

# Grab and Go Lesson Plan

## Wonderings

 The Anchor: *Little Black Crow* - Chris Raschka

### Materials

- Copy of [\*Little Black Crow\*](#) or [YouTube version](#) - remember to **MUTE** and read aloud yourself!
- Chart paper or whiteboard
- Student writing paper or “I Wonder...” reproducible (included)
- Optional: images of birds/animals or outdoor observation time

## 1. Introduction

### Set the Context:

*Today we are going to think about wondering - the questions that come into our minds when we are really paying close attention.*

Explain:

Good readers don't just read the words, they *think and they wonder* about the story. They ask questions about what they see, hear, and notice in the story.

Today we are going to read a story about a little boy who is wondering about a crow. But instead of asking questions ABOUT the crow - he is asking questions TO the crow - talking to the crow as if the crow can hear him.

Introduce the idea of personification briefly:

Sometimes when we wonder about animals, we might imagine that they can hear, think and feel like people. We sometimes think about them as if they were a person. In this story, the little boy thinks about a crow as if it were a person.

## Discussion Prompts:

- Have you ever watched a bird or animal and wondered about it?
- What kinds of questions might you ask an animal?
- Do you think animals have feelings or thoughts like we do?
- Do you think animals have hopes and dreams and fears like people do?

Keep responses open — no right answers.



## 2. Read Aloud

### Tell the students...

This book is filled with “crow questions”. As we read, listen for the questions the boy asks the crow.

### Set intention:

Ask students to notice:

- What kinds of questions is the little boy asking?
- Are they simple or deep-thinking questions?
- What do these questions make you think about?
- If the crow could talk, how might he answer?

Begin to read, pausing occasionally to highlight some of the powerful questions:

- *Are you ever afraid?*
- *Whom do you love?*
- *Do you ever wonder about thunder?*

Let the quiet moments sit - don't rush. Draw students' attention to the repetition and the way the story sounds like a poem.



## 3. Activity - My Wonderings

- **Planning**

Explain that they are going to be choosing an animal (insect, bird or fish) and creating their own list of wonderings. They might choose an animal they've seen before, like a dog or a spider, or something they're curious about. Brainstorm some examples

Once students have decided on their animal (bird, insect, etc), remind them that, in the story, the little boy had a special name for the crow. He didn't call him "crow" but "Little Black Crow", which makes it feel more personal.

Model an example - "Little Brown Dog". Invite students to come up with a name for their animal. Students can share their animal name with a partner.

*Say: Now I would like you to imagine that your animal, bird, or insect can hear and understand you. What questions would you want to ask?*

Model a few wondering questions aloud:

- *Little Brown Dog - Do you have a best friend?*
- *Do you ever feel lonely?*
- *Do you ever feel scared?*

Think aloud briefly: *I'm trying to ask questions that are thoughtful and might not have a simple answer. It's okay to ask some quick questions - like What's your favourite food? But I also want to ask Little Brown Dog some deep thinking questions. I'm trying to imagine what my Little Brown Dog might be feeling or thinking.*

Pass out **My Wonderings** planning page (included).

Encourage:

- A list of questions (not answers)
- A mix of simple and deep-thinking questions
- Thoughtful, imaginative language

Optional structure:

- Where do you...
- Do you ever wonder...
- What do you think about...

## Writing

Project a copy of Little Black Crow (included) on a screen or white board. Explain that the story is written like a poem. Read the poem aloud. Discuss poetic features:

- short lines
- white spaces
- stanzas
- repetition
- rhyme

Explain that the students will be using some of the questions from their planning page to write a “Wondering Poem” about their animal. (template pg. 7))

Model how to turn one question into a stanza with short lines and repetition. (Focus more on the repetition than the rhyme)

Question: Little Brown Dog, do you like to swim?

Stanza:        Little Brown Dog,  
                  Do you like to swim  
                  In the lake or the pond?  
                  Swimming for your ball?  
                  Do you like to swim?

Students can write 2-3 stanzas to create a poem. Remind them to include shorter lines, white spaces, and repetition. Pictures can be added afterwards.

## 4. End the Lesson

### SAY:

*Today we practiced wondering. We imagined what it might be like if an animal or insect could hear and understand us and what we might want to ask.*

*We worked on asking deeper questions - the kind that don't always have one clear answer. We also borrowed ideas from Chris Raschka, turning our questions into poems using short lines, repetition, and stanzas.*

*Most importantly, we learned that deep thinking often starts with a simple wondering.*

### Extension Activities (Optional)

#### Outdoor Wonder Walk

Go outside and observe birds or animals. Students jot “in-the-moment” questions.

#### Art

Students create soft, simple illustrations inspired by Raschka’s style. (sample on page 5)

#### Wonder Circle

Students share one question aloud — no answers, just thinking.



Little Black Crow Art samples from Vancouver teacher Carrie Gelson's [Blog](#)

# My Wonderings Planning Sheet

Choose your animal (insect, bird, fish) \_\_\_\_\_

What will you name your animal? \_\_\_\_\_

Draw a picture of your animal:



**If you could talk to your animal, what questions would you want to ask?** *Think about asking questions about their home, family, feelings, worries, fears, hopes and dreams.*

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# Little Black Crow by Chris Raschka

Little Black Crow,  
Where do you go?  
Where do you go  
In the cold white snow?  
Where do you go?

Little Black Crow,  
Where do you fly  
In the stormy sky?  
Whom do you meet  
In the long, wet street?  
Whom do you meet?

Little Black Crow,  
Do you ever complain  
In the wind  
And the rain?  
Do you ever complain?

Is it enough  
To have feathers  
In all kinds of weathers?  
Is it enough to have feathers?

Little Black Crow  
In that tall tree,  
Are you a boy like me?  
With a sister and a brother  
And a father and a mother?  
Are you a boy like me?

Little Black Crow  
How do you sleep  
In the forest so deep?  
How do you sleep?

Do you ever worry  
When you hop and you hurry?  
Are you ever afraid  
Of mistakes you've made?  
Are you ever afraid?

Little Black Crow,  
Whom do you love  
In the clouds above?  
Whom do you love?  
Is it that little gray dove?  
Is that whom you love?

Little Black Crow,  
Do you ever wonder  
About lightning and thunder?  
About morsels you eat?  
About creatures you meet?

Little Black Crow  
In the white snow  
In the blue sky  
In the brown below,  
Do you ever wonder  
About stars you see?

Might you ever wonder  
About someone...like me?





## Additional “Wonder” Read Alouds

[\*The Curious Why\*](#) - Angela DiTerlizzi

[\*Wonder Why\*](#) - Lisa Varchol Perron

[\*Wonder Walkers\*](#) - Micha Archer

[\*What's New, Daniel?\*](#) - Micha Archer

[\*Why?\*](#) - Tracey Corderoy

[\*I Wonder\*](#) - Kari Anne Holt

[\*I Wonder\*](#) - Tana Hoban

[\*Questions. Questions\*](#) - Marcus Pfister

[\*Wondering Around\*](#) - Meg Fleming

[\*Where Does Pepper Come From?: And Other Fun Facts\*](#) - Brigitte Raab

[\*Some Questions About Trees\*](#) - Toni Yuly

[\*Twenty Questions\*](#) - Mac Barnett

[\*I Wonder: A Book of Questions with No Answers\*](#) - Philip Bunting

Out of print but check your library!

[\*I Wonder Why\*](#) - Lois Rock

[\*Why?\*](#) - Richard Torrey