

e-Handout: Inspiring Student Environmentors via Songwriting, & Recording, Storytelling & Video Making!

Online Session facilitated by
Remy Rodden & Peter Lenton, aka The EnviroSongsters!

Please see archived video of session c/o c2c.org

C2C 2020 Provincial Conference

Lhtakoh* – Where People, Place and Practice Flow Together

*Lhtakoh: Lheidli name for the Fraser which means “waters within each other”

From Prince George, B.C. (and online)

23 Oct 2020

**THE
ENVIROSONGSTERS.CA**

Setting Tone for the Session / Participants

#1 We will **demo, invite collaboration, and have detailed handout** to take-away. Slides from session will be recorded, so you can refer back. (so you can just listen, no need to take notes, actually experience the activities, so you can try with your students next class).

#2 Highly collaborative, your ideas welcome, without anyone ever being placed on the spot. No pressure. **Joining in always voluntary**. So breathe deep sigh of relief. That being said, singing is good for the soul, yours & your kids, so feel free to sing like you are in the shower!

#3 ‘Live’ VS Online – We adapting tried & true activities from ‘live’ workshops, and classroom settings. We are all recently riding the ZOOM, online Teaching Learning curve, so let us experiment. These curriculum-tied activities can always be adapted for your grade, unit, etc.

Goals / Outcomes

#1 Tapping universal power of **MUSIC** to deepen, encourage sense of place, respecting the land, stewardship of habitat. We’ll do activities, designed for the musically yet-to-be-trained.

#2 Hook the head and body with **OEE OUTDOOR & EXPERIENTIAL** Education activities, to invite love of the land, re-stoke Kids’ existing caring for living things.

#3 Use **SONGWRITING & RECORDING** to set the hooks of enviro-stewardship even deeper, inside & outside! In school or at Home. We’ll offer glimpses of a few different approaches, to creating songs with your students.

Activity: Two Truths and a Fib – with Sense of Place theme

(template on next page)

- a) Participants think of two true facts about themselves, and one fib. *Answers can be steered by next unit topic you are studying.* You may wish to remind group not to write them down in order. Younger students often do this, making the guessing predictable!
- b) They can be written or drawn i.e. pictures. Older groups could offer their three favorite places &/or facts about themselves from memory.
- c) After group has been given 3-5 mins to write... volunteers read out loud. Then they repeat them one at a time and class members raise hand if they believe the statement to be true. Leave a few moments for inevitable discussion and laughter!
- d) Sharing by up to a half dozen volunteers gives whole group a chance to tune into your upcoming lesson. Additional sharing can be used as a reward for achieving learning goals that day. Kids love this activity so it is a good motivator.
- e) Having items written/drawn on a half page can lead more easily into various language arts activities, storytelling, and a more imaginative classroom environment! Plus, the students and teachers learn more about each other, facilitating FUN. community-building!
- f) Activity can be done throughout the year... even when a new student arrives.
- g) Try activity in pairs, about each other, and have kids introduce their partner.
- h) Students could also share favourite field trips, family outings to natural settings, etc.
- i) Tips – the fib that students choose to share, is often rooted in a dream, so debriefing could explore where in the world students would like to visit and why. Can an un-visited place still inspire a sense of place?

c. Puffin Productions & www.puffin.ca from "Smart Like a Fountain" lesson/activity booklet + Juno Award-winning recording: "Proud Like a Mountain" activity package.

c. Peter Lenton, www.puffin.ca Puffin Productions, 2020.

Getting to know you with **Two Truths & a Fib!**

Name: _____

Write down two true memories from the natural world and one that is a lie, not necessarily in order.

1)

2)

3)

Getting to know you with Two Truths & a Fib! Name: _____

Write down two true memories from the natural world and one that is a lie, not necessarily in order.

1)

2)

3)

LA Activity - From Similes to Songwriting...

by Peter Lenton, B.Ed., aka Peter Puffin's Whale Tales!

Singing Your Way to Language Literacy, and cultivating sense of place in kids!

Start by singing "Peace Like A River" along with Youtube. Peter's Proud Like a Mountain works too.



Music really is the universal language! Some of our best loved songs use similes in their lyric lines.

This activity taps the innate wonder about the natural world (that all of us have in some measure... and kids have LOTS!), and, the powerful truth that if affective, feelings for our learning are evoked, more efficient education occurs, and a stewardship-inspiring, deep connection to the land grows.

1. Start with a blank "page" on your white board, SmartBoard screen...
2. Title your page: Wild Writers Love Singing!
3. Define simile - a comparison using words "like" or "as"
4. Brainstorm list of feelings down the left side of page. Encourage mostly positive feelings but make point of accepting more negative examples the students will suggest... and encourage youngsters that both kinds of feelings are fine and natural... it is what you do with the feelings that really matters.

eg. It is completely normal to feel sad once and a while - trick is what you do to accept th sensation, perhaps deal with the cause if necessary, and then transition away to a more uplifting feeling.

Congratulate kids on sharing their feelings - very worthwhile to learn how to appropriately share feelings with other people.

5. Now brainstorm a second column on the right side of the page... anything to do with nature, natural phenomena like weather, the earth... every suggestion they make can be gtraced back to the earth eventually!

This is a great chance to encourage a safe, comfort zone with your students... where no reasonably appropriate answer will ever be wrong in your classroom. Such a caring approach encourages kids to be openly creative and productive learners.

LA Activity - From Similes to Songwriting... (cont)

by Peter Lenton, B.Ed., aka Peter Puffin's Whale Tales!

6. Next, ask for volunteers to compare a feeling to an example of nature. In other words... choose a feeling from the list on the left, use a word "like" or "as" and add the example from the nature column on the right.

Peter Lenton's (aka Peter Puffin's Whale Tales) popular song: "Proud Like a Mountain" is full of similes. Also, the classic traditional song "Peace Like a River (incidentally... covered on Peter's 1st and Festival Soup albums) is made up of three similes.

You may wish to start the lesson with playing song recording, or singing / actions of one song and wrap the session by singing the other. Eventually you can sing and make up actions for the student similes! This is incredibly rich learning.

We are tapping the universal language of music. Students are investing physical energy into their learning by doing actions to the lyrics / similes. And... we have tapped their affective caring energy... to make the learning environmental even more fertile! A triple-rich approach to learning language literacy! Your students will love it!

7. In your demo you now have a page with similes created by adding "like" or "as" with squiggly lines to complete the simile phrase. See next page for example.

8. Students can use the blackline master called Going Wild With Nature to create their own simile phrases...

9. You can then help fit their similes to the melodies of Peace Like a River or Proud Like a Mountain, and facilitate the students creating actions to go with their similes.

10. Develop the (song) writing skills by showing how an adjective can be used to describe the examples of nature they have suggested. Audio / video record a practised version of their song. Seeing the looks of joy on the faces of kids seeing and hearing themselves singing their "own" song is absolutely delightful. Now plan to take yourself for a decadent snack after school today, for having delivered such a stellar lesson!



Following is an actual example of song lyrics generated by students in one of our artist-in-residence programs. You could show it to a class to illustrate your goal.

LA Activity - From Similes to Songwriting... (cont)

by Peter Lenton, B.Ed., aka Peter Puffin's Whale Tales!

(1st three lines below sang to melody of Peace Like a River –
2nd eight are sang to tune: Proud Like a Mountain)

Natural Similes

wiggly as a snake

prickly as a burr

vicious as a piranha

As organized as an ant

slimy as a snail

wise as a fox

graceful as a dolphin

prickly as a porcupine

smooth like a river

small as a moth

sleepy as a sloth

Comparing Amazing Feelings to Awesome Nature!

Discovering the songwriter in you! A simile (pronounced sim-a-lee) is a comparison using the words "like" or "as". The title and lyric of Peter Puffin's song "Proud Like a Mountain" is a simile. Peace Like a River (Marvin Frey) is also a simile.

You can list examples of feelings and nature, insert "like a" or "as a" and then fit your lines together to make another verse for "Proud Like a Mountain". Just count the number of lines in a "Proud..." verse and substitute yours. You can be a songwriter too... even with a borrowed tune! People who care about nature and write songs about their feelings can help others care for reducing pollution and climate change.

You can brainstorm your "Feelings" first, then **fill in the "Nature" ideas, and draw arrows between them to create similes.**

Feelings

Nature

Draw / colour a picture to go with one of your similes on back of this page.

This page from: Activity CD/booklet package "Proud Like a Mountain (CD) & Smart Like A Fountain (Booklet)" c. 2015, Peter Lenton, Puffin Productions, www.puffin.ca, toll-free 1 (888) 878-3346.

Storytelling Satchel - meaning-making & sense-of-place

by Peter Lenton, B.Ed., aka Peter Puffin's Whale Tales!

- #1. Objects from the natural world are discovered through as many senses as possible and even with eyes closed for the older grades. Participants are then encouraged to share their own anecdotes inspired by the objects, emphasizing tales that relate to connections with Mother Nature. Stories can be turned into poems and even put to drums or other instrumental music.
- #2. Ask participants to sit in circle and close eyes. Facilitator hands out items so that they are flowing both ways around the circle. participants spend 30 secs getting 'picture' of object in brain, using all senses except sight. Objects are placed in center of circle after traveling around circle.
- #3. Participants can open eyes and are given a few minutes to reconcile the appearance of the real object with the 'blind' picture that they created in mind. For a gentle start to encouraging use of imagination, the facilitator can tell brief stories about objects chosen by participants.
- #4. Stories inspired by object can be true or imagined... participants could vote.
- #5. Participants can choose objects to tell story about. Students love getting to hold the object again (with their sight this time!)... and even a couple of sentences sparked by the object, loosens up the creative abilities... that can then be applied to other activities during and after the school day.
- #6. Stories can be elaborated upon in journals, recorded via audio & video.
- #7. Other members can add sentences to the story started by the first person to hold the object. Use multi-media like recording to evolve the activity!
- #8. Note that the storytelling satchel can put together by the teacher and / or the students... with guidelines to support different units and learning goals.

Songwriting Idea Starter

We've had much success using this approach for helping kids and adults write songs. It's simply a way of organizing thoughts and feelings. It can also be a launching place for inquiry learning approaches using the info gleaned in the "would like to know" category. The full blackline master follows for use in your classroom.

1. Choose your topic – something in nature that is important to you – and write it in the centre of the page.
2. Fill in the top two boxes, using point form and single words and short phrases.
3. To the left of the line in each of the bottom boxes, write a list of words representing feelings and actions you could take about the subject. Try for single syllable words if possible.
4. Now, find words that rhyme with the ones you put on the left side. Write them beside the words on the right side of the line.
5. Try composing a song with those rhymes while also taking ideas from the "know" and "would like to know" boxes. You can use a familiar tune you know, or make up your own. It helps to start with the "chorus" or "hook" of the song first, then do the verses after. Have fun with it!
6. Whatever you come up with, celebrate and share! This may be the first song you've ever tried to write so don't expect a perfect result. People will be delighted to hear what you've come up with.
7. Try it again. You never know, this just might be your gift! Like anything, it takes practice to get good at it!

What I know	What I would like to know
Topic	
Feelings	Actions



