

BACK OF THE BUS

LESSONS FOR:

HISTORICAL FICTION

VOICE & PERSPECTIVE

MOOD

SIMILES



GRADES 3-5

MENTOR TEXT
CLUB
by jivey

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Digital Learning Links

NOTE: The original purpose of the lessons in the Mentor Text Club were for direct teacher instruction. These lessons don't always translate well to a digital learning environment, but I have converted the activities to Slides and Forms as I was able.

These files are for the use of one classroom only, and should not be placed on public web pages or other sharing forums.

Before clicking any of the links in this file, it is important that you are signed into the Google Drive that you will use to share the files with your students.

Click each of the links below and a screen will open to prompt you to make a copy. The files will be in your own Google Drive account.

(You may want to create a folder for all of these!)

[Show. Don't Tell](#)

[Mentor Sentence Student Page](#)

[Voice: Back of the Bus](#)

[Similes Interactive Activity](#)

[Exploring Voice in Writing](#)

[Editing Assessment](#)

[Writing From a Picture](#)

[Rosa Parks Background](#)

[Assess Mood and Voice](#)

[Identify Facts/Fiction](#)

[Symbolism](#)

You'll need: Back of the Bus by Aaron Reynolds

	READING	GRAMMAR	WRITING
DAY ONE	Read an article about Rosa Parks to provide background information. Discuss how age affects perspective.	Show students the mentor sentence. Discuss the structure of the sentence. Notice the use of sensory details to express emotion.	Read <u>Back of the Bus</u> to the students, paying close attention to the sensory details that help express emotion in the story.
DAY TWO	Students will classify the text as historical fiction and identify the facts and the fiction in the story.	Students identify the functions of the words in the sentence. Use the interactive activity to teach/review focus skill of similes.	Students will analyze sentences from the mentor text for voice, specifically noting the way it expresses the boy's personality, age, and experience.
DAY THREE	Students will analyze the structure of the text and identify the main idea and supporting details.	Discuss how the sentence could be revised to make it stronger. Allow students to revise the sentence and share.	Students will write to express voice, particularly showing age and experience.
DAY FOUR	Students will identify the symbolism of the marble in the mentor text.	Discuss how the sentence can be imitated. Share the example and note the differences. Students should imitate the sentence and share.	Students will use an image to write a short narrative that describes the scene from two perspectives: the woman in the image, and a child in the image.
DAY FIVE	Students will identify the author's purpose and the main idea and supporting details in the text.	Practice using the "writing session" (or the "writing session" as a "challenge").	

MENTOR SENTENCE

Core Anchor Standards: L.1, L.2, L.3, L.5, W.5

Duration: 15 MINUTES DAILY

Objectives: Students will notice grammar and conventions, revise, and imitate a mentor sentence and apply it to their own writing.

Materials needed: If you are new to using mentor sentences, encourage students to visit my website to read more on videos on Mentor Sentences (Back to the Basics) and how to implement them. If you are already familiar with them, you may want to start with them: [MASTER MENTOR SENTENCES](#)

Mentor Sentence (Back to the Basics)

Mentor Sentence Lesson

Student Notebooks

Actions: Each day, students will work with a mentor sentence in a different way in their notebook. Discussion is where the learning happens- this should not be center or independent work! Students will notice what is RIGHT about a sentence (rather than looking at a sentence full of mistakes) to apply what they see to their own writing.

Day 1: Students should share what they notice about the sentence that makes it an excellent sentence. They will notice all the words and how they are used. You will want to highlight the sentence and the words that bring the story to life.

Day 2: Students should identify the function of the words in the sentence. Do the words help the reader understand what the author is communicating? Especially focus on the adjectives (and nouns they describe), as they are related to the focus skill: similes, but don't worry if they can't label every single word in the sentence.

Day 3: Students will revise the mentor sentence by adding or changing words without changing the meaning of the sentence.

Day 4: Students will imitate the mentor sentence by keeping the style and structure but writing about what you want to write about. Use the example first and allow the students to notice what is the same and different from the original.

Day 5: Students will share what they have learned with a peer or a teacher.

Monday - possibilities of things to notice
 *simile - marble is like a tiger's eye
 adjective clause set apart by commas
 non-essential adjective clause (simply extra descriptive)
 present tense
 first person point of view
 prepositional phrases
 apostrophe used to shorten "old" to show southern dia
 simple sentence with compound predicate

Tuesday - label the sentence

I, my, it - pronouns
 take, lay - verbs
 out, all - adverbs
 marble, eye, ol' - nouns
 shiny, bright, ol' - adjectives
 and - conjunction
 like, on, in - prepositions
 a, the - articles
 tiger's - possessive noun (adjective)

I take out my marble, all shiny and bright like a big ol' eye, and lay it on the grooves in the aisle.

complete subject
 simple subject

complete predicate
 simple predicate

Wednesday - possibility of revised sentence

I take out my glass marble, all shiny and bright like a big ol' tiger's eye, and lay it on the worn grooves in the bus aisle.
 (added adjectives)

Thursday - possibility of imitation sentence

I pull out my sweatshirt, all warm and cozy like a big ol' bear hug, and wear it over my t-shirt in the theater.

I take out my marble, all shiny
 and bright like a big ol' tiger's

eye, and lay it on the grooves
 in the aisle

**I take out my marble,
 all shiny and bright
 like a big ol' tiger's eye,
 and lay it on the grooves in the aisle.**
 ~Back of the Bus

**I take out my marble,
 all shiny and bright
 like a big ol' tiger's eye
 and lay it on the grooves in the aisle.**
 ~Back of the Bus

Similes compare two things by saying "like" or "as". The things compared are called the **tenor** and the **vehicle**. The simile is the **simile**. Cut out the simile on the notebook and glue it across the four flaps. Highlight the simile on the notebook and write the two things being compared.

SIMILES

My marble comes right back to me, like it's on a string.

People pile on, all crammed like lima beans.

Mrs. Parks had eyes that were like a hawk's.

The marble was gold in the light, like a sun.

**I take out my marble,
 all shiny and bright
 like a big ol' tiger's eye,
 and lay it on the grooves in the aisle.**
 ~Back of the Bus

1. Circle 4 mistakes in the sentence. Rewrite the sentence correctly:
I take out my marble, all shiny and bright like a big ol' tiger's eye, and lay it on the grooves in the aisle.

What two things are being compared in these sentences with similes?

- Mrs. Parks just sits in that seat like a turnip pile.
 Mrs. Parks is compared to a turnip pile, the way she isn't moving.
- The policeman clicks the handcuffs on her hands, quick and loud like the screen door slamming.
 The sound of the handcuffs is compared to a screen door slamming.

Circle 4 mistakes in the sentence. Rewrite the sentence correctly:

- Some books get old and new ones come down.
- I rolled my marble like a big ol' eye.
- Fifty whole minutes we sit, but if you punch more.
- It's so hot on her head, like a sun too.
- I got somethin' in me, all pale and punchy, sayin' it won't be.

BUILDING BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Core Anchor Standards: RI.1, RI.3

Duration: 45 MINUTES

Objectives: Students will refer to details in a text and explain events using support from the text.

Materials needed:

Rosa Parks article

Short Answer activity

Actions: Read the article about Rosa Parks with the students BEFORE reading the mentor text, *Back of the Bus*, to provide background knowledge.

Give students the short answer activity. For at least the first question, model for students how to rephrase the question for their answer, as well as how to go back in the text to find the support for their answer. This could be completed together, or students could work in small groups with prompts to rephrase the question, making sure to rephrase the question and use the text for support.

Rosa Parks

December 1, 1955: that is the day that put Rosa Parks in history books. For years, Black people in Montgomery, Alabama (as well as in many other cities across the Southern United States) had to sit in the back of the bus, as the front seats were reserved for white people. The first section of the bus was reserved for more white people, and Black people were expected to give up their seat and stand. That December day, Rosa Parks was on her way home from her job as a seamstress. She sat in the first row of the "Colored Section." When the bus was nearly full, the driver told the Black people in that first row to stand. Three people did, but Rosa Parks did not. When the driver saw that she was still sitting, he told her he would call the police if she did not stand. She told him, "You may do that." Two policemen boarded the bus and arrested her.

This was not the first time Rosa Parks had taken a stand against segregation. She joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and became its secretary. She worked in the community, giving voice to the needs of Black people working to end discrimination toward Black people. In 1955, in particular, the discrimination in schools. Although a federal law was passed in 1954 to end segregation in schools, the law was not enforced. (There were still separate schools in Montgomery for Black students.)

Rosa Parks was not the first Black person arrested for refusing to give up their bus seat in Montgomery. Nine months before Rosa Parks, a fifteen-year-old girl named Claudette Colvin had also been arrested. The leaders of the Black community had considered a bus boycott for years to fight the racist laws, and after the arrest of Rosa Parks, they decided to launch a boycott. Starting December 5, 1955, for 381 days, 10,000 Black riders refused to work, carpool, or ride buses. After legal battles in court, the Montgomery Bus Boycott was finally over, with the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that it was illegal to racially segregate seating on buses.



"People always say that I didn't give up my seat because I was tired, but that isn't true. I was not tired physically, or no more tired than I usually was at the end of a working day. I was not old, although some people have accused me of being old. I was forty-two. No, I was tired of giving in."

~Rosa Parks

Rosa Parks

Summarize what happened on December 1, 1955:

On December 1, 1955, a Black woman named Rosa Parks took a bus home from her job. When a white man got on the bus, there weren't any seats left. The bus driver asked the people in Rosa's row to stand and allow him to sit. Three people did, but Rosa refused. The bus driver had her arrested.

Was this the start to Rosa Parks' leadership for Black rights?

This was not the start of Rosa Parks' leadership for Black rights. She joined the NAACP and became their secretary. She also fought to end segregation in schools.

The action Rosa Parks took set a movement into motion.

Describe the movement:

The arrest of Rosa Parks set the Montgomery Bus Boycott into motion. Black

leaders organized the boycott and it began December 1, 1955. It lasted until the Supreme Court ruled that the law in Montgomery to segregate seating, 40,000 Black people chose to walk, carpool, or take other means of transportation.

SHOW, DON'T TELL

Core Anchor Standards: RL.3, RL.6, L.3, W.3, W.9

Duration: 30 MINUTES

Objectives: Students will identify details in the text that convey emotion.

Materials needed:

Back of book from *When Rosa Parks*

Show, Don't Tell activity

Actions: Show students the cover of the book. Point out the description of the story in the right lower corner: Rosa Parks's historic act of defiance through the eyes of a child. Discuss with students what it means to be defiant. Allow time for discussion about how Rosa Parks was defiant using information from the article they read in the previous lesson.

After reading the first couple of pages, stop and ask students, "Who is telling the story?" (the young boy) "How do you know?" (*It is written in first person point-of-view, using words like I, me, my. The pictures show a young boy. Even without looking at the pictures, we could tell it was a young person because they are talking about their mother, and they are playing with their mother. These are things a child would do. And the first sentence of the book told us was "I was with the eyes of a child."*)

Continue reading until the page beginning with, "Some folks get up..." Remind students that a good author will show the reader how they are feeling by using sensory details and dialogue rather than just telling us outright. Aaron Reynolds does an excellent job helping us feel what the child must have been feeling in that moment. Pass out the activity or use it as a whole class chart to complete as you finish the book. Be sure to point out how much we "feel" because it is written in first person.

Discuss how the author shows the boy's feelings change at the end of the book- he has something to believe in and stand up for, and he feels "little braver" (brave). You can also discuss what it means for Rosa to "stand up for her chin," (stand up for her beliefs) Rosa Parks stood up for the boy... and how this is an example of show, don't tell. (*Mar means business nonsense; Rosa Parks also means business and isn't backing down from her beliefs; the little boy feels less afraid and more confident in his future.*)

SHOW, DON'T TELL

When Mrs. Parks refuses to get up, how does the little boy feel?

PREVIEW

shocked
scared
worried

How do you know?

VOICE

ACTIONS

SENSORY DETAILS

"Why ain't we goin' to bed?"

He spoke in a low voice.

He hears the creaked-up
thin's soft voice.

"We doin' somethin' wrong,
Mama?"

He rushed when Mama told
him to hush.

Folks look back with angry
eyes.

"We in trouble, Mama?"

He hides his marble.

He has shaky legs.

He starts thinking maybe she
does belong up there.

Folks are doin' mean scratchy
whispers.

He watches Rosa get
arrested- gettin' hauled off
to jail "or worse"

Her eyes are fierce like a
lightnin' storm

Fifteen minutes feel like a
hunch million years.

He's shaking.

PREVIEW

IDENTIFY FACTS AND FICTION

Core Anchor Standards: RL.1, RL.3, RL.7, RI.6

Duration: 20-30 MINUTES

Objectives: Students will identify important facts and details to summarize the text.

Materials Needed:

Back of the Bus by Rosa Parks

Facts and Fiction chart

Actions: Remind students that historical fiction is a story written that includes accurate details of an event in history, but many of the characters and details of the plot are made up. *Back of the Bus* is historical fiction.

Ask students to recall facts that were included in the book- what did the author share that was true about that day and about Rosa Parks? (If needed, re-read the book.)

Then, talk about the details that were fiction. Do you think the same as what really happened that day? Be sure to also go back through the pictures and point out that Rosa Parks did actually sit in the front of the bus even though the pictures show she was. (This is a common misconception and historical inaccuracy. It's a good way to remind them that this book is historical fiction!)

Back of the Bus

FACT

December 1, 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama

Black people sat in the back.

Mrs. Parks is from the tailor shop (she is a seamstress)

The bus was full of people.

The bus driver told people to move, but she doesn't.

The bus driver calls the police.

Mrs. Parks is arrested.

Mrs. Parks is famous for fighting injustice. (Many know her by name)

FICTION

The story has both realistic and fictional characters.

Rosa Parks plays with the little boy and his marble.

Rosa Parks is sitting way up front in the bus, not in the front row of the section for people of color.

Only one person comes, not actually two came to arrest Rosa Parks.

EXPLORING VOICE: MENTOR TEXT

Core Anchor Standards: W.3, L.3, RL.1, RL.3

Duration: 25 MINUTES

Objectives: Students will identify ways the author expressed voice.

Materials needed:
Back of book for student reflections
Voice in book of the voice activity

Actions: Remind students of the previous day's "show, don't tell" lesson. The author showed the boy's emotion through words, actions, and descriptions. This is one way to express the voice of a character. Voice will also reveal the character's personality, experiences, and even their age.

Look at the voice activity together. Each sentence from the book reveals the specific voice of the boy. Describe the voice the author expressed, especially based on word choice. If you have time, discuss how, the voice of the boy's time to tell about how the author's voice is the boy's voice even more so writing a southern "accent" or dialect.

Point out specifically the language that sounds "young" or "childish" and how it might have been written differently had an adult been narrating. This is called perspective: when the narrator's experiences impact how something is described. For example: *Fifteen whole minutes we sit, but it feels like a big bunch more.* An adult might say something like, "We sit for fifteen minutes, but it feels more like fifteen hours," since they would have more time terminology in their vocabulary.

Voice: Back of the Bus

Explain what these clues tell us about the character's personality, experiences and/or age.

We're sittin' right where we're supposed to—way in back.

He has a southern accent (no g on the end of sitting). He is a rule-follower, sitting in the back where he believes he is supposed to be.

I can't see him 'cuz of the people jam, but I know that growly ol' voice.

He takes this bus often enough to know the driver's voice without seeing him.

Fifteen whole minutes we sit, but it feels like a big bunch more.

He is young, so fifteen minutes can feel like an eternity. Also, the term "big bunch" sounds like what a child might say, rather than an adult.

That policeman clicks them metal things on her hands, quick and loud like the screen door slammint', and off the bus they go.

Because he is so young, he doesn't know what the handcuffs are called. He has likely never experienced anyone being arrested before.

ILLUSTRATIONS: MENTOR TEXT

Core Anchor Standards: RL.7

Duration: 20 MINUTES

Objective: Students will analyze how the illustrations contribute to the mood of the text.

Materials needed:

Back of the Book by Aaron Reynolds

Show, Don't Tell activity (completed in a previous lesson)

Actions: Review the emotions we expressed today, the boy using the details from the "show, don't tell" activity one more time. The author helped us feel these emotions through his word choice. This is called mood. Mood is the feeling we have while reading a story. Illustrators have an important job in picture books. They must match the mood the author has set in the story with their pictures.

Go through the book, page by page, and analyze each image and the mood it sets in the story. Verify that each image matches the mood of the text on that page as well.

Some pages of *Back of the Book* by Aaron Reynolds are illustrated by the author. The page when Max tells his mom: she has a stern look on her face with a bit of a frown. What mood does this suggest? Perhaps that Max doesn't want her to bring any unwanted attention.

The page showing Rosa sitting tall, looking out the window suggests determination; she will not back down.

The page showing Rosa speaking to the policeman: she has a furrowed brow, clutching her purse, and her mouth is closed in the image. This image creates a mood of worry - she seems to also be worried about what may happen.

The page showing Max looking out the window at Rosa: she has a furrowed brow, suggesting concern. The image also creates a mood of worry. The very last page suggests a very different mood though: Rosa wraps her arms around Max and closes her eyes. It is a mood of love; we can almost feel the warm hug she is giving.

EXPLORING VOICE IN WRITING

Core Anchor Standards: W.3, L.3

Duration: 45 MINUTES

Objectives: Students will practice writing to show personality and experience with voice.

Materials needed:
Writing prompts

Actions: Remind students of how they noticed tone and descriptions to reveal voice in the mentor text in the previous day's lesson. Today, they will practice expressing voice in different scenarios. Each scenario should be written from the perspective of the person described. All of these scenarios are similar, so without proper word choice or expression of personality, experience, or age, they all could potentially sound like the same story.

This activity could be completed independently, or with one of these variations:

Students could first talk through what the person might say in each scenario with a partner. (Our language often sparks great voice!)

-OR-

You could cut the scenarios apart and give one to each person within a group of four students. The students would write their responses, and then share without revealing the perspective description first. The other students would have to try to guess who the character is supposed to be based on their word choice and descriptions.

Writing with VOICE

Write a paragraph from the perspective of the person described in each scenario (in first person point of view) that expresses how they are feeling about how, don't tell me how.

A five-year-old is walking to school on the first day of kindergarten:

I squeeze Daddy's hand extra-tight as we get to the door of my classroom. There is a nice-looking man with glasses and a big smile standing in the doorway. "Good morning! My name is Mr. Cooper! I'm so happy to be your kindergarten teacher," he says, but he's making his flip-flops, and I hear him say "Daddy."

A thirteen-year-old is walking to school on the first day of kindergarten:

It's hard to remember my very first day of school, but I imagine I was probably just as nervous as Reya is about hers. "You are going to have so much fun today!" I tell her, but I can still see her eyes are brimming with anxious tears. "I bet your teacher is going to read you a fair book." She grabs onto my hand, and I can tell she doesn't want me to leave.

A teacher is walking into their classroom on the first day of school:

I flip the light switch on and breathe in the smell of freshly sharpened pencils and new crayons. I set my coffee down on my desk and look around at the empty desks that don't belong to anyone yet. I see the new yearbooks and new students to teach those seats... and my heart aches at the idea of the new students to teach, and prepare for middle school.

An eighteen-year-old is walking into class on the first day of college:

I climb the steps of the lecture hall, clutching my notebook in one hand and my coffee in the other. I drop my shoulder bag into an empty chair and sit in the next row, opening my notebook. I look up just as the professor writes "Biology 101" on the board. I get a job, and I realize my journey to becoming a veterinarian starts now!

SYMBOLISM: MENTOR TEXT

Core Anchor Standards: RL.1, RL.2

Duration: 15-25 MINUTES

Objective: Students will analyze the symbolism found in the mentor text.

Materials Needed:

Back of the Bus by Aaron Reynolds

Symbolism Activity

Actions: Remind students that in the book, *Back of the Bus*, the boy was playing with a marble. The author wrote about the marble intentionally in this book; he used the marble for symbolism. Tell students that sometimes, an object in a story can be a symbol and have a deeper meaning. The marble in this story symbolized the Black community.

Re-read the pages that feature the marble and have students look for parallels between the marble and the Black community in the 1950s. Complete the symbolism activity together or let you discuss the marble or you could simply host the discussion for this lesson and have students write.

SYMBOLISM

How did the author use the marble as a symbol in the book, *Back of the Bus*?

PREVIEW

The marble represents the Black community in the 1950s

PREVIEW



Some ways the author showed this are:

The boy was playing with the marble and giving it freedom (rolling it down the aisle) but his mama told him to put it away, just as people of color had to follow certain rules and didn't have freedom. He especially hid his marble during conflicts with whites as long as he was protecting it. Finally, he held it up, because the Black community was no longer to be seen (and heard) and not hidden anymore.

WRITING FROM A PICTURE

Core Anchor Standards: W.3, W.4, RL.6, RL.7

Duration: TWO 45 MINUTE PERIODS

Objective: Students will create two short narratives using a visual.

Materials needed:

Chaotic (picture of a winter storm or a displayed on screen for students to see)

Writing activity packet x2 for students (blank paper)

Actions: Instead of writing from a scene prompt as they did the previous day, for the next two days, they will be writing from a picture. Remind students how the tone of the mentor text was shown in pictures AND words.

Display the picture on screen or distribute the picture in color to the students. Ask students to look at the picture closely and jot down a few notes on a piece of scratch paper or in a notebook about the things they see. They could even start imagining who the people in the picture might be - ask questions like "who is that man thinking - who is the woman - are all the moms? a baby with? someone else? Who are all the children - friends... siblings... and play details for the scene. For example, is the dog over since they are all wearing a parka? and write down what they see and think. Also be sure they are noticing the facial expressions - what emotions are being expressed?

Remind them they should just be making a list or brainstorm jots of what they see and what they think, not writing a story at first. Have students pair up or get into small groups to share what they see and what they think might be happening. Brainstorming aloud with others will help get the creativity flowing!

Students will write TWO short narratives about the scene - one from the woman's perspective and one from a child's perspective. Remind students of everything they've learned about showing not telling and using the when writing this week. They should use their brainstorm lists to play out the scene in their mind; they should have a clear picture in their mind of the chaos without having to SEE the picture.



PREVIEW

PREVIEW

PREVIEW



What if I won't let the birthday girls have fun of hundreds of birthday sleepovers? As if one girl's tears and antics are enough to get five other girls riled up! The squealing and screaming... I can already feel the headache coming on. "Girls... girls!!" I plead. "I need to finish cooking dinner. No more pillow fights!" But, it's as if I was talking to a wall. One girl jumps onto the back of the sofa and another looks like she is about to launch herself from the coffee table! And wait, is someone crying? There is only one way I know to get this under control. "That's it!" I yell, "One more squeal and there will be no birthday cake, and I'll be calling the cops!" The girls hush, but the screaming is silenced only for a moment. The girls are probably trying to make it worse.

"What's a watch movie?" Tara asks her friends. They all nod and take her to the basement.

I sigh a breath of relief and head back into the kitchen.



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