

## Read the Illustration

Comparing a primary source with a story  
2 classroom periods, K-2<sup>nd</sup> Grades

**Read the Illustration** promotes the **comparison of two types of texts and the author's use of important key details** to tell their version of a true story about Henry Brown. This activity requires students to **communicate with partners and whole group** what they **see, think, and wonder** (or Observe, Reflect, and Question method<sup>1</sup>) about a primary source cartoon and then **compare findings** with the story, *Henry's Freedom Box* by Ellen Levine.

1. **Introduce a present day cartoon** familiar to students as a **type of text**.

*\*Tip: Define or review the terms, "cartoonist" and "illustration".*

2. Explain that we will be looking at an older cartoon (150+ years ago) that shares a true story. Display a **focus question** to be explored during the observation of the cartoon.

**Focus Question:** "How can illustrations help tell a story?"<sup>2</sup>

*\*Tip: Share a timeline connection with students. Connect the date of this cartoon being approximately 150 years ago, during the time of President Abraham Lincoln or their great, great, great, great grandparents.*

3. **Introduce an old cartoon**, "The resurrection of Henry Box Brown at Philadelphia." created by A. Donnelly, as a trifold. The middle piece will be shared last.
4. **Independent work:** Begin with the left 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the cartoon and have students **circle and label one detail they think is most important** (2-3 minutes). Encourage students to notice people, objects, words, and expressions.

*\*Tip: Model this task by showing them how you look at the 1/3 section for 20-30 seconds before choosing one detail to circle and label, i.e. say aloud*

*"I see two men (while circling and labeling), and I think they must be important to the story."*

*\*Tip: Share a sentence stem on chart paper to help students communicate their ideas and show evidence for their thinking.*

*I see \_\_\_\_\_ and I think \_\_\_\_\_.*



5. Repeat the step above with the right 1/3<sup>rd</sup> section of the cartoon and then the middle section.
6. Instruct students to unfold the entire cartoon to see all three circled details. Give students 1 minute to think independently about the question, "**What story is the cartoonist telling?**" **Pair students** and have them sit "**eye- to-eye and knee to knee**"<sup>3</sup> to share their answer with a partner (2 minutes).

*\*Tip: Help students refer to their circled details to help them tell their story.*

<sup>1</sup> **Library of Congress Analysis Tool (Utilizes an ORQ method)** <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/guides.html>

<sup>2</sup> A **focus question** helps focus students' thinking and inquiry of a primary source(s), is open-ended and relates directly to the primary source(s).

<sup>3</sup> **Knee to Knee** is a learning strategy where students work in pairs, side-by-side or face-to-face with knees touching. In this way, they can provide effective feedback to each other. Web resource: Learn NC Website, <http://www.learnnc.org/reference/knee-to-knee>.

7. As a **whole group** choose a few students to **share out**. Point out how students' stories were the same or different and discuss why. Did they choose different details or have a different point of view. **Post questions** students may have about the story.

8. **Introduce and read the story** *Henry's Freedom Box* by Ellen Levine.

*\*Tip: Explain that this book shares the same story as the cartoon but in a different way.*

9. As a **whole group**, **discuss** the following:

Was your story the same or different from Ellen Levine's story.

Did the story help you answer any questions about the cartoon?

How was Ellen Levine's story the same or different from the cartoon?

What new questions do you have after reading the story?

Why was Henry's story important to share?

10. Going back to the cartoon, ask students to help you **chart** what **details from the cartoon** were the same as the story.

*\*Tip: This step will help students identify which details were important to the cartoonist in telling a story. Ask students, what if the "box" was not included and just how important is that detail in telling the story.*

*\*Tip: Help students notice where most of the key details lie in the cartoon illustration and why.*

11. **Whole group discussion:** In thinking about all the important details on the chart, have students answer the **focus question**, "How can illustrations help tell a story?" Possible answers may include: "The key details help tell the story." "The key details match the words."

### **Analyze and Synthesize, Going Deeper**

12. **Divide students into small groups.** **Assign** each group **stories** that are known by all students (Three Little Pigs or stories they have recently read as a class). Each group will read their story.
13. Each student will **choose one detail he/she thinks is important** to the story and **collaborate** with their group to **create an illustration** that will "tell a story" (15 minutes). All illustrations are displayed throughout the classroom.
14. The teacher will display one title at a time for each of the stories and the students must figure out which illustration goes with the title using the key details from the students' illustration to support their answer.

*Tip: Consider adding a title that is not represented to get students to really think.*

### **Alternate Culminating Activity**

Students can create a "**bag report**" after reading a story. They will choose 4 or 5 objects or pictures to represent key details (drawn or printed) to help tell the story. Decorate the bag and place the objects and pictures in the bag. Second grade students can create object/picture tags which includes a sentence that shares the importance of each item in the bag.

### Extension

Share Henry Box Brown's narrative which was published in 1851,

<http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/brownbox/brownbox.html>.

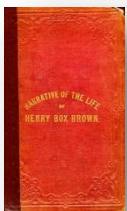
Where might authors, like Ellen Levine and A. Donnelly, get their information to illustrate their story? How is Henry Box Brown's narrative similar or different from the story or cartoon?

### Library of Congress Primary Source:



Donnelly, A. The resurrection of Henry Box Brown at Philadelphia, who escaped from Richmond Va. in a bx 3 feet long 2 1/2 ft. deep and 2 ft wide. 1850. New York. No. 19 1/2 Courtland St. From the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2004665363/>



Brown, Henry Box. Narrative of the Life of Henry Box Brown, Written by Himself. Documenting the American South, University Library, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

<http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/brownbox/brownbox.html>

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### Other Resources and Materials:

- Teacher's Guides and Analysis Tool, <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/guides.html>
- *Henry's Freedom Box* by Ellen Levine

### First-grade Common Core State Standards met by this activity:

CCSS.1.RI.2 Key Ideas and Details: Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.

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CCSS.1.RI.9 Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: Identify basic similarities in and difference between two texts on the same topic.

CCSS.1.RL.9 Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in stories.

CCSS.1.W.3 Text Types and Purposes: Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.

CCSS.1.SL.1 Comprehension and Collaboration: Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

CCSS.1.SL.2 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

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