

# Light Up Literacy Lesson Plans – Grades K, 1 and 2

Light up  
Literacy



## Book Fiesta!

### RATIONALE

This activity is designed to help students experience what life would be like if they were not able to read; to help students to reflect on the importance of reading; and to learn about Reading Village.

### REQUIREMENTS

Materials	<i>Book Fiesta!</i> by Pat Mora – this bilingual book celebrates books and reading. It encourages everyone to read and have fun in whatever language or locale they can
Time:	30 minutes
Space:	classroom – chairs in a circle or on a reading rug
Number of participants:	unlimited
Age level:	grades K, 1 and 2

### DIRECTIONS

1. Read Pat Mora's *Book Fiesta!*
2. Debrief with discussion questions

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Where do you like to read?
2. What is the silliest place you have ever read a book?
3. Do you have a lot of books at your house?
4. When do your parents read to you? Does your brother or sister read to you?
5. What is your favorite book?
6. Can you read? What kinds of books do you like to read?
7. What would it be like if you did not have any books in your house?
8. What would it be like if your parents could not read?
9. Talk about children in Guatemala and how many cannot read and do not even have books in their houses. Connect this activity to the work of Reading Village.

# Light Up Literacy Lesson Plans – Grades 3 and 4



## I Can't Read This!

### RATIONALE

This activity is designed to help students experience what life would be like if they were not able to read; to help students to reflect on the importance of reading; and to learn about Reading Village.

### REQUIREMENTS

Materials:	A variety of books written in different languages (Spanish, Italian, German, Hebrew, etc.)
Time:	30 minutes
Space:	room for participants to work together in groups of 3 or 4
Number of participants:	unlimited
Age level:	grades 3 and 4

### DIRECTIONS

1. Divide participants into groups of 3 or 4. Distribute a book to each grouping. Tell the students that there will be a test on the information in the books and they should take turns reading to each other as a way to prepare for the test. Let the students know that everyone must pass this test.
2. Students take turns reading the book.
3. Distribute the test.
4. Debrief with the discussion questions.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How did you do on the test?
2. Did you feel that the book you studied prepared you for the test? Why? Why not?
3. How does it feel to not be able to read a book?
4. What would school be like if you were not able to read?
5. What do you think people do when they can't read?
6. What do you think everyday life is like for people who can't read – think about school; driving; running errands; going to the grocery store; watching TV; watching a movie; playing a video game
7. Imagine how your life would be different if you couldn't read

- List five activities you would not be able to do if you couldn't read.
- Describe the work of Reading Village - connect to fact sheet about Reading Village and illiteracy in Guatemala
- How do you think that you will change the lives of people in Guatemala because of your support of Reading Village?
- What does Judaism say about our responsibility to help others?

### **SAMPLE TEST** – Guatemala and Illiteracy

This will be a simple test. Just answer the five questions below to the best of your ability.

- What percent of rural Guatemalan children fail first grade?
- How many rural Guatemalan children complete sixth grade?
- Which Latin American country has the lowest literacy rate?
- Which Latin American country has the highest literacy rate?
- Do men or women have a higher literacy rate in Guatemala?
- Name a language spoken in Maya homes?
- What language is spoken in schools?
- What percentage of rural Guatemalan children complete high school?

Answers:

- 50%
- 25%
- Guatemala – the literacy rate of all Guatemalans over the age of 15 is 69%
- Uruguay – 98%
- Men – males are more likely to be able to read in Guatemala
- Kaqchikel (Cock Chee KELL)
- Spanish
- 10%

## **The Power of Light Up Literacy**

### **RATIONALE**

This brief activity will help students understand the impact of illiteracy on the children of Guatemala; introduce them to some key statistics regarding illiteracy in Guatemala; and demonstrate the power of their commitment to Light Up Literacy.

## REQUIREMENTS

Materials: Statistics on Illiteracy in Guatemala

Time: 20 minutes

Space: classroom

Number of participants: unlimited

Age level: grades 3 and 4

## DIRECTIONS

1. Teacher selects 10 students (20, if the class is bigger) to stand in front of the class. Have the students imagine that these 10 children represent all of the children in a village where Reading Village works.
2. Share the following information with the class:  
“Very few of these children’s parents know how to read. I would like you to think about your favorite storybook that your parents or grandparents read to you over and over, again and again and again.” Point to the 10 students in front of the class and continue, “These children didn’t have that opportunity because their parents don’t know how to read and because they don’t have enough money to buy books. They live on just \$2 a day. They do not have enough money to buy books and there are no libraries where they can go and borrow books. As a consequence 5 of you will need to sit down now. You just failed first grade. 50% of children fail first grade in Guatemala. They did not fail because they were stupid, they are smart like you.”  
  
“One of the reasons they failed is that these are Mayan children and at home they speak a language called Kaqchikel (Cock Chee KELL) and when they go to school, do you know what language is spoken there? Spanish. These children do not understand what’s going on in a classroom, because they do not speak or read the language.”
3. Ask 2 more students to sit down (now there are 3 left). “Only 25% of students complete sixth grade – that is the 3 of you left standing. Again, student have to leave school, not because they aren’t smart, but sometimes there is not a school in their neighborhood or community and the bus costs money and your family may not have extra money to pay for the transportation so you can’t go to school anymore. You may have to leave school because your parents need you to plant and harvest onions so that you can help your whole family earn money.”
4. Ask 2 more students to sit down (now there is only 1 student left). Only 10% of students complete high school. Gesture to the one student that is left. “This lucky student is the only one who will go to high school (from the whole group). Everyone else will not be able to go to high school.

“The money we raise through Light Up Literacy will buy Spanish-language storybooks for these children to read and older children to read to them. The power of your gift will be to help all of these kids to stay in school and make it possible for them to go to high school.” That is the gift you will be giving to the children in Guatemala.”

5. Debrief with the discussion questions.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. You were born to families that have dreams for you. Part of that dream is for you to go to school so that you can dream for yourself about the kind of life you would like to live and what you would like to do. What are some of your dreams? What do you want to be when you grow up? Why is school an important part of your dream?
2. Think about this activity that we just did. What did it feel like to be pulled out of school, knowing that you would not be able to return? What did it feel like knowing that you were able to stay in school when others could not?
3. What would life be like for you if you only went to school through first grade? (50% of children fail first grade.) What would you do all day? What will you do when you grow up if you only have a first grade education?
4. How do you imagine the parents feel when they are not able to afford to continue sending their children to school?
5. Why is it important to provide these children with books? What else can be done?

## Light Up Literacy Lesson Plans – Grades 5 and 6

### Completing an Application

#### RATIONALE

This activity is designed to help students experience what life would be like if they were not able to read; to help students to reflect on the importance of reading; and to learn about Reading Village.

Materials: an application (for a job, library card, school registration, etc) in a different language, preferably not in a language that has a lot of English cognates or random English letters made into words

Time: 30 minutes



Space: classroom

Number of participants: unlimited

Grade Level: grades 5 and 6

### DIRECTIONS

1. Have a brief conversation about applications/registrations with students. Why are they important? What kind of information do we learn from them?
2. Distribute an application to each student and ask them to complete it. Give them at least 5 minutes to complete this task.
3. Debrief with discussion questions

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have students share their challenges in completing the application.
2. What did it feel like when you had so much time to complete the task but could not do it?
3. What kinds of applications do people have to complete (job, credit card, bank loan, school registration, etc.) Can people complete applications if they can't read? What happens to them?
4. Applications for jobs are often the first way that we get our "feet in the door," if you can't complete an application – what else can you do to get a job?
5. What do you think everyday life is like for people who can't read – think about school; driving; running errands; going to the grocery store; watching TV; watching a movie; playing a video game
6. Imagine how your life would be different if you couldn't read.
7. There is a saying that "knowledge is power," what do you think this means? When have you felt powerful because of something that you knew?
8. How does this activity relate to the work of Reading Village?
9. What do you think it feels like to give the gift of reading to someone who can't read?
10. Review Maimonides levels of giving charity. By contributing to the work of Reading Village, which level are we?

## Honorable Ways to Give Charity

Maimonides, often called by his acronym RaMBaM (Rabbi Moshe Ben Maimon), was a 12th century Jewish scholar and physician. Rambam wrote a code of Jewish law, the Mishnah Torah, based on the Rabbinic oral tradition.

Rambam organized the different levels of tzedakah (charity) into a list from the least to the most honorable.

8. When donations are given grudgingly.

7. When one gives less than he should, but does so cheerfully.
6. When one gives directly to the poor upon being asked.
5. When one gives directly to the poor without being asked.
4. When the recipient is aware of the donor's identity, but the donor does not know the identity of the recipient.
3. When the donor is aware of the recipient's identity, but the recipient is unaware of the source.
2. When the donor and recipient are unknown to each other.
1. The highest form of charity is to help sustain a person before they become impoverished by offering a substantial gift in a dignified manner, or by extending a suitable loan, or by helping them find employment or establish themselves in business so as to make it unnecessary for them to become dependent on others.

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### **REQUIREMENTS**

Materials: Statistics on Illiteracy in Guatemala

Time: 20 minutes

Space: classroom

Number of participants: unlimited

Age level: grades 5 and 6

### **DIRECTIONS**

6. Teacher selects 10 students (20, if the class is bigger) to stand in front of the class. Have the students imagine that these 10 children represent all of the children in a village where Reading Village works.
7. Share the following information with the class:

“Very few of these children’s parents know how to read. I would like you to think about your favorite storybook that your parents or grandparents read to you over and over, again and again and again.” Point to the 10 students in front of the class and continue, “These children didn’t have that opportunity because their parents don’t know how to read and because they don’t have enough money to buy books. They live on just \$2 a day. They do not have enough money to buy books and there are no libraries where they can go and borrow books. As a consequence 5 of you will need to sit down now. You just failed first grade. 50% of children fail first grade in Guatemala. They did not fail because they were stupid, they are smart like you.”

“One of the reasons they failed is that these are Mayan children and at home they speak a language called Kaqchikel (Cock Chee KELL) and when they go to school, do you know what language is spoken there? Spanish. These children do not understand what’s going on in a classroom, because they do not speak or read the language.”

8. Ask 2 more students to sit down (now there are 3 left). “Only 25% of students complete sixth grade – that is the 3 of you left standing. Again, student have to leave school, not because they aren’t smart, but sometimes there is not a school in their neighborhood or community and the bus costs money and your family may not have extra money to pay for the transportation so you can’t go to school anymore. You may have to leave school because your parents need you to plant and harvest onions so that you can help your whole family earn money.”

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10. Debrief with the discussion questions.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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8. What would life be like for you if you only went to school through first grade? (50% of children fail first grade.) What would you do all day? What will you do when you grow up if you only have a first grade education?
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