

BLUE *Sky* YELLOW *Kite*

BY JANET A. HOLMES & JONATHAN BENTLEY



Common Core Teaching Guide

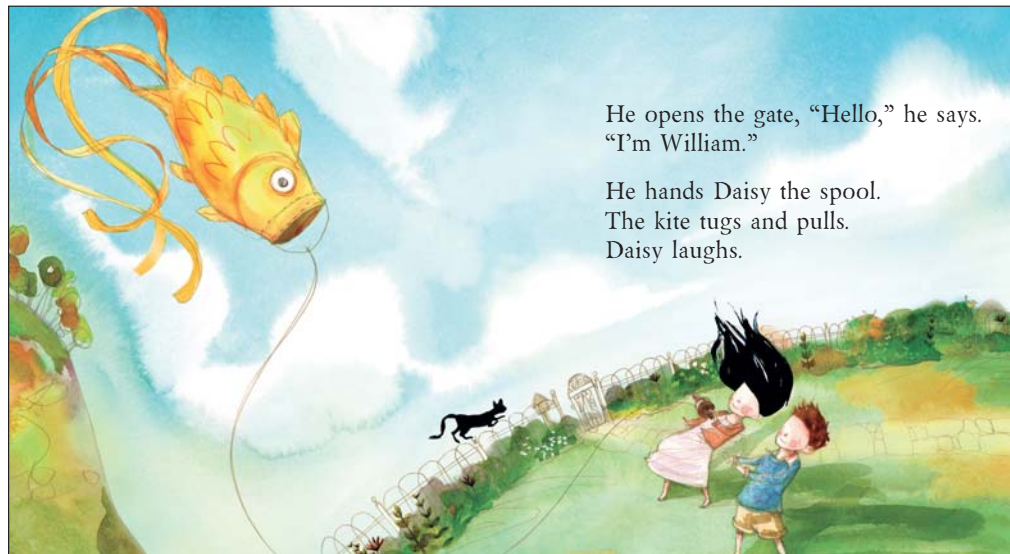
About the Book

Daisy sees a beautiful yellow kite fluttering in the sky and is immediately taken with it. She follows its trail which leads her to a young boy, named William, who lives on the other side of the hill. He kindly shares his kite with Daisy and shows her how to fly it. But before she knows it, she is running through the field, over the hill, and back to her home—with William's kite firmly in hand.

However, Daisy's elation soon turns to guilt, a feeling that keeps her awake all night. Having the treasured kite somehow doesn't seem as important anymore—but being a good friend does. Will Daisy be able to right her wrongs?

A poetic tale about discovering one of the most beautiful treasures of all—friendship.

Introduction



Dear Teacher,

A picture book with spare, lyrical text and beautiful illustrations both vibrant and dreamy, *Blue Sky Yellow Kite* offers young readers opportunities to think about and discuss moral issues involved in ownership of material possessions while considering generosity and friendship as they practice Common Core Speaking and Listening skills. They will also encounter a wealth of delicious language, including rich verbs, in the lovely text that will serve as a launch pad to Reading Literature and Writing activities.

In addition, you can use the book as a springboard for an art activity that will extend student appreciation and engagement and generate a beautiful visual display that will continue to remind young readers of the magical journey of *Blue Sky Yellow Kite*.

This guide was prepared by Toni Buzzeo, M.A., M.L.I.S., author, educational consultant, and school librarian. www.tonibuzzeo.com

Reading Literature Standards

READING LITERATURE STANDARD 4

- RL K.4** Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.
- RL 1.4** Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses.
- RL 2.4** Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song.
- RL 3.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.

Moving through Space

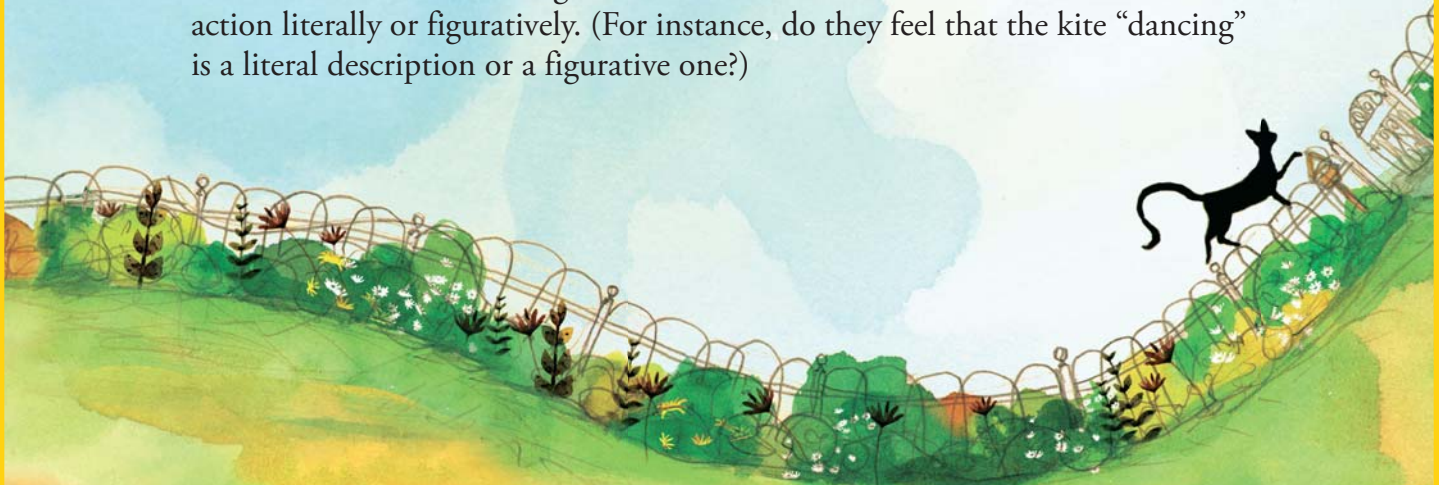
Kindergarten, Grade One, Grade Two, Grade Three:

Verbs are often the most powerful words in fiction. They not only tell us what happens, but they also tell us how it happens. Author Janet A. Holmes is a master of verb choice, as you and your students will discover when you revisit the text of *Blue Sky Yellow Kite*.

Begin this activity by reviewing with students what a verb is and how it functions in a sentence. Then go on an “interesting verb” hunt in the text. Using the **Moving Through Space** graphic organizer, record the interesting verbs that students find. Ask:

- **WHAT** does this verb mean?
- **WHAT** is a simpler or more common verb the author could have used?
- **HOW** does this word make you feel?

Grade Three: Ask third graders to consider whether each verb describes the action literally or figuratively. (For instance, do they feel that the kite “dancing” is a literal description or a figurative one?)



Reading Literature and Speaking and Listening Standards

READING LITERATURE STANDARD 3

RL K.3 With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story.

RL 1.3 Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.

RL 2.3 Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

RL 3.3 Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING STANDARD 2

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.

SL 1.2 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

SL 2.2 Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

SL 3.2 Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

Details Are Key

Kindergarten, Grade One, Grade Two, Grade Three:

After reading *Blue Sky Yellow Kite* aloud, invite your students to answer the following questions about the text.

- **Who** is the main character in this story?
- **Who** is the secondary character? How do you know that he is not the main character?
- **Where** does this story take place?
- **When** does this story take place? **What** clues do you see in the illustrations to tell you time of day and time of year?
- **What** makes Daisy curious in the first place?
- **What** does she do about her curiosity?
- **How** does William respond to Daisy? Is he generous?
- **What** does Daisy do that doesn't feel right to her?
- **What** does she do about this action at first and then later?
- **How** does William respond? Does the ending make both Daisy and William happy?

READING LITERATURE STANDARD 7

- 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).
- RL 1.7** Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.
- RL 2.7** Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.
- RL 3.7** Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).

SPEAKING AND LISTENING STANDARD 2

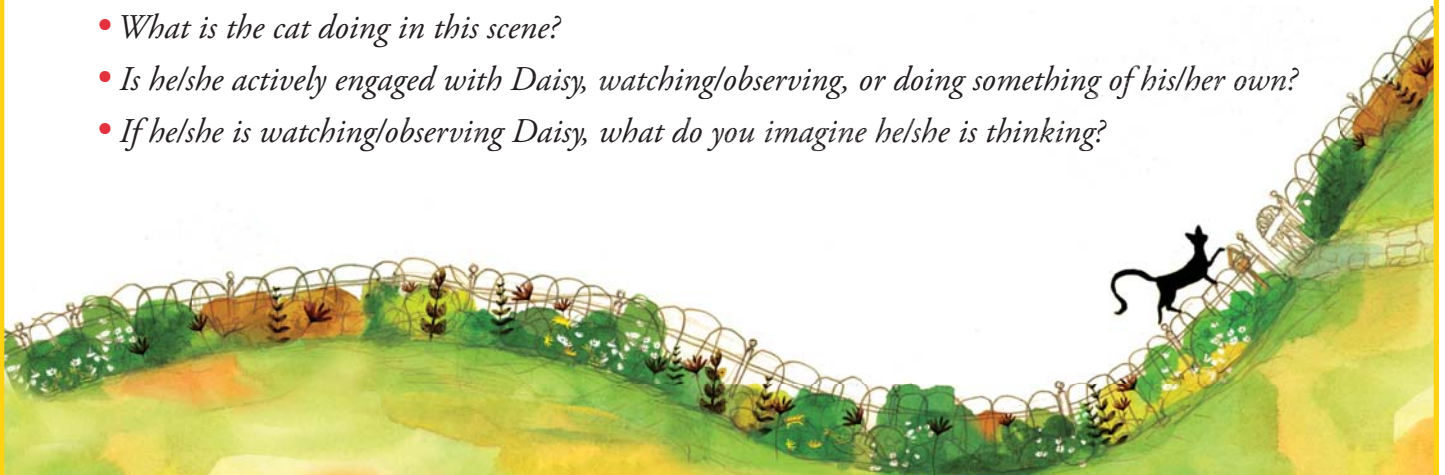
- SL K.2** Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.
- SL 1.2** Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
- SL 2.2** Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
- SL 3.2** Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

What the Cat Saw

Kindergarten, Grade One, Grade Two, Grade Three:

Picture books are a marriage of text and illustration with each of the two components moving the story along its trajectory. Often, picture book illustrations carry forward a story thread or character that is not mentioned in the text. After reading and discussing *Blue Sky Yellow Kite*, ask students to revisit the illustrations and search for a character not mentioned in the text—the black cat. With students, explore the cat's actions and expressions as the story unfolds. Scene by scene, ask:

- *What is the cat doing in this scene?*
- *Is he/she actively engaged with Daisy, watching/observing, or doing something of his/her own?*
- *If he/she is watching/observing Daisy, what do you imagine he/she is thinking?*



Writing Standards

WRITING STANDARD 3

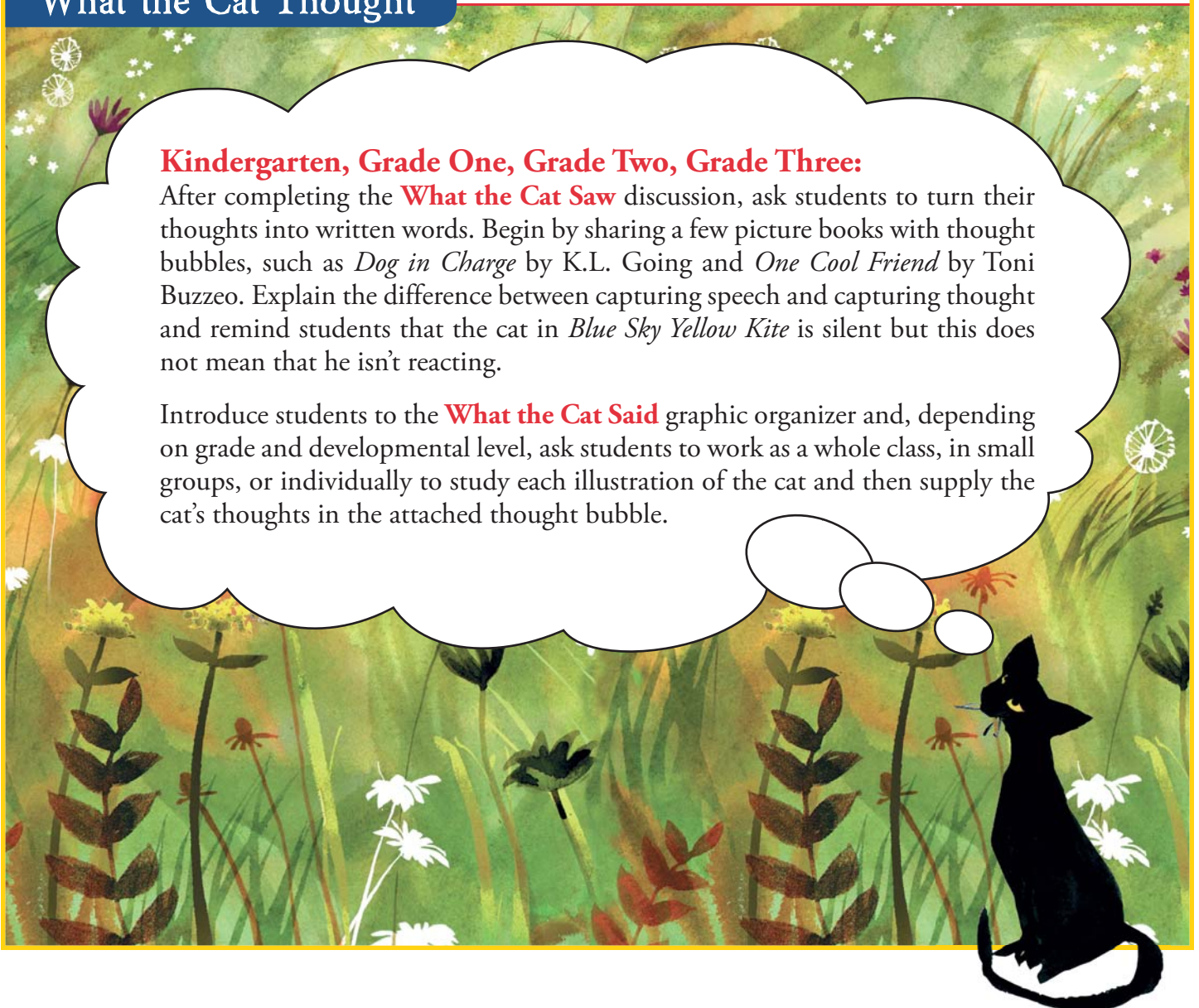
- W K.3** Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.
- W 1.3** Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.
- W 2.3** Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.
- W 3.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

What the Cat Thought

Kindergarten, Grade One, Grade Two, Grade Three:

After completing the **What the Cat Saw** discussion, ask students to turn their thoughts into written words. Begin by sharing a few picture books with thought bubbles, such as *Dog in Charge* by K.L. Going and *One Cool Friend* by Toni Buzzeo. Explain the difference between capturing speech and capturing thought and remind students that the cat in *Blue Sky Yellow Kite* is silent but this does not mean that he isn't reacting.

Introduce students to the **What the Cat Said** graphic organizer and, depending on grade and developmental level, ask students to work as a whole class, in small groups, or individually to study each illustration of the cat and then supply the cat's thoughts in the attached thought bubble.



What the Cat Said



What the Cat Said





What the Cat Said





What the Cat Said





Reading Literature and Writing Standards

READING LITERATURE STANDARD 2

RL K.2 With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details.

RL 1.2 Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.

RL 2.2 Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.

RL 3.2 Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.

WRITING STANDARD 3

W K.3 Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.

W 1.3 Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.

W 2.3 Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.

W 3.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

The Big Mistake

Kindergarten, Grade One, Grade Two, Grade Three:

Blue Sky Yellow Kite is written in third person prose. With students, discuss how the story might have been written differently if either Daisy or William were telling the story. As a whole class, choose one of the two characters and practice telling the beginning of the story in the first person voice of that character. Then discuss how this changes the students' experience of the story.

Kindergarten, Grade One: Challenge students to choose one scene from the story and independently render it in either Daisy's or William's voice. Allow Kindergartners to use a combination of writing, drawing, or dictating as needed.

Grade Two, Grade Three: Invite students to begin as the story opens or to continue from the group suggestion to render the entire story in either Daisy's voice or William's voice, reporting all events from her or his perspective and making sure to include individual thoughts and feelings.

Grade One, Grade Two, Grade Three: After students have finished their writing assignment and shared their work, engage them in a discussion of the author's central message, lesson, or moral. Ask:

- *What does author Janet A. Holmes want us to think about stealing?*
- *What does she want us to know about forgiveness?*
- *What does she want us to understand about friendship?*

Art Extension Activity

Blue Sky Kites

In *Blue Sky Yellow Kite* William flies a yellow kite reminiscent of a traditional Japanese carp kite called a *koinobori*. At the end of the story, he helps Daisy to create a similar red fish kite. Invite students to think about a favorite animal, particularly one that either has wings itself, or can be fashioned to have an interior space to catch the wind, as William's and Daisy's kites do. Then, ask them to either draw a large-scale model or, if time allows, construct it (in two dimensions) from colored paper. Display these colorful pieces of student art on a vast stretch of blue.

About the Author and Illustrator

Author **Janet A. Holmes** was born and grew up in Perth, Western Australia. After completing an Arts Degree at the University of Western Australia, Janet worked as a research assistant. Following a Graduate Diploma in Education, she worked as a teacher-librarian in a primary school. She then moved to Canberra, Australia, where she currently resides and writes.

As a little boy, **Jonathan Bentley** liked soccer and drawing. When he was about eight years old he realized that he might not be good enough to play soccer professionally and so he concentrated on drawing instead. He likes to work with a range of materials including acrylics, oils, and line and watercolor. Jonathan looks forward to the day when he has a big barn-like studio somewhere in the countryside.

