



***Look at the World; Speak for the Trees***

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:  
2nd Grade

**Keywords:** The Lorax, visual literacy, digital literacy, social studies, environmentalism, project based learning, Socratic seminar, Paideia, blended learning, advertising

**Teaching Standards:** See [Appendix 1](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

**Synopsis:** By delving into the text and illustrations of *The Lorax*, this unit will address literacy and social studies standards. Students will use technology, Socratic seminars, and collaborative research groups to learn about the importance of natural resources. They will then design their own advertising campaign to save a natural resource.

*I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 24 students in 2nd grade.*

*I give permission for the Institute to publish my curriculum unit and synopsis in print and online. I understand that I will be credited as the author of my work.*

## Introduction

### Rational

My students face a barrage of images throughout their lives. They gain so much of their understanding of the world through advertisements, television, film, and digital applications. In this digital age, visual media is no longer just a supplement to text, but rather the primary source of information.<sup>1</sup> Images, videos, and info graphics often stand alone, with barely a caption to help convey meaning. Even texting has evolved so that it need not include any actual text; emojis, gifs, and memes can easily take the place of words in an entire conversation. The ability to understand the meaning of images is an essential skill in modern society. With the prevalence of Photoshop, political propaganda, and 'fake news,' being able to differentiate between real and altered images is especially important. Some sources estimate that nearly half of all people gather information on current events from social media.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, today's students must become visually literate in order to be successful in both 21<sup>st</sup> century academia and everyday life.<sup>3</sup>

In addition, students are easily distracted from or jaded by text-heavy lessons. Visual cues and digital technology help keep young learners engaged in lessons. Introduce a novel piece of technology and you will immediately see a seven-year-old child's face light up. In fact, an estimated sixty percent of students are visual or visual kinesthetic learners.<sup>4</sup> Lectures and rote memorization can no longer suffice. Teachers must adjust the way they are teaching and embrace technology to effectively educate their students.<sup>5</sup>

The next generation will likely bear the burden of climate change and have an even greater need to differentiate between legitimate and artificial sources. I want to provide my students with the tools they need to help the environment and understand the world they inherited. The powerful, like the Once'ler in his reclining leather chair, often have the greatest impact on environmental issues. However, even those without traditional forms of power can make a difference. Through collective action, regular citizens can band together and change policy. Compounded, even individual efforts to recycle and conserve energy have the potential to make an impact worldwide. I hope to inspire environmental awareness, or even activism, in my students so that together they may create a more sustainable future.

Through this seminar, I plan to develop a literacy unit that relies heavily on visual media. In a world where people are bombarded with images, it is important that students learn how to interpret them with the same critical thinking they use in reading. The unit will address second grade reading, writing, speaking and listening, and social studies standards. I already analyze illustrations and use blended learning in my classroom. By using both the arts and technology, I try to engage even the most weary students. Some

that struggle with the written word excel in art, a method of communication that is often overlooked by traditional curriculum.

## Demographics

I teach second grade at Davidson Elementary- School. Davidson is suburb of Charlotte in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. Davidson Elementary serves 712 students in kindergarten through 5th grade. The student population is 78.2% Caucasian, 11.3% Hispanic, 6.3% African American, 2.2% Asian, 1.2% Multi-Racial, and 1% other. There are 65 students with disabilities, 42 students with limited English proficiency, and 109 students enrolled in the Talent Development program. The school is ranked 13th of 304 elementary schools in the Charlotte Mecklenburg School District. In 2016, the school exceeded expectations with an overall student growth score of 84% on reading and math end of grade exams. There is no school or district wide assessment for elementary writing.

## Unit Goals

This unit will address North Carolina Common Core writing, reading, speaking, listening, social studies, and technology standards. In writing, students will learn to differentiate text types and purposes, produce and distribute writing, and research to build present knowledge. To address speaking and listening standards, students will collaborate and present knowledge and ideas. Students will also be able to identify the craft and structure of a story, integrate art into their projects in meaningful ways, and read and comprehend appropriately leveled texts, in accordance with literature standards. They will use Chromebooks, Google classroom, and other technology resources to collect and present information. In addition, the subject matter of the text, *The Lorax*, will address social studies standards.

## Content Research

Much like a constructed image, an individual's worldview is assembled "from pieces, assuming that what we see is both coherent and equivalent to reality. Until we discover it is not."<sup>6</sup> Visual literacy, or "the ability to decode, interpret, create, questions, challenge, and evaluate texts that communicated with visual images as well as, or rather than, words," is a life long skill.<sup>7</sup> Competency in visual literacy is defined by five standards. Students will:

1. Determine the nature of visual materials
2. Locate images effectively
3. Interpret the meaning of visual media
4. Valuate images and their sources
5. Use visual media effectively.<sup>8</sup>

The same tools used to access imagery also benefit professionals from dermatologists to police officers. Indeed, learning to analyze artwork increased the diagnostic skills of dermatology students by 56% when compared to peers. The FBI, military, Federal Reserve, Scotland Yard, and others have invested in teaching recruits art analysis. Since most readers can interpret visual information long before they can read, visual literacy is an especially important skill for English learners.<sup>9</sup>

Digital literacy is an essential part of education in the modern world.<sup>10</sup> Students of the so-called digital generation have had technology at their fingertips since birth. In fact, the availability of technology may be changing the way students learn.<sup>11</sup> The majority of students are visual and visual kinesthetic learners. It is therefore crucial that 21<sup>st</sup> century students are visually literate. Becoming an objective observer is proven to help students excel in academia and in life.<sup>12</sup>

Understanding humanity's impact on the environment is important for all future generations. "Many of the pressing issues facing the world today—education, water quality, immigration, and economic stability—threaten children especially. Changes in the Earth's climate are also affecting animal and plant life. To a great extent, they are happening because resources on Earth are being converted into gases that amplify the insulating effect of Earth's atmosphere."<sup>13</sup>

Though some, like English professor George L. Boggs, suggest *The Lorax* is a dated and oversimplified text, I believe that it is an appropriate introduction for elementary aged students.<sup>14</sup> The story features familiar power structures of good and evil, but upon further reflection it appears that the face of the Once'ler and the consumer are omitted because they could be anyone. It could even be you. We all have a role to play in environmentalism.

## **Instructional Implementation**

### Teaching Strategies

#### *Anchor Charts*

Anchor Charts are created with students and placed strategically around the classroom. Students can quickly reference the charts to review concepts and expectations.<sup>15</sup> Anchor charts are rotated to reflect the most current learning and behavior goals.

#### *Four W's*<sup>16</sup>

Four questions that lead students to make observations, connections, and inferences about visual media are:

1. What do I see?
2. What does it remind me of?
3. What's the artist's purpose?
4. So what?

### *Graphic Organizer*

Graphic organizers allow students to collect their thoughts and plan their presentations.

### *Image Analysis Worksheets*

Used to analyze key features of different formats; provided courtesy of the National Archive:<sup>17</sup>

1. Photo Analysis
2. Cartoon Analysis
3. Map Analysis
4. Poster Analysis

### *Mentor Text*

Mentor texts are examples used to demonstrate a writing skill or inspire student writers. These published texts are read during the mini lesson. Students are asked to pause and reflect during the reading using “Think, Pair, Share.”

### *Mini lesson*

The mini lesson should last for 10-15 minutes at the beginning of each session. Students should come to the carpet and listen as the mentor text is read. They will “Think, Pair, Share” during the reading, reflecting on previously learned skills and the current lesson objective.

### *Read Aloud*

Read aloud is used for mentor texts, which promote writing skills the teacher wants reflected in student work. During this time, students must also practice listening standards, such as facing the speaker and sitting quietly. Students must listen carefully during read aloud, because they will frequently be asked to reflect on the readings and adjust their writing accordingly.

### *Technology*

It is increasingly important that students be technologically literate. Students will be encouraged to use Chromebooks and the school's computer lab throughout the unit.

### *Tummy Time*

Tummy time denotes individual work time around the classroom. As long as students are being safe and productive, they are able to work wherever they choose. In my classroom, this includes at, on, or under their desks. Clipboards, carpet squares, stability balls, couches, and chairs are also available to students at all times. A small workroom exists for students who need to remove themselves from distractions.

### *Turn to a Partner*

“Turn and talk” or “think, pair, share” is a teaching strategy used to promote teamwork and thoughtful reflection. During and after a mini-lesson, students are encouraged to turn and talk to a partner. Students will be asked open-ended questions about a text or concept. When the teacher says, “think,” students will formulate their own thoughts silently. At “pair,” students will turn to face their partners. They will then “share” their thoughts, being careful to split the time equally between partners and listen carefully to their partners' thoughts.<sup>18</sup> When signaled, students will turn to face the teacher. They are then randomly selected to share their partner's thoughts, using the following sentence frame, “My partner, \_\_\_\_\_, thinks that \_\_\_\_\_.” At the close of the lesson, responses are discussed as a whole class.

### *“What's Going On In This Picture?”<sup>19</sup>*

Every Monday, *The New York Times* publishes an image with no captions. Students are encouraged to study the photo and answer the following questions:

1. What is going on in this picture?
2. What do you see that makes you say that?
3. What more can you find?

I use this exercise throughout the school year for morning work. Students independently answer the above questions in writing. Then we inspect the picture again as a class. On Friday, I reveal the caption and we discuss what we missed.

## Activities

### *Lesson 1*

Read *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss to the class. Stop at page 2, which depicts a dark sky, a town in the distance, grayish green grass, scraggly trees, and a broken brick structure (Figure 1.) Discuss what students see, what's happening, and why Dr. Seuss chose those illustrations. Read up to page 12 and discuss the same (See Figures 2 and 3.) Contrast the colorful Truffula Trees and happy animals with the barren scene on page 4. Read up to page 18.

As a class, brainstorm what may have caused the landscape to change. Then allow students to choose research groups to investigate the possible causes. Topics may include climate change, smog, water pollution, deforestation, waste, and loss of biodiversity. The following websites are great places for students to begin researching. Students should focus on why the affected resource is important and why it is at risk.

- <http://study.com/academy/lesson/environmental-issues-lesson-for-kids.html><sup>20</sup>
- <http://www.theworldcounts.com/stories/environmental-issues-for-kids><sup>21</sup>
- <https://inhabitat.com/top-6-environmental-issues-for-earth-day-and-what-you-can-do-to-solve-them/><sup>22</sup>
- <https://ypte.org.uk/><sup>23</sup>

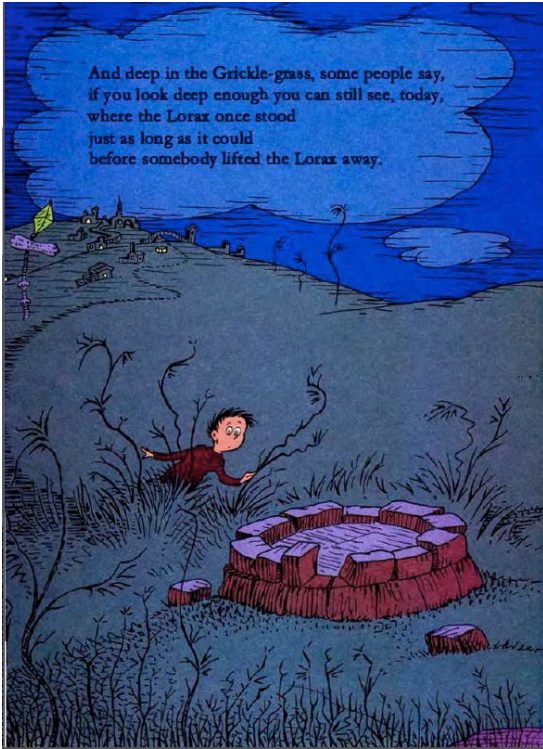


Figure 1

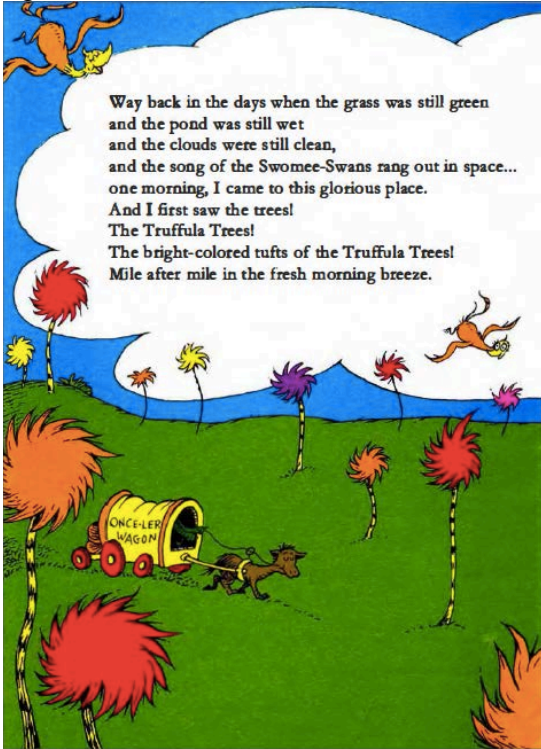


Figure 2



Figure 3



## Lesson 2

Begin by rereading page 18. Discuss what is happening in the picture (See Figure 4.) Can students use context clues, visual and textual, to figure out what a Thneed is? Read up to page 27 and then discuss what is in the picture (See Figure 5.) Hopefully, students will notice that the purchaser's face is hidden, just like the Once-ler's. In a Socratic seminar, enquire why Dr. Seuss may have chosen to hide the villains' faces. If the students cannot think of a reason, ask if the Once-ler and the consumer could be anyone.

Have students continue research in groups. They should record their research on a graphic organizer (See Appendix 2.)

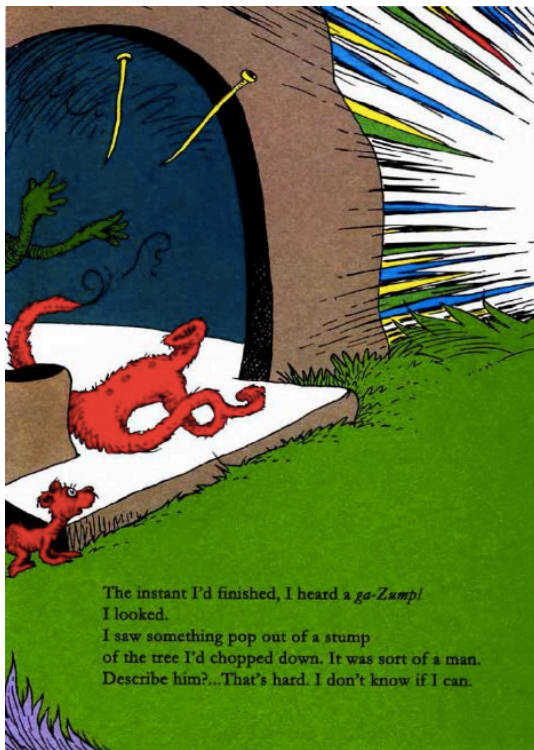


Figure 4



Figure 5

## Lesson 3

Read up to page 39. Discuss what the students see in the picture and what they think is happening (See Figure 6). Does the imagery look familiar to students? What problems might Dr. Seuss be alluding to? Possible answers include consumerism, greed, pollution, and endangered species.

While students continue researching, ask them to consider how their research topic could contribute to the scene on page 39. Students should begin to organize their research into a Google Presentation.



Figure 6

#### *Lesson 4*

Begin reading back at page 37. Discuss with students how the Once-ler did not set out to ruin his environment, but that it happened through carelessness and greed. Ask students what role the consumers play. Could the people buying all these Thneeds share responsibility? Discuss in a Socratic seminar. Continue reading to page 54. What do they think the Lorax meant by “unless?” If consumers are responsible, could they also make a difference?

While researching, students should focus on ways to prevent or reverse their environmental issue. They should include societal solutions, like protecting the rainforest, and every day tasks they can do to help, like recycling. Allow students to brainstorm possible solutions before researching to confirm.

### *Lesson 5*

Reread page 54 and continue on to the end of the book. Discuss Dr. Seuss's purpose in writing this text and the moral of the story. Introduce the idea of a mascot. Mascots symbolize their cause in a variety of ways. The Lorax physically resembles his environment. His brightly colored fur and bushy mustache look like the tufts of the Truffula Tress. He has a motto: "I speak for the trees!" He also teaches an important lesson: "Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not."<sup>24</sup>

Students will individually create a mascot for their cause. The mascot's physical attributes should reflect the environment affected. They should have a motto and teach a lesson. Students will design a poster featuring their mascot, motto, and lesson. They will also justify their artistic choices in writing. This lesson may continue over multiple sessions.

### *Lesson 6*

Students will present their research to the class as a group. The audience will take notes on why the resource presented is important, what is threatening it, and how to help. Individuals will then share their mascots and explain their thinking.

### Assessments

Informal assessment will take place throughout the unit. Particular attention will be paid to participation in Socratic seminars. The final presentation of projects will serve as an assessment for students.

## **Appendix 1: Teaching Standards**

### **Writing:**

#### **Production and Distribution of Writing:**

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.5**

With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.6**

With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.

#### **Research to Build Present Knowledge:**

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.8**

Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

### **Speaking and Listening:**

#### **Comprehension and Collaboration:**

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.1**

Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.1.A**

Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.1.B**

Build on others' talk in conversations by linking their comments to the remarks of others.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.1.C**

Ask for clarification and further explanation as needed about the topics and texts under discussion.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.2**

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

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.3**

Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.

#### **Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:**

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.4**

Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.5

Create audio recordings of stories or poems; add drawings or other visual displays to stories or recounts of experiences when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.6

Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.

Reading: Literature:

Craft and Structure:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.5

Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.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.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.10

By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories and poetry, in the grades 2-3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Language:

Knowledge of Language:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.2.3

Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.2.5

Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.2.5.A

Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe foods that are spicy or juicy).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.2.5.B

Distinguish shades of meaning among closely related verbs (e.g., toss, throw, hurl) and closely related adjectives (e.g., thin, slender, skinny, scrawny).

Information and Technology:

Technology as a Tool:

NC.2.TT.1

Use technology tools and skills to reinforce classroom concepts and activities.

NC.2.TT.3

Use technology tools to present data and information (multimedia, audio and visual recording, online collaboration tools, etc.).

Social Studies:

Geography and Environmental Literacy:

NC.2.G.2.1

Use technology tools and skills to reinforce classroom concepts and activities.

NC.2.G.2.2

Use technology tools to present data and information (multimedia, audio and visual recording, online collaboration tools, etc.).

## **Materials for Classroom Use**

1. Markers
2. Pencils
3. Colored Pencils
4. Chart paper
5. Post-it Notes
6. Lined Paper
7. Construction Paper
8. Computers
9. Document Camera
10. Projector

## Resources for Students

“Do You Know Why We Call Our Planet Mother Earth?” *The World Counts*. (Published July 8, 2018; Accessed October 28, 2017).

<http://www.theworldcounts.com/stories/environmental-issues-for-kids>.

The text-heavy lesson is best suited for students with high reading levels.

“Fact Sheets.” *Young People's Trust for the Environment*. (Accessed October 28, 2017).

<https://ypte.org.uk/audiences/kids>.

This website has kid friendly fact sheets about the environment. It's easy for kids to navigate and understand on their own.

Marks, Joshua. “Top Environmental Issues.” *Inhabitat*. (Published April 24, 2016;

Accessed October 28, 2017). <https://inhabitat.com/top-6-environmental-issues-for-earth-day-and-what-you-can-do-to-solve-them/>.

This article has useful suggestions about what changes students can make in their lives to address environmental issues. However, lower level readers may need support with the text.

Mullikin, Mary Beth. “Environmental Issues Lesson for Kids.” *Study.com*. (Accessed October 28, 2017). <http://study.com/academy/lesson/environmental-issues-lesson-for-kids.html>.

This lesson provides an overview of various environmental issues and their causes in kid-friendly language.

Seuss, Dr. *The Lorax*. New York, NY: Random House, 1999.

*The Lorax* is children's story about the dangers of industrialization and the impact humans make on their environment. This book served as the mentor text for this unit.



## Resources for Teachers

“ACRL Visual Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education.” *Association of College and Research Libraries*. (Published October, 2011; Accessed September 20, 2017). <https://ala.org>.

This resource provides a precise overview of visual literacy standards. It explains the development and ideal implementation of visual literacy standards.

Boggs, George L., Nance S. Wilson, Robert T. Ackland, Stephen Danna, and Kathy B. Grant. 2016. "Beyond The Lorax." 69, no. 6: 665-675. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (Accessed October 28, 2017).

This article discusses the merits and shortcomings of environmental texts for children. The books it suggests could be used as an extension to this unit.

Dumetz Carry, Diana. “Visual Literacy: Using Images to Increase Comprehension.” [https://readingrecovery.org/images/pdfs/Conferences/NC09/Handouts/Carry\\_Visual\\_Literacy.pdf](https://readingrecovery.org/images/pdfs/Conferences/NC09/Handouts/Carry_Visual_Literacy.pdf).

Dr. Carry provides strategies for using visual literacy. This resource is a convenient guide to introduce and strengthen visual literacy in the classroom. I would highly recommend reading this guide before starting the unit.

*Elementary Literacy Scope and Sequence*. Charlotte, NC: Charlotte Mecklenburg School District, 2017.

The Literacy Scope and Sequence was developed by CMS educators to guide teaching in accordance with district timelines and Common Core State Standards. This should be consulted before implementing the unit.

Elkins, James. *The Object Stares Back: On the Nature of Seeing*. Harcourt, 1999.

This book discusses the subjectivity of vision. Our perception is colored by our experiences, fears, wants, and needs.

Eshet-Alkalai, Yoram. “Digital Literacy: A Conceptual Framework for Survival Skills in the Digital Era” *Journal of Educational Multimedia and Hypermedia*; Norfolk Vol. 13, Iss. 1, (2004): 93-106. [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Yoram\\_Eshet-Alkalai/publication/250721430\\_Digital\\_Literacy\\_A\\_Conceptual\\_Framework\\_for\\_Survival\\_Skills\\_in\\_the\\_Digital\\_Era/links/544f61640cf26dda0890487c/Digital-Literacy-A-Conceptual-Framework-for-Survival-Skills-in-the-Digital-Era.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Yoram_Eshet-Alkalai/publication/250721430_Digital_Literacy_A_Conceptual_Framework_for_Survival_Skills_in_the_Digital_Era/links/544f61640cf26dda0890487c/Digital-Literacy-A-Conceptual-Framework-for-Survival-Skills-in-the-Digital-Era.pdf)

This article discusses the needs of students in the digital age. Easy access to technology is changing both the way students learn and individuals succeed in society.

Faigley, Lester. *Picturing Texts*. W.W. Norton & Company, 2004.

This book combines reading and images to teach students how to think critically about words and images. It is especially useful for projects that asked students to design their own imagery.

Finley, Todd. "Common Core in Action." Edutopia. (Published February 19, 2014; Accessed September 18, 2017). <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/ccia-10-visual-literacy-strategies-todd-finley>.

This resource suggests ten actionable visual literacy strategies that can be easily incorporated into any classroom. I've used think-alouds, the 4 WS, and image analysis worksheets with my students.

Fountas, Irene C., and Gay Su. Pinnell. *The Continuum of Literacy Learning, Grade PreK-8: A Guide to Teaching*. Portsmouth, N. H.: Heinemann, 2011

Fountas and Pinnell, known for the guided reading levels they devised, provide suggestions for teaching writing throughout grade levels. This knowledge helps teachers differentiate instruction to students who are writing above or below grade level.

Gottfried, Jeffrey, and Elisa Shearer. "News Use Across Social Media Platforms 2016." *Pew Research Center*, 26 May 2016, [www.journalism.org/2016/05/26/news-use-across-social-media-platforms-2016/](http://www.journalism.org/2016/05/26/news-use-across-social-media-platforms-2016/).

This study reviews how and where most Americans gather information about current events. This information is pertinent to preparing students for a digital society.

Gocsik. *Writing about Movies*. 3th, Rev. Ed. W.W. Norton & Co. Inc., 2013.

This book helps the reader understand film form, theory, and analysis and explains how to implement this knowledge in academic writing.

Herman, Amy E. *Visual Intelligence Sharpen Your Perception, Change Your Life*. Mariner Books, 2017.

Herman writes about the merits of using visual intelligence in a variety of fields. She also provides suggestions for improving perception.

Johansson, Viktor. "'In Charge of the Truffula Seeds': On Children's Literature, Rationality and Children's Voices in Philosophy." *Journal Of Philosophy Of Education* 45, no. 2 (May 2011): 359-377. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed October 28, 2017).

Johansson advocates for children as rational beings capable of philosophical investigation and discussion. He uses *The Lorax* as an example.

Jukes, Ian, Ted McCain, and Lee Crockett. *Understanding the Digital Generation: Teaching and Learning in the New Digital Landscape*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2010.

This book explores how technology is changing education. It provides suggestions for utilizing technology in the classroom and emphasizes how important digital literacy is for modern students.

Kolker, R. P. (2006). *Film, Form, & Culture*. McGraw-Hill.

This book explores the influence of culture on film, from individual scenes to cultural movements.

Logue, Catherine. "Anchors Aweigh!" *Instructor* 125, no. 3 (November 2015): 38-41. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed September 24, 2016).

This text explains the benefits of using anchor charts in the classroom.

Mirzoeff, Nicholas. *How to See the World: an Introduction to Images, from Self-Portraits to Selfies, Maps to Movies, and More*. Basic Books, 2016.

This text demonstrates how important visual literacy is in the digital age. With our easy access to cameras, being able to utilize and process the images around us is essential to success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Nichols, Bill. *Engaging Cinema: an Introduction to Film Studies*. W.W. Norton & Co., 2010.

In addition to being a useful overview of the basic principles and categories of film form, this text also delves into the social influences and effects of film. Nichols drives home the impact of film on culture and vice versa.

Pavlik, John Vernon, and Shawn McIntosh. *Converging Media: A New Introduction To Mass Communication*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Digital media is changing the way people communicate. The authors explore the causes and effects of digital communication.

Rankin-Gouthro, Erin, and Gail Krantzberg. "The Lorax Can Win: Using Scenario Building to Create A New Vision and Invigorate An Activist Agenda" for the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Basin." *Electronic Green Journal* 1, no. 31 (April 2011): 1-22. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed October 28, 2017).

This article suggests how to use the story of *The Lorax* to inspire environmental activism.

Seuss, Dr. *The Lorax*. New York, NY: Random House, 1999.

*The Lorax* is a children's story about the dangers of industrialization and the impact humans make on their environment. This book served as the mentor text for this unit.

Sloane, Amy. "Reading *The Lorax*, orienting in potentiality." *Environmental Education Research* 16, no. 3/4 (June 2010): 415-428. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed October 28, 2017).

In addition to discussing the history and content of *The Lorax*, Sloan delves into issues in environmental education. She suggests that telling a student what to do is not enough.

Starosielski, Nicole. "Movements that are drawn': A history of environmental animation from *The Lorax* to *Fern Gully* to *Avatar*." *International Communication Gazette* 73, no. 1/2 (February 2011): 145-163. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed October 28, 2017).

This essay discusses the evolution and effectiveness of environmental films. Though it discusses the film version of *The Lorax*, the film's moral remains true to the original.

"Strategies for Socratic Questioning." *Paideia Active Learning*. 2015. Accessed September 23, 2017. <https://www.paideia.org/>.

This website provides a definition of paideia learning, sample lessons, guiding questions, and tools for implementing Socratic seminars in the classroom.

Tucker, Amy. *Visual Literacy: Writing about Art*. McGraw-Hill, 2005.  
This book teaches how to write academically and rhetorically about art.

Teorey, Matthew. "*The Lorax* and Wallace Stegner: Inspiring Children's Environmental Activism." *Children's Literature In Education* 45, no. 4 (December 2014): 324-339. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed October 28, 2017).

Teorey discusses the merits of *The Lorax* and its positive effect on generations of children. He argues that Dr. Seuss's language and storytelling make the ominous tale of industrialization accessible and influential.

"What's Going On In This Picture?" *The New York Times*. 2012. (Accessed October 28, 2017). <https://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/10/15/new-feature-whats-going-on-in-this-picture/>

*The New York Times* publishes an image without captions each week. In an excellent visual literacy exercise, students are directed to think critically about what they think is happening in the image and why.

Winebrenner, Susan, and Pamela Espeland. *Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom: Strategies and Techniques Every Teacher Can Use to Meet the Academic Needs of the Gifted and Talented*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Pub, 2001.

This text provides strategies for expanding content for gifted learners through things like project based learning and Socratic seminars.

Zicht, Jennifer. "In Pursuit of *The Lorax*." *EPA Journal* 17, no. 4 (September 1991): 27. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed October 28, 2017).

Zicht presents an overview of *The Lorax* and suggests other reading material for older readers. Her suggestions may be useful in adapting this curriculum to higher age groups.

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- <sup>1</sup> “ACRL Visual Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education.” *Association of College and Research Libraries*.
  - <sup>2</sup> Gottfried, News Use Across Social Media Platforms 2016
  - <sup>3</sup> Herman, *Visual Intelligence*.
  - <sup>4</sup> Jukes, *Understanding the Digital Generation*.
  - <sup>5</sup> Jukes, *Understanding the Digital Generation*.
  - <sup>6</sup> Mirzeoff, *How to See the World*.
  - <sup>7</sup> Dumetz Carry, *Visual Literacy*.
  - <sup>8</sup> “ACRL Visual Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education.” *Association of College and Research Libraries*.
  - <sup>9</sup> Dumetz Carry, *Visual Literacy*.
  - <sup>10</sup> Eshet-Alkalai, *Digital Literacy*.
  - <sup>11</sup> Jukes, *Understanding the Digital Generation*.
  - <sup>12</sup> Herman, *Visual Intelligence*.
  - <sup>13</sup> Boggs, *Beyond the Lorax*.
  - <sup>14</sup> Boggs, *Beyond the Lorax*.
  - <sup>15</sup> Logue, *Anchors Aweigh!*
  - <sup>16</sup> Finley, Todd. “Common Core in Action.”
  - <sup>17</sup> Finley, Todd. “Common Core in Action.”
  - <sup>18</sup> *Being a Writer: Grade 2: Teacher's Manual*.
  - <sup>19</sup> *What's Going On In This Picture?*
  - <sup>20</sup> Mullikin, “Environmental Issues Lesson for Kids.”
  - <sup>21</sup> “Do You Know Why We Call Our Planet Mother Earth?” *The World Counts*.
  - <sup>22</sup> Marks, Joshua. “Top Environmental Issues.”
  - <sup>23</sup> “Fact Sheets.” *Young People's Trust for the Environment*.
  - <sup>24</sup> Seuss, *The Lorax*.