

Lesson Plan: Using Illustrations to Enhance a Story

- Overview

In the book *A Place Where Hurricanes Happen* the words of author Renee Watson and illustrations of artist Shadra Strickland work together to tell the stories of New Orleans children who faced Hurricane Katrina. In this lesson students will identify details in the illustrations that tell more about the story. Students will then respond to *A Place Where Hurricanes Happen* by creating their own piece of art that includes details from the story.

- Resources & Preparation

- Materials and Technology

- The book *A Place Where Hurricanes Happen* by Renee Watson
- Drawing paper
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- Index cards
- pencil

- Instructional Plan

- Student Objectives:

- Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.
- Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading aloud.
- Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

1. Background/Discovery Knowledge: use a nonfiction book or [online resources](#) as overview of what hurricanes are and the Hurricane Katrina disaster in New Orleans (see suggested nonfiction titles below).
2. Read aloud: *A Place Where Hurricanes Happen*
3. Whole Group Discussion:
 - a. Lead a discussion on how the events of the story fit in with the images and information shared before reading the book. Encourage students to refer back to the illustrations and text for evidence as often as possible.
Discussion topics may include:
Describe the characters' lives before the storm? What evidence do you have?
How much warning were New Orleans citizens given? Describe how you know.
Give examples of how the characters and their families prepare for the storm.
Describe the different experiences each character had during the storm.
How were their lives changed after the storm?
Were these changes long-term or short-term? Explain how you know.
4. Turn & Talk: Small groups of 2-4 will choose one of the four characters from the story (Adrienne, Michael, Keesha, or Tommy) and discuss that character's experiences within the book.

5. Writing/Drawing Activity:
 - a. From their chosen character's story, group members will collaborate to select a portion of text (1-2 sentences) for every person in their group. Each group should choose at least one piece of text from before, during, and after the storm. Individuals will then write portion of text on an index card.
 - b. Each individual will then independently draw a picture representing the text they have chosen, taping the index card with their text on it to the bottom of the drawing. Encourages students to include in their art details from the words in their text. Students should be given 10-15 minutes to complete their drawing.
6. Sharing: Group members will come together again. Each group will share with the rest of the class their chosen character and texts and their completed drawings, presenting the items in chronological order. As other groups are presenting, the other students will work to identify the details from the text that each artist included in his or her drawing.

- Additional Resources:

- Books for Discovery/Background Knowledge of Hurricanes & Katrina

- *Hurricanes* by Matt Doeden – perfect age-appropriate nonfiction selection to read all the way through with students to learn relevant vocabulary (*hurricane, evacuate, hurricane eye, storm surge, tropical storm, etc.*) and effects of hurricanes on people and communities.
- *Inside Hurricanes* by Mary Kay Carson – great for discovery discussion on hurricanes, particularly pages 4-25 for general information and images of hurricanes and pages 32-37 with before/after images and personal stories about Katrina
- *Hurricanes* from Smithsonian by Seamor Simon – great for a flip-through with students about what hurricanes are; includes summary and images of Hurricane Katrina on pages 22-23.
- *Hurricanes: Witness to Disaster* by National Geographic - (particularly pages 6-11 for Katrina images)
- *Violent Weather: Thunderstorms, Tornadoes, and Hurricanes* from National Geographic by Andrew Collins – description of hurricanes and human efforts to protect themselves and their property before/after hurricane (particularly pages 24-33).