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Please enjoy this complimentary excerpt from Text Structures From Picture Books [Grades 2-8].

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The Color Collector

by Nicholas Solis and illustrated by Renia Metallinou



Summary: A boy notices a new girl at his school. She is collecting bits, pieces, and small items. When he asks her why she does it, she shows him a mural she's made to re-create the home that she left.

Why We Love It: This is a beautiful story of friendship, new places, and finding common ground. Plus, the author, Nicholas Solis, is a fellow Texas teacher! What's not to love?

Big Ideas: finding beauty in unlikely places, friendship, seeing things differently, perspective, being seen, diversity, inclusion, belonging, feeling new, feeling out of place, missing home, looking for beauty in the small things



1 QUICK WRITE.

- Think about a time when you discovered something about someone else that you did not know before. What did you discover? How did you discover it? How did that new information change the way you saw or thought about that person?

Write about this for 3 minutes and then set it aside.

2 READ.

Read the picture book *The Color Collector* and discuss the story. Discuss parts of the story that stick out to you or that you connect with. What writer's craft moves do you notice the author using? Notice the parts of the story.

3 CRAFT MOVES TO NOTICE.

- A list of purposeful sentence fragments ("Bright blue cookie wrappers. Yellow pieces of paper. Red fall leaves.")
- Personification ("A red candy wrapper did somersaults. It landed at her feet. It hugged her shoe.")

5

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4 SHARE THE STRUCTURE.

Show the students the structure found in the picture book. Reread the story, looking for chunks together and watching for how the author moves from one part to the other.

A Change in Perspective

What I saw
and thought
at first

Something
I saw that
surprised me

How I
investigated
my discovery

How I saw
things
differently

How I
changed as
a result

5 INVITATION TO WRITE.

Here are several ways you can get students to write.

- Have students use the text structure to write a kernel essay summary of the story. (Give them between 5 and 10 minutes to do this.)
- Have the students use the text structure to write their own piece in a kernel essay. (Give them between 5 and 10 minutes to do this.)
- See what students come up with. (Give them around 10 minutes.) Here are some possibilities:
 - A page of thoughts in their quick write
 - Examples of the author's craft moves
 - A text structure

Whatever they choose to write, let them know that they can change anything they need to and make it their own.

6 SHARE.

Invite students to try their writing on someone else's ears. This is a crucial step! The sharing is just as important as the writing.

Want to Go Deeper?

Try These Options.



OPTION 1: CRAFT CHALLENGE

Purposeful Fragments as a List

This author uses a list of purposeful fragments:

“Bright blue cookie wrappers. Yellow pieces of paper. Red fall leaves.”

Authors use fragments to quicken the pace and make their writing punchy.

Look through your piece to see where you can add a list of purposeful fragments of your own. Try these out on someone’s ears to see how they sound in your writing.

OPTION 2: ANALYZE

1. Start with a big idea.

- Try asking: *What big ideas do you see in this story that tell you what it’s really about?*
- If students need a nudge, look to big ideas from the list in the lesson’s introduction and then asking them to provide evidence from the story to support their answers. **Ask:** *How is this story about (big idea)? How does the author explore the big idea? Where in the story do you see that?*



2. Turn the big idea into a truism (thematic statement).

- Use one big idea to create truisms for this story. Here are some examples from this story:
 - If we take the time to observe, we might see things in a different way.
 - Being in a new place, far from home, can feel lonely.
- Have students write and share their own truisms.

Ask them to prove their truisms by providing evidence from the text.

OPTION 3: READING RESPONSE

Students can compose short or extended responses to demonstrate understanding by answering any of these questions. Look in the appendix to find a list of “Basic Reading Response Text Structures” and a list of additional question stems.

Questions for Reading Response

- What is this story really about?
- What is the boy’s attitude about seeing Violet pick up the colorful trash at first?
- Which sentence or part expresses a turning point in the story?
- What does the boy learn or realize by the end of the story?
- How does Violet change in the story?

5

Student Examples

QUICK WRITES

Camille Garza, fourth grade

A girl on my volleyball team named Emma wouldn't talk at all even when she scored a point. I discovered this when all of a sudden, her friend joined the team and then she was talkative and seemed happy. Now I'm not worried that she isn't having a good time. Now I see her as a talkative, nice girl instead of a sad and shy girl.

KERNEL ESSAYS

Rose Anderson, fourth grade

I thought this kid in my class was going to be a lot different and meaner. But then I noticed that she loved to draw just like me. I went up to her and said hello and said, "Those drawings are neat," and she said a simple, "Thank you." Once I walked away, I realized that she was nothing like I imagined she would be and then we soon became friends. As a result, I actually started to get better at drawing—a lot better.

Henry Millican, sixth grade

I discovered it by walking around in his room, and in a corner there was a bunch of Lego. Then I saw a bunch of Lego boxes. I asked Wyatt about them and he said he loved Lego. It changed my way of thinking because I did Lego too, and I realized we had another great thing in common. So now, we share our new Lego sets.

Gianna Nunez, sixth grade

A time when I discovered something I didn't know was when I saw Isal (a classmate) at the first school golf tournament. I did not know she played golf; it surprised me. It surprised me how talented she was playing golf. I went up to her asking her how long she had played. I had thought that Isal had only played volleyball; it changed my thinking of what we have in common. It changed my thinking of her because we have more in common than I thought.

TRUISMS

Renna Perez, fourth grade

If you give anybody, any age, any kind, a chance, a new friendship can bloom.

Gianna Nunez, sixth grade

It's important to never forget the old ways of life.

READING RESPONSES

Gianna Nunez, sixth grade

Text Structure: Story of My Thinking

Q: What's the boy's attitude about seeing Violet pick up the color trash?

A: I used to think Violet was lonely because she never talked to anyone else. Violet picks up colorful trash but a boy one day asks why she picks it up. Violet then showed the boy her colorful room with bright blues and colors of all different shades on her wall showing how it used to be in her old home. So now I know Violet was just sad about leaving her old home.