Title/Author: *Miss Maple’s Seeds* by Eliza Wheeler

Suggested Time to Spend: 5 Days (Recommendation: two sessions per day, at least 20 minutes per day)

Common Core grade-level ELA/Literacy Standards: RL.K.1, RL.K.2, RL.K.3, RL.K.4, RL.K.7; W.K.2, W.K.8; SL.K.1, SL.K.2, SL.K.5, SL.K.6; L.K.1, L.K.2, L.K.4

Lesson Objective: Students will listen to an illustrated story read aloud and use literacy skills (reading, writing, language, listening, and speaking) to demonstrate their understanding of the Big Idea.

Teacher Instructions

**Before the Lesson**

1. Read the Big Ideas and Key Understandings and the Synopsis below. **Please do not read this to the students**. This is a description to help you prepare to teach the book and be clear about what you want your children to take away from the work.

Big Ideas/Key Understandings/Focusing Question

What are the different ways seeds can be dispersed? One key takeaway is that seeds can travel in many ways, including in the river, in the wind, and being carried by animals.

What is the story trying to teach us? Big, grand things can begin as small things, just like the seeds in the story.

Synopsis

This is a narrative depicting the journey of small seeds preparing to take root and begin their life cycle. The main character, Miss Maple, prepares her “orphan seeds” for their spring planting. Through figurative language, the author details the obstacles the seeds may face as they travel. The last piece of dialogue leaves the reader with a life lesson: “even the grandest of trees once had to grow up from the smallest of seeds.”

1. Go to the last page of the lesson and review “What Makes This Read-Aloud Complex.” This was created for you as part of the lesson and will give you guidance about what the lesson writers saw as the sources of complexity or key access points for this book. You will of course evaluate text complexity with your own students in mind and make adjustments to the lesson pacing and even the suggested activities and questions.
2. Read the entire book, adding your own insights to the understandings identified. Also note the stopping points for the text-inspired questions and activities. *Hint: You may want to copy the questions, vocabulary words, and activities over onto sticky notes so they can be stuck to the right pages for each day’s work.*
3. Consider pairing this series of lessons on *Miss Maple*’*s Seeds* with a text set to increase student knowledge and familiarity with the topic. A custom text set can be found[here](https://achievethecore.org/page/3050/miss-maple-s-seeds-with-companion-text-set)[.](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B66A6Ds77LpiU3dIZVFxMFFkLUk) *Note: This strategy is particularly supportive of ELL students.*

*Note to teachers of English Language Learners (ELLs): Read Aloud Project Lessons are designed for children who cannot read yet for themselves. They are highly interactive and have many scaffolds built into the brief daily lessons to support reading comprehension. Because of this, they are filled with scaffolds that are appropriate for English Language Learners who, by definition, are developing language and learning to read (English). This read aloud text includes complex features which offer many opportunities for learning, but at the same time includes supports and structures to make the text accessible to even the youngest students.*

*This lesson includes features that align to best practices for supporting English Language Learners. Some of the supports you may see built into this, and /or other Read Aloud Project lessons, assist non-native speakers in the following ways:*

* *These lessons include embedded vocabulary scaffolds that help students acquire new vocabulary in the context of reading. They feature multi-modal ways of learning new words, including prompts for where to use visual representations, the inclusion of student-friendly definitions, built-in opportunities to use newly acquired vocabulary through discussion or activities, and featured academic vocabulary for deeper study.*
* *These lessons also include embedded scaffolds to help students make meaning of the text itself. It calls out opportunities for paired or small group discussion, includes recommendations for ways in which visuals, videos, and/or graphic organizers could aid in understanding, provides a mix of questions (both factual and inferential) to guide students gradually toward deeper understanding, and offers recommendations for supplementary texts to build background knowledge supporting the content in the anchor text.*
* *These lessons feature embedded supports to aid students in developing their overall language and communication skills by featuring scaffolds such as sentence frames for discussion and written work (more guidance available* [here](https://achievethecore.org/page/3159/ell-supports-for-writing-and-discussion)*) as well as writing opportunities (and the inclusion of graphic organizers to scaffold the writing process). These supports help students develop and use newly acquired vocabulary and text-based content knowledge.*

The Lesson – Questions, Activities, and Tasks

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| **Questions/Activities/Vocabulary/Tasks** | **Expected Outcome or Response (for each)** |
| **FIRST READING:**  Read aloud the entire book with minimal interruptions. Stop to provide word meanings or clarify only when you know the majority of your students will be confused. | The goal here is for students to enjoy the book, both the text and illustrations (allow students time to view these when reading), and to experience it as a whole. The idea is to give students some context and a sense of story before they dive into examining the parts of the book more carefully. |
| **SECOND READING:**  Explain that we will reread the story to find out more about the seeds, including how the seeds are alike and different.  Reread pgs 1-4.  On pg 1, say: Guests, guests are visitors. Who are Miss Maple’s “guests”?  Continue reading through pg 4.  Pg. 4, The text says, “Miss Maple has traveled all summer long, searching the land for orphan seeds that got lost during the spring planting.” What do you think “orphan seeds” mean?  What words and illustrations help you to figure this out?  Let’s look at the basket. Do you think these seeds will all grow in the basket? Is this their home?  What is Miss Maple doing? Why is she doing that?  Read pgs 5-6. (Allow time for students to view page 5). Allow time for students to process the different types of seeds through oral discussion.  Pg. 6 What do you think “all similar, yet none the same” means?  Reread page 7 FIRST LINE ONLY:  Tell students tomorrow the class will reread the part about Miss Maple’s field trip with her seeds to find out what they discover.  After the second reading, have students (individual, small group, whole class as appropriate) make a trifold to capture events of the field trip with Miss Maple. Have students label the three columns as seen in chart in the left column.  **\*Trifold should be large enough for illustrations and words.**  **This trifold will be used to capture the events that lead to the big idea.** | They are seeds. (Note: Just mention the word “guests” and provide clarification if needed based on your students background.)  They are all alone. They got lost. They don't have anyone to take care of them. They are not with their families.  In the picture, the birds drop the seeds off and do not stay with them. Also, none of the seeds in the illustration of the many orphans look like the others. Allow students to process that these seeds do not come from the same “family.” Listen in and point out when students use words like similar, same, alike, and different. (They are all little. They are not the same shape. There are different types of seeds.)  No. The basket is too small for all the seeds to grow. It isn’t there home because seeds grow in dirt, not in baskets.  She is taking care of them. She is cleaning them, getting them ready to plant. She is getting to know each one so she’ll know where to take it to plant it.  They are all seeds and they are all little, but they are not the same seeds. They will be different things when they grow.   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | How seed travels | Where it lands | What helps it grow | |  |  |  | |  |  |  | |  |  |  | |
| **THIRD READING:**  Reread the first sentence of page 7. Tell students to pay close attention to what Miss Maple tells them about how the seeds travel, where they may land, and what will help them grow. Allow students to share ideas in reference to the illustrations on pages 7-8.  Read page 7. How will the seeds travel to safe places?  Where will they land and grow?  \*Add student responses to the trifold chart  Who are the “friends of the river” and how will they help the seeds bloom?  \*Add student responses to the trifold chart.  Read page 10 “Bustling” means being very busy and full of life. What do you think a “bustling garden” would look like?  Why is this an important stop on the field trip?  How did the seeds get to the grassy fields and thick forests?  \*Add student responses to trifold chart.  Read pages 11 -14.  On pgs. 13-14, what do you notice in the illustration?  How did the seeds travel? Where did they land?  How do you think the seeds were planted?  \*Add student responses to trifold chart.  Read pages 15-18.  Pages 18-19 Provide enough time for students to view the illustration. Students should see that the seeds drifting with the petals. “To drift” means to move slowly from one place to another. What do you think drifting looks like?  Read page 19 and look at our chart we created. What are the ways seeds might travel based on what we have read so far in the text? Allow students to be creative while keeping them focused on what happened in the text. \*Use the trifold chart as your guide.  If you were a small seed, how might you feel if you had to travel like that?  **Activity**:  Explain that we will go back to the beginning of the book using their ideas from the chart. We will look at the pictures and words on each page to recount the journey seeds might travel.  Students will use the trifold created on previous day to review how seeds travel. For each method, students will act out the way in which the seeds traveled. | They will be carried by the river.  They will land in soft mud.  The friends of the river are the lily pads and the frogs. They will take the seeds across the river to the mud.  There would be a lot of plants. The garden will be very full.  Miss Maple tells the seeds to take care to stay clear of weedy characters.  They were blown there by the wind.  The animals are carrying the seeds into the tree. They are keeping the seeds to eat in the winter. The animals may bury them to keep them safe.”  Sample completed chart.   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | How seed travels | Where it lands | What helps it grow | | water | mud | friends of river | | wind | field and forest | sun, rain | | animals | around trees | animals bury/store them |   Allow a few students to show what drifting looks like. Students should stand and slowly move toward the ground.  They might travel in the water. They might float in the wind. Animals may carry them.  I would feel scared. I would feel worried. I would feel excited. |
| **FOURTH AND BEYOND:**  Reread pages 1-6.  Page 6 Why do you think Miss Maple says, “for the world is big and you are small”?  Can someone and a friend model what that phrase means?  Read pages 7-10.  Pg. 10 Based on the text, what do seeds need to be healthy?  Why do you think the seeds “must take care to stay clear of weedy characters?”  Read pages 11-12.  Reread “Take care my little ones, for the world is big and you are small.”  Why do you think Miss Maple repeats these words to the seeds?  \*Help students recognize this repeated line of text and make the connection to the big idea that although thing are small, they can still make a big impact.  Read pages 13-16.  Page 15 Why do you think Miss Maple says, “Don’t be afraid—raindrops help us grow”?  Read pages 17-24.  Page 24 Ask students if they notice a special line of text on this page. What do they notice?  Why do you think it is important for Miss Maple say this again?  Read page 25.  The text says, “even the grandest of trees once had to grow up from the smallest of seeds.” What does this mean?  Read page 27  What is Miss Maple preparing to do now? Why is this important?  What is this story trying to teach you about seeds?  What lesson is this story teaching you about yourself? | The seeds are very small and the world is very big.  One student may stand with their arms stretched out very wide or in a large round shape. Another student may squat down and curl up to show that they are small like a seed.  They need soil, sun and rain.  They are bad. They look scary. (Tell students that weeds can prevent plants from growing because they take up the things the plants need to be healthy.)  She wants them to be careful. She cares about them. They are small and the word is big.  The seeds are little and the raindrops might scare them because they are the same size. The seeds are just babies and might not know what rain is.  “Take care, my little ones, for the world is big and you are small.”  She really wants them to be careful, and she thinks they are special.  All trees, even the biggest and best trees, were small seeds before they were big trees.  She is going to get more seeds. This is important so more seeds can grow. It shows that she does this every year.  Even though the seeds are small, they can still grow into big trees and other things.  Even though we are small, we will grow up into grown-ups. We can do great things. |

FINAL DAY WITH THE BOOK - Culminating Task

Begin by saying, "Many plants start out as a tiny seed. How do these seeds travel to their new homes?"

Reread pages 7-14. Revisit the trifold chart where notes from previous lessons were captured. Explain that students will work today to illustrate how one seed will travel and where it will land. Students may select one of the three ways from the text to illustrate seed dispersal. Students will share their seed dispersal illustration with the class and explain their illustrations.

Español:

Comience diciendo: “Muchas plantas comienzan como una pequeña semilla. ¿Cómo viajan estas semillas a sus nuevos hogares?”

Volver a leer las páginas 7-13. Revisa la table donde se escribieron las notas de las lecciones anteriores. Explique que los estudiantes ilustrarán cómo viajará una semilla y dónde aterrizará. Los estudiantes puden seleccionar una de las tres formas del texto para ilustrar la dispersion de semillas. Los estudiantes compartirán su ilustración de dispersion de semillas con la clase y explicarán sus ilustraciones.

Vocabulary

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| **These words merit less time and attention**  (They are concrete and easy to explain, or describe events/  processes/ideas/concepts/experiences that are familiar to your students) | **These words merit more time and attention**  (They are abstract, have multiple meanings, and/or are a part  of a large family of words with related meanings. These words are likely to describe events, ideas, processes or experiences that most of your student will be unfamiliar with) |
| Page 1 – guests – a person who is invited, a visitor  Page 4 – travel(ed)– moved from one place to another  Page 6 – similar – almost alike, resembling something  Page 15 – burrow – to dig, make a hole or tunnel  Page 18 – drift – to be carried slowly  Page 19 – journey – traveling from one place to another | Page 4 - orphan – a young one with no parents  Page 10 – bustling – being full of life and activity  Page 24 - gazes – looks steadily and intently  Page 25 - grandest – magnificent/large in size and appearance |

Extension learning activities for this book and other useful resources

* Reread *Miss Maple’s Seeds*, pointing out the last paragraph, “But the end of each season is a start to the next.” Pair with reading *The Life Cycle of a Pumpkin* by Gail Gibbons. Allow students to make the connection between that last paragraph and the paired text: each year the life cycle begins with new plants. The students should also explore the size of a pumpkin compared to the seed. Refer to page 5 in *Miss Maple’s Seeds* as well as the quotation, “even the grandest of trees once had to grow up from the smallest of seeds.” How does this message show up again in *The Life Cycle of a Pumpkin.* *Note: This is particularly supportive of English Language Learners.*
* **Act it out:** View a video ( <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-xYVSfFX8n8> Or <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6hcjxaBz8mw>) on seed dispersal and (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LxaELwrTChs>) the life cycle of a plant.
* **Seed Search**: Collect seeds and predict what the collected seeds may grow into. After making predictions, research the seeds to determine what type of seed it is.
* **Plant seeds:** Observe and record their growth over time using words and pictures in students’ science journals.
* **Make a personal timeline**: Have students bring in baby pictures so they can see how they have grown from an infant to a kindergarten student.
* **See links** **for additional resources**:
* Check out Eliza Wheeler’s website with additional activity sheets to support Miss Maple’s Seeds. <http://wheelerstudio.com/2013/04/03/miss-maples-seeds-activity-sheets/>
* Retell how seeds travel using a visual ( <http://wheelerstudio.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/MissMaple_Colorsheet_dispersal_150.jpg> ). Have students retell to a partner and take home to retell to a parent.
* View Magic School Bus Plants a Seed (<https://vimeo.com/66102046>). Create a Venn diagram using the video and Miss Maple’s Seeds on how seeds travel.

**What Makes This Read-Aloud Complex?**

1. **Quantitative Measure**

Go to <http://www.lexile.com/> and enter the title of your read-aloud in the Quick Book Search in the upper right of home page. Most texts will have a Lexile measure in this database.

Most of the texts that we read aloud in K-2 should be in the 2-3 or 4-5 band, more complex than the students can read themselves.

2-3 band 420-820L

4-5 band 740-1010L

850L

1. **Qualitative Features**

Consider the four dimensions of text complexity below. For each dimension\*, note specific examples from the text that make it more or less complex.

There is more than one level of meaning in this text. It is explicitly about how seeds travel, but a more subtle message can be taken from the repeated quotation, “Take care, my little ones, for the world is big and you are small” and “even the grandest of trees once had to grow up from the smallest of seeds.” The theme of big things come from small starts and message that size doesn’t matter can be pulled out of this text.

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| More than one level of meaning with levels clearly distinguished from each other; theme is clear but may be conveyed with some subtlety |

This story puts the cycle of a seed into narrative form. Illustrations and graphics are needed to clarify vocabulary and complex phrases. Ex. “weedy characters”

Figurative/ Nonliteral language is included in this text

Ex. “Curtains of rain,” “Orphan seeds,” “dance and burrow down”

Students will need the basic knowledge that plants grow from seeds in order to make the connection to the less explicit message that “size doesn’t matter.”

**Meaning/Purpose**

**Structure**

**Language**

**Knowledge Demands**

\*For more information on the qualitative dimensions of text complexity, visit <http://www.achievethecore.org/content/upload/Companion_to_Qualitative_Scale_Features_Explained.pdf>

1. **Reader and Task Considerations**

What will challenge my students most in this text? What supports can I provide?

* Connecting the narrative structure to the life cycle of the plant and then back to the overall message.

How will this text help my students build knowledge about the world?

* At the basic level, students may be aware of how seeds travel from place to place. At a more complex level, students will see that they have much potential for the future.
* Even small ones can accomplish grand things someday.

1. **Grade level:** What grade does this book best belong in? K as a read-aloud.