

Grab and Go Lesson Plan

Story Within A Story

The Anchor: [A Book of Maps for You](#) - Lourdes Heuer

I've always loved maps in books. *The Hobbit* was the first novel I ever read that had a map printed inside the cover, and I remember being absolutely mesmerized by it. As I read, I kept flipping back and forth, tracing Bilbo's journey with my finger, wanting to "see" exactly where the story was taking me. That experience stayed with me - the feeling that a map can guide not only characters, but readers too.

What I love about maps is that they can be both factual and deeply creative. They tell stories - stories of places, pathways, countries, castles, oceans, and adventures waiting to unfold. They help us understand where we are, where we've been, and where we might be going next.

When I discovered *A Book of Maps for You* by Lourdes Heuer, illustrated by Maxwell Eaton III, earlier this spring, I instantly fell in love with it. The story follows a young boy who is moving away and leaves behind a thoughtful book of maps for the new family moving in - maps of his community, his favourite places, and the pieces of his world that mattered to him. I was so touched by this idea - this "story within a story" - and immediately saw endless possibilities for classroom mapping activities that invite students to think about their own stories, spaces, and connections.

I had briefly considered creating a New Year's goal-setting lesson for January, but the truth is that goal-setting is limited to those first few days back. This mapping lesson, on the other hand, can be done *anytime* - January, February, or even later in the spring - and it offers a rich blend of literacy, creativity, and sense-of-place thinking.

(And if you *are* looking for a quick New Year's activity for those first few days of school, you can always check out my OLLI blog post [HERE](#).)

Materials

- Anchor Book: *A Book of Maps for You* - Lourdes Heuer (or use any map book from the book list included at the end of this lesson)
- Slides of different kinds of maps - Download [HERE](#)
- Chart paper or whiteboard and markers
- ***Two Stories in One*** template (included)
- ***My Map of _____*** template (included)

1. Introduction

Set the Context:

Tell students that today you are going to talk about maps. Explain that although you will be reading a book about maps later, you want to spend a few minutes first reviewing what maps are and why we use them.

Use [these slides](#) to show different types of maps, using the discussion prompts below.

Discussion Prompts:

- What are maps for? (*help us find directions, show a very large place in a simple way*)
 - Why are maps helpful? (*they help us know where places are in the world, help us “see” large countries*)
 - When might you use a map? (*when travelling*)
 - What different types of maps are there? (*continents, countries, cities, streets, imaginary*)
 - What are different ways maps can be shown? (*side view, bird’s-eye view, etc.*)
 - What do most maps include? (*compass rose, key or legend, symbols*)
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2. Read Aloud

Tell students that you are going to read a book **full of maps**. Show the cover and read the title: *A Book of Maps for You*. Then show the title page and the picture of the boy sitting at the desk.

Ask students:

- Who do you think this boy is?
- Who do you think the “you” in the title is?
- Why would someone make a book of maps for someone else?

Explain that although this book is about maps, it is *also* a story about the boy who made the maps for someone else. Tell students to listen carefully and see if they can figure out *why* he made the book.

NOTE: I highly recommend asking your teacher-librarian to order a copy of this book. Because it is new, there is currently no YouTube read-aloud available, but keep checking! If you don’t

have access to this book, you can use one of the following titles on YouTube (*press MUTE and use your own voice!*):

- [My Map Book](#)
- [Follow that Map - A First Book of Mapping Skills](#)
- [Martha Maps it Out](#)

Read the story, pausing occasionally to discuss and wonder together:

- What are you noticing about these maps? (*personal notes, tips the boy included, how the maps tell a story*)
- How do you think the person who made the maps feels about his neighbourhood? (*he really likes it, knows it well*)
- What clues is he leaving behind?

Pause on the second-to-last page (*the boy getting into the car*) and ask:

- What are you noticing?
- What are you inferring (thinking) is happening? (*the boy is moving*)

Turn to the last page (*the girl looking at the book of maps*) and ask:

- What are you noticing?
- What are you inferring (thinking)?

Discuss why students think the boy made the book of maps (*to help the new person moving in, to share tips about places he loved*) and how the girl might have felt when she found it (*grateful, less nervous about moving*).

Ask students if they have ever moved before and discuss the feelings that can come with being in a new house, neighbourhood, or school. Share a personal moving experience if applicable, and how having a book of maps like this one might have helped.

3. End the Lesson

SAY: I think we can all agree that this story is about maps. But what I really love about this book is that there is another story woven inside - the story of a boy who is moving and leaving behind a home and community he loves. Even though we didn't know at first that the boy was moving, the author gave us many clues and emotions through the maps.

*This was a story about moving inside a story about maps. When readers look for clues and figure out what the author isn't directly telling us, we are using a reading strategy called **inferring**. We used the clues at the beginning and end of the story to infer what was really happening.*

4. Activities

1. Two Stories in One

Pass out the **Two Stories in One** template (*included*). Review the two stories students identified:

- A book of maps
- A boy who is moving

Invite students to complete the template, showing each part of the story on a different side.


2. Map of My _____

Distribute the Map of My _____ template (*included*).

Tell students they are going to create a map of a place they know well such as their house, bedroom, classroom, school, or a favourite park. Students can choose a side view or bird's-eye view.


Maps should be coloured, labelled, and include personal notes and tips, just like the maps in the book.

Extension Activities (Optional)

 **Imaginary Maps** Students create imaginary maps of a “theme” island - i.e. Icecream Island, Hockey Island, Minecraft Island. They need to create the outside shape of the island and include:

- Arrival and departure location
- 5-6 landmarks or places of interest- i.e. forest, mountain, store, park, river, lake market, restaurant, hotel
- Roads that lead to each landmark
- Compass rose and a key
- Tips and personal notes

(This lesson can be found in my book [Nonfiction Writing Power](#) - page 76)

 **Map of Our School** Students work in partners or small groups to create maps of different areas of the school (e.g., library, lunchroom, office). Students will need time in each space to develop accurate maps. Combine the completed maps into a class book.



Favourite Mapping Books

[*The Boy Who Loved Maps*](#) - Kari Allen (*Primary*)

[*What a Map Can Do*](#) - Gabrielle Balkan (*Intermediate*)

[*Magnolia's Magnificent Map*](#) - Lauren Bradshaw (*Primary*)

[*Henry's Map*](#) - David Elliott (*Primary*)

[*My Map Book*](#) - Sara Fanelli (*Primary*)

[*From Here to There: A First Book of Maps*](#) - Vivian French (*Primary*)

[*All Kinds of Maps*](#) - Susan Ahmadi Hansen

[*Making Your Own Maps*](#) - Susan Ahmadi Hansen

[*Mapping Sam*](#) - Joyce Hesselberth (*Primary*)

[*Mapping Penny's World*](#) - Loreen Leedy (*Primary*)

[*Maps*](#) - Aleksandra Mizielińska & Daniel Mizieliński (*Intermediate*)

[*Follow That Map: A First Book of Mapping Skills*](#) - Scot Ritchie (*Primary*)

[*The Shape of Things: How Mapmakers Picture Our World*](#) - Dean Robbins
(*Primary–Intermediate*)

[*Where We Live: Mapping Neighborhoods of Kids Around the Globe*](#) - Margriet Ruurs
(*Intermediate*)

[*The Last Mapmaker*](#) - Christina Soontornvat (*Intermediate NOVEL*)

[*Me on the Map*](#) - Joan Sweeney (*Primary*)

[*A Map into the World*](#) - Kao Kalia Yang (*Primary–Intermediate*)

[*Martha Maps It Out*](#) - Leigh Hodgkinson (*Primary*)

[*My Town*](#) - Ingela P. Arrhenius (*Primary - places in a community*)

[*The Once Upon a Time Map Book: Take a Tour of Six Enchanted Lands*](#)- B.G. Hennessy
(*Primary–Intermediate*)

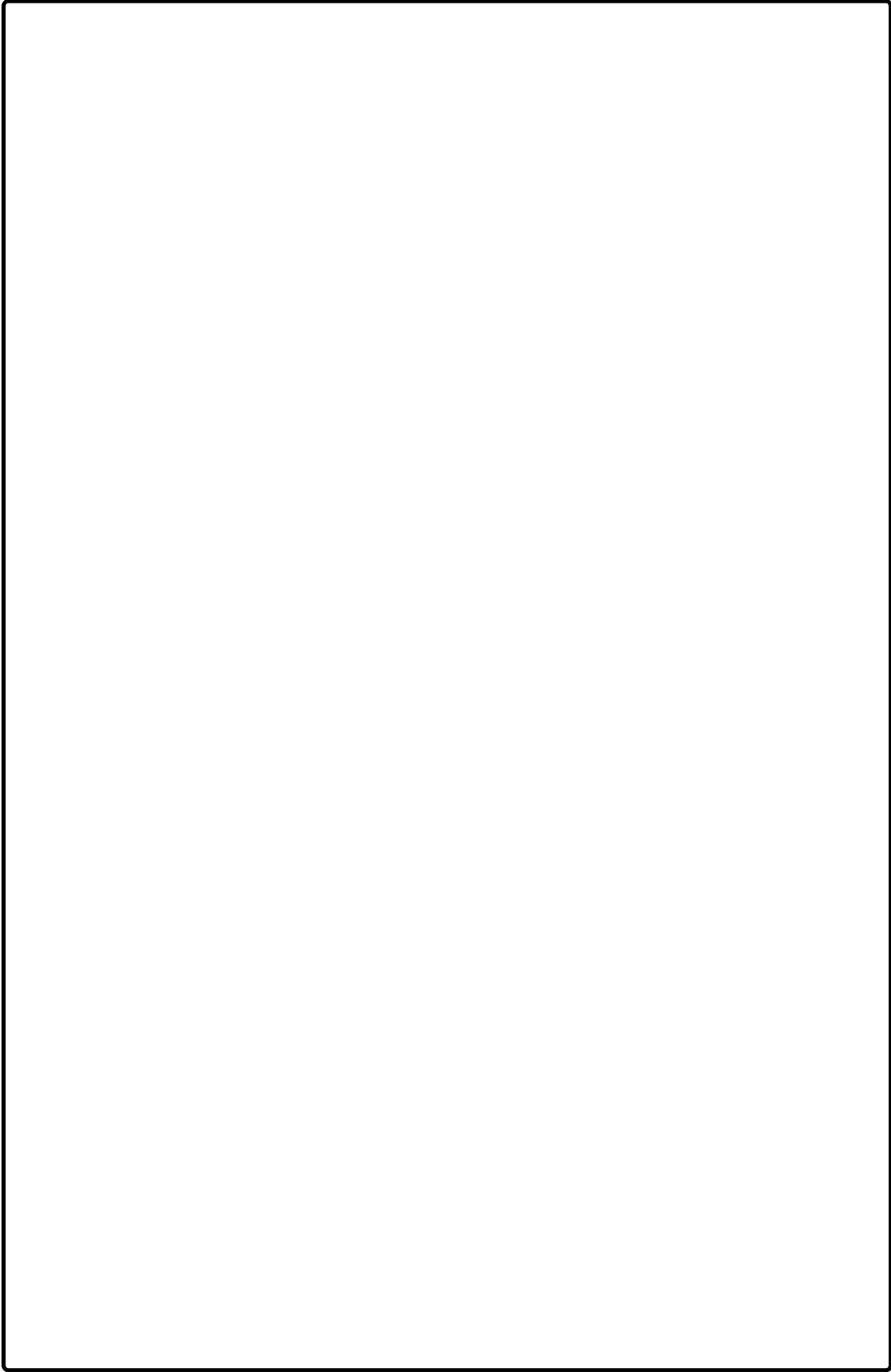
Two Stories in One

Name: _____

<p>This story is about _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>This story is also about _____</p>
<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

Name: _____

Map of My _____



Name: _____

Map of My _____

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for a student to draw a map of their location. The box occupies most of the page below the title.