



## Leaf Man...Just like Lois Ehlert

**Grade Level:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

**Number of Students:** 17

**Unit Topic/Lesson Name:** Fall-Leaves and a Lois Ehlert "Author Study"

### **Expected Outcomes (Objectives):**

- 1) Students will examine and analyze the literature of Lois Ehlert (overriding themes, style of writing, voice, characters, media for illustrations, etc).
- 2) Students will be able to use the Lois Ehlert picture books as a model for their own writing, and create their own piece that reflects the work of a published author (learning how "writers" write).
- 3) Students will demonstrate their ability to appropriately use the writer's process. They will edit and revise their writing, to create a final draft.
- 4) Students will demonstrate the idea of self-assessment. They will use a checklist to assess their own writing before it is passed in.
- 5) Students will orally share their story in an Author Share, demonstrating their public speaking skills, as well as appropriate audience etiquette.

### **Lesson Resources and Materials**

**Teacher Resources:** Lois Ehlert's Leaf Man  
Student cover page (20 copies)

### Self-assessment checklist (20 copies)

**Student Resources:** Assortment of leaves  
Writer's Notebooks

**Supplies:** Pencils  
Pre-peeled crayons (for leaf rubbings)  
Colored Pencils  
White Paper  
Easel/marker/Easel paper

### Teaching/Learning Strategies

**Learning Environment/Lesson Setting:** This lesson will take place in our classroom. The children will first be involved in a read aloud (teacher led with children interacting) and then a discovery discussion (whole group) on our classroom carpet. Shortly after, the class will move to their small group tables. We will be using a small group setting for this lesson because the children will be sharing lots of materials, such as crayons, pencils, and most importantly, a variety of collected leaves. Materials are divided amongst groups, and already placed in work bins on the tables as a time and classroom management strategy. The expected noise level of the room will be fairly normal, because although the children will be cooperatively working and buddy sharing, they understand the expectations of a Writing Workshop block.

**Springboard: (15 mins)** The Springboard for this lesson will be our read aloud, which will be Lois Ehlert's Leaf Man. This will get the children thinking about the kind of writing that Ehlert does, and what makes his picture books unique. They will be prefaced with some things to think about; such as what the illustrations look like, media used for the illustrations, characters in the story, overriding themes, narrator of the story, etc. The teacher will scaffold and guide the children in thinking about each of these areas when needed.

**Information Exploration: (35 mins)** During this time, the class will participate in a whole group discussion. Using a piece of large easel paper, we will brainstorm a list of the observations made about Lois Ehlert's book. These observations can range from very basic to specific. Encourage the

children to think about the different parts of stories that we have been learning about in Reading Workshop, and how many of these are used throughout his story. What makes up a good story? How do we use our voice to ensure that our reader understands the point we are trying to make? How can we use deep describing words to "show" the reader, rather than simply "telling"? Most importantly, discuss how Lois Ehlert uses leaves to create his illustrations (every image on his page is constructed from a leaf, rotated and transformed in a way that creates other objects and animals). Slowly take a picture walk with the children through the book's illustrations for a 2<sup>nd</sup> time, highlighting some key parts.

During this time, the teacher will also demonstrate how to create a leaf rubbing. This is done by placing a chosen leaf under a piece of white paper. With the side of a crayon (peeled), you color back and forth over the paper (and the outline of the underlying leaf). This should leave an interesting design, mimicking the leaf used. Explain that the children will be doing this exact procedure at their seats, using their leaves and crayons, to create leaf illustrations for their own Leaf Man book. Once the children have created their illustrations (they need at least 4 pages), they can add story text to go along. Each Leaf Man book also needs a cover page, which will be provided by the teacher, but must be colored and decorated by the children to individualize their writing books.

This is where I have included one of my print materials. I have created a cover page that all of the children will be using on their Leaf Man books during this lesson. There are 20 copies of the cover page, and once they are distributed to the children, they will serve as the first page of their books.

Lastly, the teacher will explain that the children are responsible for checking their own work before it is turned in to the Neat Sheet-Final Draft box (this is a typical part of their Writing Workshop so they are very familiar with the concept). In doing this, they will complete a checklist which has been created for them. The checklist entails all of the required pieces to this writing project, and before the children can fully complete their book, they must answer "Yes" to all of the checklist points. If they have a "No", it means that they might have a little work still left to do. Read through the checklist with the children so that they understand the requirements before they set off independently.

This is where a second print material is found. I have created a checklist using Microsoft Word for the children so that they are able to self-assess their writing project; promoting independent work, self-monitoring skills, and responsibility. This is also a classroom management strategy because the children can use the instructional tool to answer any minor questions they might have about the project (Am I done? What should I do?), leaving room for the teacher to circulate and help students one-on-one with other needs. There are 20 copies of this material.

**Active Involvement: (Two-45 Min blocks)** During this time, the children will be independently working on their own Leaf Man books. The teacher and peers are available for any support that the children may need. All supplies are available for use on the books, and the Lois Ehlert book will be on display as well.

**Closure/Transition: (10 Mins)** To close this lesson, we will hold an Author Share. The children will sit in the Author Chair, one by one, and share their writing (and illustrations) with the class. Once a child has shared, the audience will be given a total of three questions or concerns that they wish to ask the author before another author is given his/her turn.

**Connection to Outcomes:**

**Student Work-** The Leaf Man books will be held in the classroom's published writing bin. This bin is housed in our classroom library so that the children can spend some time reading each other's work. With the self-checklist, the children's work should entail all of the project requirements; however neatness, creativity, and writing development will also be evaluated.

**Teacher Records-** The Leaf Man book will be recorded as a checkmark, for full completion of the assignment. Notes about the writing development will be written in the children's progress files. Documentation will also be taken because this lesson has met the following Maine Learning Results:

English Language Arts

A-7: Ask questions and give other responses after listening to presentations by the teacher or classmates.

B-1: Understand the basic plot of simple stories

F-1: Edit their own written work for standard English spelling and usage

G-1: Dictate or write stories or essays which convey basic ideas, have sequences that make sense, and show evidence of a beginning, middle, and end

### **Overall-**

**Is this a lesson that will be appealing and motivating for students?**

This lesson is very appealing and motivating for students because it gives them a model to work from. They are given the opportunity to engage in a read aloud (which is key to any Reading/Writing Workshop class and is very interactive if done right), and study how real writers write. For children at this age, modeling writers is the best way for them to identify different writing styles, voices, descriptive words, and other elements that enhance their writing abilities for future grades. Practicing what they see opens a whole new adventure for children in their writing, and gives them confidence to be creative! Using leaves that they have collected to make illustrations is also something "atypical" in Writing Workshop so children would love to participate in this artsy assignment. I also feel as though the children will enjoy reading each other's silly stories, and viewing the different way leaves can create designs (or objects!)

**Are instructional materials an integral and important part of this lesson?**

The instructional materials are extremely important in this lesson. If we had not sent the letter home to parents, we would not have received the leaves needed to complete the assignment in the first place. We would have had to go outside and search ourselves (possibly risking the fact of collecting the same type of leaves, rather than assortments from different neighborhoods), and this would have also taken away from valuable class time. The leave experience also gives parents a chance to support their children's education and spend some quality time with their children outdoors (in the Fall ☺). The cover, yet decorated uniquely by each child, is very easy for these books. When placed in the publishing bin, the children will know months later what they are reading. Lastly, the self-assessment checklist was beneficial for many reasons, stated above in the Information Exploration section of the lesson plan.

**\*Disclaimer-** For collection purposes, the last print material, which was a letter home to parents asking for a sandwich baggie filled with leaves, was sent home a week before the lesson.