means to explore, search, and hunt for. As a writing buddy, Bear is determined to help Theo discover writing ideas. List ways that Bear can help Theo forage for ideas to write about.
- Observe the bees buzzing about the beehive. Imagine if, after Bear’s support as a writing buddy, Theo begins to burst with ideas much like the bees buzzing about the hive. How would this effect his attitude about writing?

“The first draft is just the start of good writing. The real magic begins when you rebuild, reimagine, and rework.”

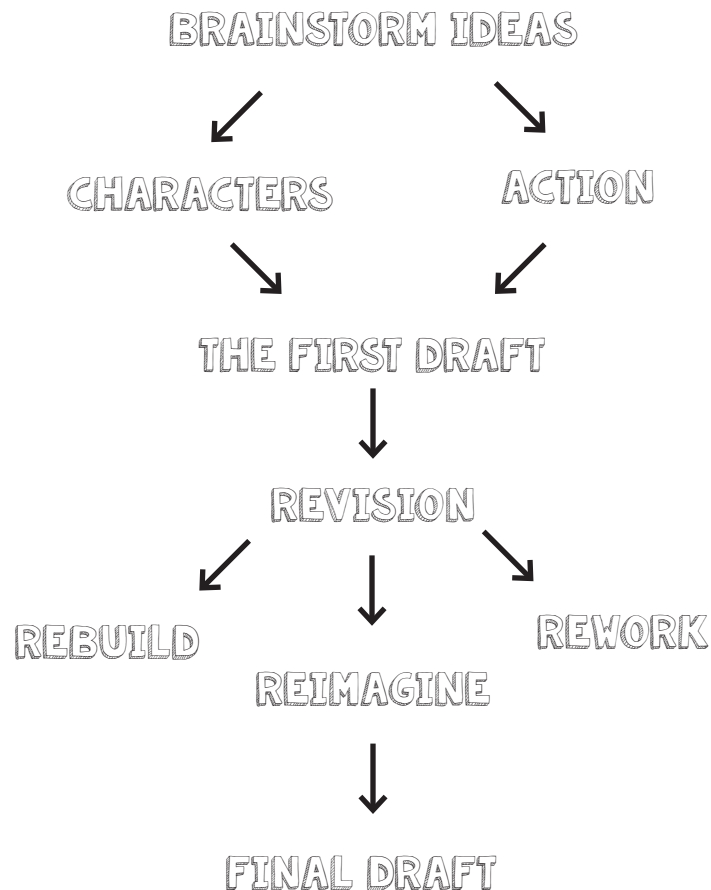
- The definition of the word *magic* is fascination, remarkable, and enchanted. Explain how returning to the first draft for revisions can spark magic into a story.
- Adelaide uses the phrase *real magic* when describing what a first draft becomes rebuilt, reimaged, and reworked. Explain the different between magic and *real* magic. Which type of story would you prefer to read? Explain your answer.



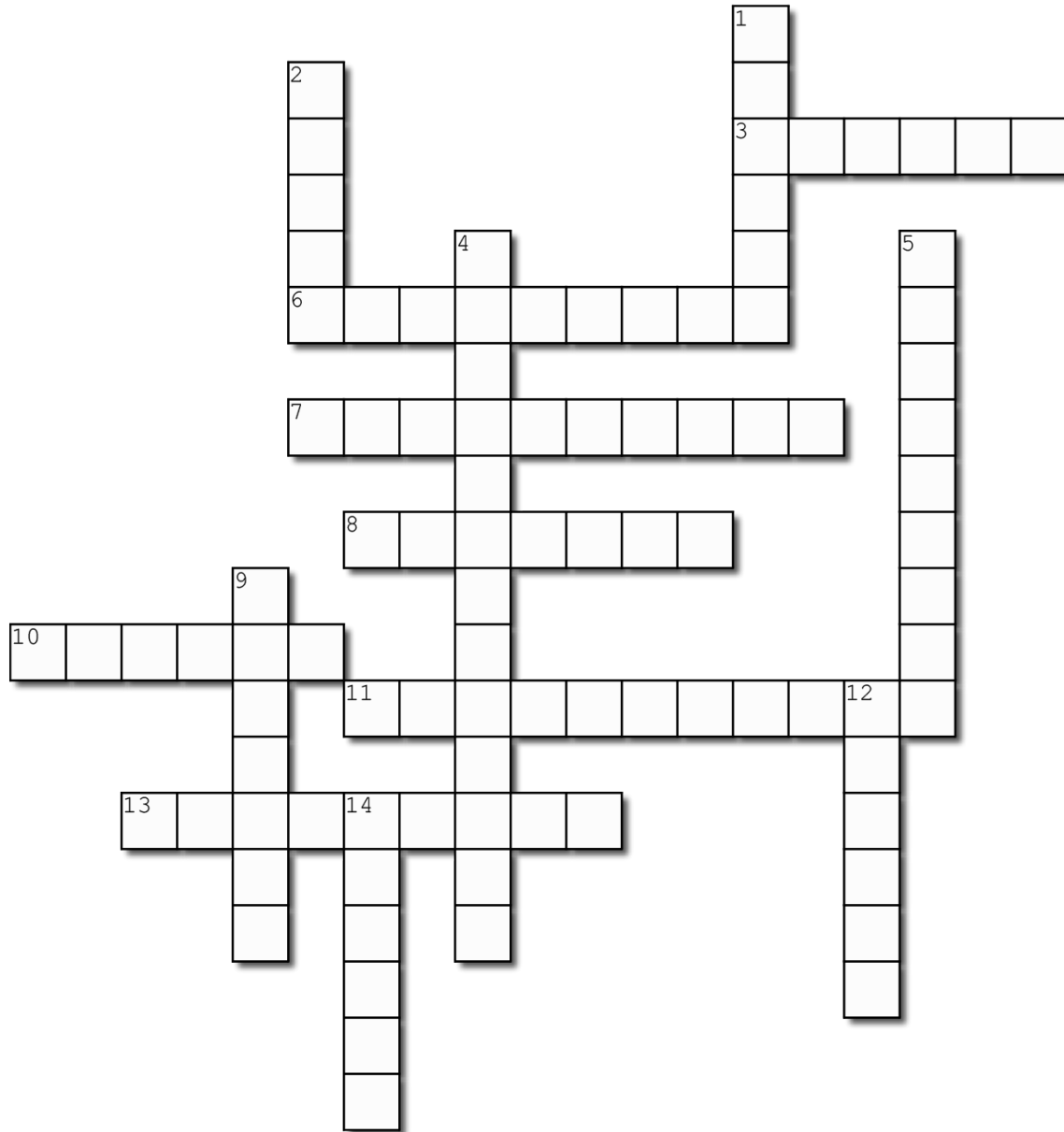
Theo snatched his pencil, opened his notebook, and ...

- When the story began, Theo was frustrated and uninspired to write a story. In this illustration, he appears to be eager to get his words on the page. Identify the reasons why Theo's attitude about writing changed.
- The word *buddy* is defined as being a pal or a friend. Discuss how Bear and Adelaide's expression of friendship by being Theo's buddy helped Theo develop confidence as a writer.
- How about you? Do you know of someone who could use your support in doing something that does not come easy to them? Tell how you might help them find ways to stay with their problem long enough to find ways to solve it, much like Adelaide and Bear did for Theo.

Return to the story to discover how, with Adelaide and Bear's support, Theo worked through the different stages of the writing process. Use the list below as a guide to help you write your next story filled with real magic!



Vocabulary Crossword Puzzle

**Across:**

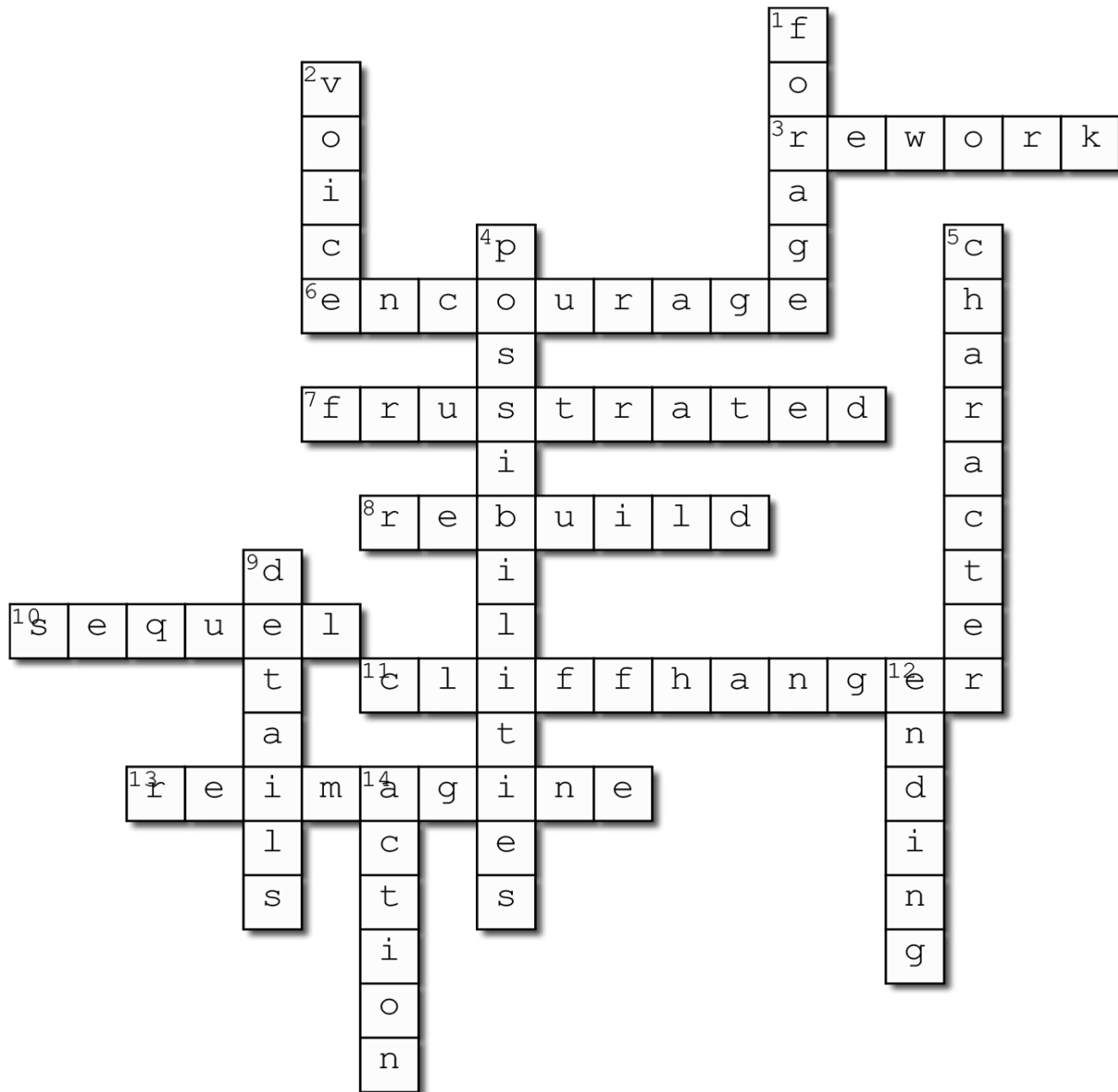
3. Make changes
6. Give support, confidence, or hope
7. Feeling distressed or annoyed
8. Build again
10. A story that follows another story
11. An exciting ending to an episode
13. Rethink creatively

Down:

1. Search widely
2. Individual way of expressing oneself in words
4. Things that could happen
5. A person in a story
9. Describe item
12. An end or final part of something
14. Doing something



Vocabulary Crossword Puzzle Answers

**Across:**

3. Make changes
6. Give support, confidence, or hope
7. Feeling distressed or annoyed
8. Build again
10. A story that follows another story
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Making a Heart Map

*“There’s nothing you can’t say when it comes from your heart.
Because your voice is your voice – no two are the same.”*

Objective: To generate a list of concrete words, illustrations, and phrases with the intent to explore the concept of a literary voice.

Materials:

- BEARS MAKE THE BEST WRITING BUDDIES, the book
- The Heart Map Graphic Organizer (pg. 9)
- Pencil or pen
- Markers

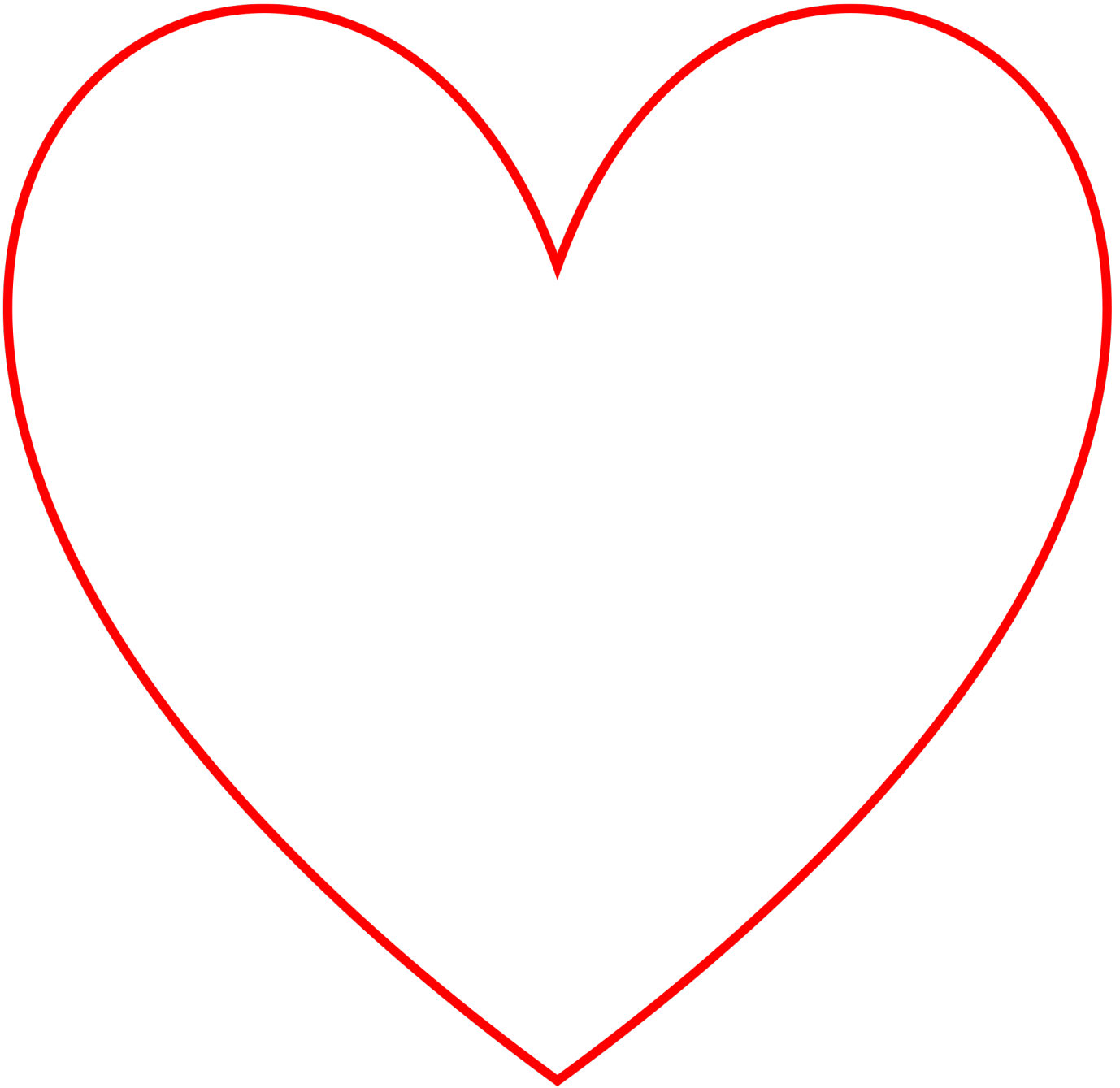
Procedure:

- Discuss the spread featuring the group of children holding decorated hearts in their hands. Use the following statements as a guide to examine the illustration.
 - Which heart do you feel is most creative? What does that heart suggest about the child holding it?
 - Which heart do you feel is boldest? What does that heart suggest about the child holding it?
 - Which heart do you feel is most original? What does that heart suggest about the child holding it?
 - Which heart do you feel is the funniest? What does that heart suggest about the child holding it?
 - Which heart do you feel is most beautiful? What does that heart suggest about the child holding it?
 - Which heart do you feel has the most personality? What does that heart suggest about the child holding it?
 - A writer’s *voice* is defined as the way they express their creativity, boldness, originality, humor, beauty, and unique personality. Encourage the students to explore ways that they can express their individuality in writing by discovering their unique voice.
- Turn discussion toward the students by asking them what sorts of things do they hold dear, buried in the folds of their hearts? Describe the people, places, and things that they love.
- Using the **Heart Map Graphic Organizer**, instruct the students to fill the inside of the heart by listing or illustrating all of the people, places, and things that they love – including foods, pets, places...anything goes. Have them decorate their hearts, much like the children in the illustration have done. Tell the students to fill their hearts with things that people, places, and things that delight them!
- Instruct students to share their hearts with the class.

Reference: Atwell, Nancie. *Lessons that Change Writers*. Heinemann, NH. 2002. pg. 12-16.



The Heart Map



A Sensory Poem

“He asks you to share details you can see and smell.
He asks for details you can hear, taste, or touch.”

Objective: To creatively explore the use of similes as sensory details.

Materials:

- BEARS MAKE THE BEST WRITING BUDDIES, the book
- A Sensory Poem Template (Guide, pg. 11)
- Pencil
- Markers

Procedure:

- Print and distribute the **Sensory Poem Template**.
- Tell the students that they are going to have to think creatively about their favorite color. Explain that, in this exercise, they will describe their favorite colors using sensory details – how their color feels, tastes, sounds, looks and smells. Instruct them to approach this exercise as if they were with Bear *foraging* for new ideas. Think differently. Get creative. Have fun!
- Encourage students to illustrate their Sensory Poems in the space provided on the template and share their work with the class.

Blue

Blue feels peaceful like cloud-filled sky.

Blue tastes minty like a Tic Tac candy.

Blue sounds silent like a blink of an eye.

Blue looks royal like a king's robe.

Blue smells fresh like a cool breeze.



A Sensory Poem Template

_____ *feels* _____ *like* _____

_____ *tastes* _____ *like* _____

_____ *sounds* _____ *like* _____

_____ *looks* _____ *like* _____

_____ *smells* _____ *like* _____



Common Core State Standards

Common Core State Standards		Discussion	Crossword Puzzle	Heart Map	Sensory Poem
English Language Arts Standards » Reading: Literature					
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.1	With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	●	●	●	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.3	With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story.	●	●	●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.4	Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.	●	●		
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.6	With prompting and support, name the author and illustrator of a story and define the role of each in telling the story.	●			
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.7	With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts).	●		●	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.10	Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.	●	●	●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.1	Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	●	●	●	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.3	Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.	●	●	●	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.7	Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.	●		●	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.10	With prompting and support, read prose and poetry of appropriate complexity for grade 1.	●	●	●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.1	Ask and answer such questions as <i>who</i> , <i>what</i> , <i>where</i> , <i>when</i> , <i>why</i> , and <i>how</i> to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.	●		●	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.3	Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.	●		●	
English Language Arts Standards » Reading: Foundational Skills					
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.K.1	Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.	●	●	●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.K.2	Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).	●	●	●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.K.3	Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.	●	●	●	●
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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.1.3	Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.	●	●	●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.2.3	Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.	●	●	●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.2.4	Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.	●	●	●	●
English Language Arts Standards » Writing					
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.K.2	Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.			●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.K.5	With guidance and support from adults, respond to questions and suggestions from peers and add details to strengthen writing as needed.			●	●



		Discussion	Crossword Puzzle	Heart Map	Sensory Poem
English Language Arts Standards » Writing (cont.)					
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.1.5	With guidance and support from adults, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed.			●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.2	Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.			●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.5	With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing.			●	●
English Language Arts Standards » Speaking & Listening					
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.1	Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about <i>kindergarten topics and texts</i> with peers and adults in small and larger groups.	●	●	●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.2	Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.	●	●	●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.3	Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.	●	●	●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.4	Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail.	●	●	●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.5	Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.	●	●	●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.6	Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.	●	●	●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.1	Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about <i>grade 1 topics and texts</i> with peers and adults in small and larger groups.	●	●	●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.2	Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.	●	●	●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.4	Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.	●	●	●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.5	Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.	●	●	●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.1	Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about <i>grade 2 topics and texts</i> with peers and adults in small and larger groups.	●	●	●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.2	Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.	●	●	●	●
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.3	Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.	●	●	●	●

