Welcome to Junior Great Books® Series 3–5!

This sample unit contains:
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• Pages 8–33: Complete Unit, “Crow Call,” from Series 4, Book One
• Pages 34–35: Theme Connections
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Junior Great Books Series 3–5 Benefits

**Teachers** move from a prescriptive, instructional approach to an inquiry-based, collaborative approach. Series 3–5 makes it easy to:

• Engage all students in higher-level reading, thinking, and discussion
• Differentiate instruction to address students’ needs and learning styles
• Integrate critical thinking and social/emotional learning into their curriculum

**Students** come to see themselves as successful learners and thinkers, as they learn to:

• Read for meaning
• Use reading comprehension strategies
• Go beyond initial responses to deeper thinking
• Support ideas with evidence from the story
• Develop appreciation for rich, rewarding literature

**Students** develop cognitive, social, and emotional intelligence by:

• Thoughtfully considering different points of view
• Listening to others and responding appropriately
• Contributing to a collaborative, respectful classroom environment

Junior Great Books® is a registered trademark and Shared Inquiry™ is a trademark of the Great Books Foundation.
Junior Great Books Series 3–5 Materials

Student Books

The student books are anthologies of outstanding stories, grouped by theme, that capture students’ imaginations and sustain a thoughtful process of reading, writing, and discussion. Engaging artwork provides visual interest and strengthens students’ understanding of each story. Student-friendly glossaries define challenging story words.

Audio CDs

Professionally recorded audio versions of each story add flexibility to your reading routine and provide support for struggling students.

Teacher’s Editions

Teacher’s Editions include:

• A unit overview for each story that provides important planning details and a big-picture snapshot of the unit
• A unit guide that walks you through each day’s lesson
• Annotated reading selections that have notes, icons, and highlights that correspond to activity instructions
• A Teacher Resources section for each unit that contains a range of additional support materials

Reader’s Journals

Reader’s Journals allow students to record their thinking at each stage of work on a story, reinforcing the reading-writing connection.
Junior Great Books Series 3–5 Features

High-Quality Literature
The Junior Great Books program features outstanding literature by award-winning authors such as Langston Hughes, Lois Lowry, Isaac Bashevis Singer, and Jane Yolen, with illustrations by lauded artists such as Brian Pinkney, Bagram Ibatoulline, and Caldecott winner Brian Floca. Stories are selected for their vivid writing and for their ability to support multiple interpretations and thought-provoking discussions, as well as for their diversity of settings, genres, and writing styles.

In-Depth Reading, Critical Thinking, and Writing Activities
The sequence of Shared Inquiry activities encourages students to develop the habits of effective readers and thinkers: to read closely, to think critically and write thoughtfully about what they have read, and to listen and respond to their classmates.

Students read along as a story is read aloud, ask questions about the story, and then reread and respond to the story—all fundamental reading comprehension strategies. Then through a Shared Inquiry discussion, students practice the three essential elements of critical thinking:

• Idea—Students develop and clarify ideas about a story’s meaning.
• Evidence—Students support these ideas with evidence found in the story.
• Response—Students listen to and consider the ideas of others.

After the discussion, students continue their exploration of the story through written responses, creative responses, related fiction readings, and projects linking the story to other subject areas.

Differentiated Instruction
• Student learning spectrums present the range of student behaviors you might expect to see during core activities.
• Support and challenge options, keyed to the learning spectrums, help you tailor each activity to suit the needs of all students.
• Close-reading options accompanying the second reading activity engage different learning styles.
• Suggestions for working with ESL students and small ability-based groups are also included.
Thematic Organization

Junior Great Books selections are divided into character-education themes that are commonly taught in elementary school and are easy to integrate into the larger curriculum.

Each student book consists of three themes (with three stories per theme). Theme-related activities allow students further practice with inquiry-based learning and allow teachers to introduce vital character-education concepts into the elementary classroom:

• A Theme Introduction in the student book, with a corresponding Reader's Journal page, poses an essential question for students to discuss and revisit as they work through the stories.

• A Theme Connections section in the Teacher's Edition includes a theme wrap-up activity, a story-to-story connection activity, and at-home thematic activities for students and parents.

Assessment and Reflection

• Student learning objectives and learning spectrums provide a simple framework for ongoing informal assessment.

• A formal assessment suite includes comprehension tests for each story, a critical thinking rubric, activity scoring instructions, and portfolio assessment tools.

• Reflection forms for students and teachers make goal setting simple and benchmarks for improvement more concrete.

Teacher Support

The Teacher Resources section in the Teacher's Edition contains a range of support materials, including:

• Reading comprehension strategies
• Vocabulary activities
• Discussion troubleshooting, tips, and handouts

In addition, links are provided to online videos showing elementary-grade students engaged in Shared Inquiry activities, along with practical tips from a Great Books instructor.
Research-Based Learning

Great Books programs have been recognized as effective by the U.S. Department of Education, by Learning Forward (formerly the National Staff Development Council), and by other studies of curricula. Independent research has shown that regular, sustained use of Shared Inquiry and Great Books programs improves reading comprehension and critical thinking for students from a wide range of demographic backgrounds and achievement levels. Please contact us for more information on research supporting Shared Inquiry practices.

Professional Learning

The Great Books Foundation offers professional learning courses and webinars, and on-site consultation days and planning sessions to introduce teachers to Shared Inquiry and to provide continuing assistance. Learning Forward has cited the Great Books Foundation’s courses for teachers as effective in improving students’ learning results.

Great Books Foundation professional learning courses give teachers the opportunity to practice using the Shared Inquiry method. Teachers also learn how to prepare a text for inquiry-based learning, how to conduct the classroom activities, and how to manage student responses by asking effective follow-up questions. For more information, click on “Professional Learning” when you visit greatbooks.org.

You can find free downloadable materials, videos of real classroom discussions, research studies, and more at greatbooks.org.

The Shared Inquiry™ Method of Learning

The Junior Great Books program uses a method of reading and discussion known as Shared Inquiry. This distinctive approach to learning enables teachers, parent volunteers, and other adults who lead Great Books programs to foster a vibrant environment in which children learn critical thinking and close reading skills used regularly and naturally by good readers, thinkers, and learners. Through your own curiosity and attentive questioning, you serve as a partner in inquiry with your students, helping the group work together to discover a story’s meaning. The process reaches its fullest expression in Shared Inquiry discussion, where you and your students think and talk about an interpretive question—a question about the story that has more than one good answer that can be supported with evidence from the story.
About the Great Books Foundation

Founded in 1947, the Great Books Foundation is an independent, nonprofit educational organization whose mission is to advance the critical, reflective thinking and social and civic engagement of readers of all ages through Shared Inquiry discussion of works and ideas of enduring value.

In 1962, the Foundation extended its mission to children with the introduction of Junior Great Books. Today, the Foundation offers programs for learners of all ages. Great Books professional learning consultants conduct face-to-face and online courses and provide customized on-site consultations for educators and parents who want to use Shared Inquiry to improve students’ critical thinking, reading comprehension, vocabulary, and writing skills.

Great Books Programs Support Your English Language Arts Standards

The Great Books Foundation provides strong, inquiry-based language arts programs that improve students’ achievement in reading comprehension, critical thinking, writing, and speaking and listening. Our programs combine classroom materials and the Shared Inquiry method of learning to develop the student competencies assessed by most state English Language Arts standards.

Each unit in Junior Great Books presents an engaging sequence of activities that clearly and consistently provide opportunities for students to learn and practice the essential skills they need to be college- and career-ready.

Visit greatbooks.org to download a sample unit for your grade level.
Crow Call

Lois Lowry

LENGTH: 11 pages  READ-ALOUD TIME: About 15 minutes
GENRE: Realistic fiction  SETTING: U.S. (rural Pennsylvania)

About the Story

Liz, a young girl, goes on her first hunting trip with her father, who has recently returned from war. During the outing, Liz learns the art of crow calling, while she and her father get to know—and understand—each other.

About the Author

Lois Lowry was born in Honolulu, Hawaii, in 1937. The daughter of an army dentist, she spent her early years in New York, Pennsylvania, and Japan. Her work is often inspired by childhood memories and by the lives of her children. Lowry has earned numerous awards for her writing, including Newbery Medals for Number the Stars and The Giver. Crow Call, Lowry’s first picture book, was published in 2009. Lois Lowry lives and works in Massachusetts.

Author website: www.loislowry.com

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The story starts on page 77 of the Teacher’s Edition and on page 23 of the student book.
UNIT OVERVIEW

SESSION 1  PAGES 65–67
Prereading  5 MINUTES
Students explore a concept relevant to the story they will be reading.

First Reading with Sharing Questions  30–40 MINUTES
Students read along as the story is read aloud and share their questions about it.

SESSION 2  PAGES 68–69
Second Reading  30–40 MINUTES
Students read along as the story is reread, engaging in activities that help them explore the story more deeply.

SESSION 3  PAGES 70–73
Shared Inquiry Discussion  30–40 MINUTES
Students explore the story’s meaning by discussing an interpretive question.

SESSION 4 OPTIONS  PAGE 74
Written and Creative Response  TIMES VARY
Students write a brief expository essay or a piece of creative writing based on the story, or explore the story through another creative form.

ADDITIONAL SESSIONS
Curriculum Connections  TIMES VARY
Students engage in suggested activities that connect “Crow Call” to the rest of your curriculum (p. 75).

Unit Wrap-Up  TIMES VARY
Students complete the unit with a theme connection activity (pp. 122–123), multiple-choice test (p. 320), portfolio assessment (p. 347), or reflection on discussion (pp. 350–352).
Use these activities and word lists at any time during the unit to customize the program to your classroom learning goals. (Page numbers refer to the student book, unless otherwise noted.)

Vocabulary in Context
Use these suggested words (or your own words) to work with vocabulary in context. See page 301 of this Teacher’s Edition for vocabulary activity ideas.

**Suggested target words**
- lingered (p. 24)
- imitation (p. 26)
- confide (p. 28)
- resolute (p. 32)
- subsides (p. 32)

Spelling
Use these suggested words (or your own words) for spelling practice.

**Inflectional ending -ing,**
- writing (p. 26)
- driving (p. 26)
- hesitating (p. 24)
- memorizing (p. 27)
- smiling (p. 32)

**Prefix un-**
- unfold (p. 24)
- unknown (p. 27)
- uneasy (p. 27)
- unsurprised (p. 29)
- unchangeable (p. 29)

Reading with Expression
Students look for words, phrases and punctuation that help them read aloud with expression (Teacher’s Edition, p. 23).
Prereading (5 minutes)

Activity Instructions

1. Choose a prereading option below.

2. Ask follow-up questions to help students further explain their ideas.

3. Stop after about five minutes to conserve class time for reading the story and sharing questions.

ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Students explore a concept relevant to the story they will be reading.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE

To activate and build background knowledge related to a story.

KEY SHARED INQUIRY CONCEPT

Thinking about what we already know helps us prepare to read.

Materials

- Student books

Text Preview

Preview the title and story illustrations with students. Then ask:

- What do you know about crows?
- What does the phrase “crow call” make you picture in your head?

Ask students what they think the story will be about, based on the title and illustrations. After reading, you may want to ask students how their inferences matched up (or didn’t match up) with the story.

Opening Question

Ask students to think of a time when someone they were close to was away for a long time and then came back. Then ask: How did you feel when the person came back? What was easy and what was hard about being together again?
First Reading with Sharing Questions

(30–40 minutes)

Activity Instructions

1. **Prepare** students to ask questions by telling them to listen for anything that is confusing or that they wonder about while you read.

2. **Read** the story aloud. Have students read along in their books and mark a ? anywhere they have a question (on a sticky note or in the text).

3. **Ask** students to share their questions. Record them on chart paper.

4. **Help** students answer any questions that signal a serious comprehension problem. Leave the rest unanswered for now.

5. **Post** the list of questions in the classroom and let students know that they will revisit many of the questions during their work on the story.

6. **Reader’s Journal**: Ask students to record something from the story that they understand better now that they have shared their questions, along with the question someone else asked that most interests them.

**OVERHEARD IN THE CLASSROOM**

**Helping Students Ask Questions**

During this discussion, the teacher helps a student formulate a question before recording it.

**TEACHER**: Joseph, did you have a question about the story?

**JOSEPH**: I think Lizzie’s weird.

**TEACHER**: What part of the story makes you think Lizzie is weird?

**JOSEPH**: I don’t know why she’s so worried about going on a trip with her dad.

**TEACHER**: So can you turn that into a question?

**JOSEPH**: Why is she worried about a trip with her dad?

The teacher asks a follow-up question to help a student clarify his reaction.

The teacher helps the student turn his reaction into a question.
SPOTLIGHT

on Evaluative and Interpretive Questions

During the sharing questions activity, your students will likely ask different types of questions that are important to recognize.

“Crow Call” Questions

1. Why does Liz practice saying “Daddy”?
2. Why does Liz’s father buy her the shirt?
3. Was it fair for Liz’s father to take Liz hunting and not take Jessica?
4. What does a crow call sound like?

For more information on question types, see pages 302–303 (pp. 136–137 of the student book).

Student Learning Spectrum

Look for students to:

- Have difficulty following or asking questions about the story
- Follow the story and ask a variety of questions, some of them relevant to the story’s meaning
- Follow the story and ask a variety of questions, many of them relevant to the story’s meaning

Differentiated Instruction

**SUPPORT** If students are struggling to follow or ask questions about the story, ask what part(s) of the story confused them or what they liked or did not like about the story. Help students shape their reactions into questions if necessary. If students are struggling with comprehension, consider having students listen to the story once more before Session 2.

**CHALLENGE** If students follow the story and readily ask questions, you might:

- Have students mark other reactions to the story, such as ! where they are surprised or smiling/frowning faces where they have positive/negative reactions.
- After students share questions, review the question types on pages 302–303 (pp. 136–137 of the student book). Ask groups or pairs to identify different types of questions on the class list and explain their thinking.
Second Reading (30–40 minutes)

Activity Instructions

1. Choose one or more of the Move! Note! Share! activities (see box below) to conduct during the second reading.

2. Prepare students to reread with a purpose by telling them that this time they will be doing activities that help them think more deeply about the story.

3. Read the story aloud or play the audio CD as students read along. During the reading have students do one of the following:
   • Note! Take notes throughout the entire story.
   • Move! or Share! Pause at the appropriate passage to engage in the activity. Then ask students the follow-up question corresponding to that activity.

4. Review with the class the list of questions you posted from the sharing questions activity. See if any have been answered while rereading and add any new questions.

5. Reader’s Journal: Ask students to record something new they learned from rereading as well as a question they would like to talk about more.

6. Collect the Reader’s Journals and note which questions students have recorded. This will help you choose a focus question for Shared Inquiry discussion.

ACTIVITY SUMMARY

- Students read along as the story is reread, engaging in activities that help them explore the story more deeply.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- To reread a story purposefully in order to gain a deeper understanding of it

KEY SHARED INQUIRY CONCEPT

- Rereading helps us discover new things about a story.

Materials

- Student books
- Audio CD
- Sticky notes
- Class question list
- Reader’s Journal: Second reading page (p. 13)

Second Reading Activity Options

MOVE! Students act out the crows becoming noisier and more active as another student (or teacher) calls them (p. 86).

FOLLOW-UP QUESTION:
Why does Liz say to her father, “Do you hear them? They think I’m their friend! Maybe their baby, all grown up!”?

NOTE! Students mark an N where Liz feels nervous and a C where she feels comfortable (see p. 79 for sample student responses).

FOLLOW-UP QUESTION:
Why did you mark that Liz feels nervous (or comfortable) there?

SHARE! Pairs of students share their visualizations of the forest when Liz and her father get out of the car (p. 80).

FOLLOW-UP QUESTION:
How does the stillness make Liz feel?
Student Learning Spectrum

Look for students to:

- Have difficulty engaging in second reading or related activities
- Misunderstand or have trouble answering second reading questions

- Reread and participate in the related activities
- Offer simple answers to second reading questions

- Reread and participate in the related activities, purposefully pursuing a deeper understanding of the story
- Offer more insightful answers to second reading questions

Differentiated Instruction

**SUPPORT** If students struggle to reread or complete the related activities, you might:

- Pause for comprehension checks as you reread, modeling reading strategies (p. 300).
- Return to a Move! Note! Share! activity and read the corresponding passage aloud. Model the activity, then have students complete it themselves. Ask the follow-up question and give students time to think or write before sharing answers aloud.

**CHALLENGE** If students readily reread and participate in the related activities, ask them to consider different answers: For Note!, have students return to a passage they marked and look for evidence that supports the opposite note. For Move! or Share!, have them generate alternative answers to the follow-up question. Have students share their thinking with a partner, a small group, or the whole class.

The questions following the Move! Note! Share! activities are interpretive (they have more than one good answer). These questions help prepare students for the thinking they will do in Shared Inquiry discussion and require them to make inferences about characters and events—an essential reading strategy.
Shared Inquiry Discussion  (30–40 minutes)

Activity Instructions

NOTE: If your class is large, you may wish to divide it for discussion. For instructions on the fishbowl technique, where half your class observes the other half in discussion, see page 307.

1. **Review** students’ Reader’s Journal pages and the class question list and compare them to the questions in the box on the facing page.

2. **Choose** the interpretive focus question and cluster questions that best align with your students’ areas of interest. Write those questions on your Discussion Planner (reproducible master on p. 310).

3. **Seat** everyone in a circle. If needed, review the dos and don'ts of discussion and the five discussion guidelines on pages 6–9 of the student book.

4. **Reader’s Journal**: Post the focus question and have students copy it on the Shared Inquiry discussion page of the Reader’s Journal. Give students time to think, look back at the story, and write their answers.

5. **Begin** the discussion by asking students to share their answers to the focus question.

6. **Ask** follow-up questions such as those on the facing page or on your Discussion Planner. Aim for the discussion to last at least 25 minutes.

7. **Reader’s Journal**: As the discussion winds down, have students complete the Shared Inquiry discussion page of the Reader’s Journal. If time allows, have volunteers share what they wrote.

**For more tips on conducting a successful Shared Inquiry discussion, see pages 306–310 of the Teacher Resources section.**
Suggested Focus and Cluster Questions

Choose one of the options below for your discussion. Start with the focus question. Ask the related cluster questions when they fit naturally into the conversation—they will help students develop their ideas by looking closely at specific parts of the story. (Page numbers refer to the student book.)

**OPTION 1**

**FOCUS QUESTION**

Why does Liz go crow hunting with her father, even though the word *hunter* makes her uneasy?

**CLUSTER QUESTIONS**

- Why does Liz hope her pigtails will stay hidden, after she is mistaken for a boy at the diner?
- Why does Liz feel “uneasy” about walking in front of her father in the woods? (p. 27)
- After Liz asks her father whether he was scared in the war, why does she confide in him that she is “scared sometimes”? (p. 28)
- Why does Liz enjoy using the crow call so much?

**OPTION 2**

**FOCUS QUESTION**

Why doesn’t Liz’s father shoot any crows?

**CLUSTER QUESTIONS**

- Why does Liz’s father put her in charge of the crow call?
- After Liz confides in her father that she is scared sometimes, why does he ask her, “Are you scared now”? (p. 29)
- As Liz runs among the circling crows, why does her father remain seated and smile?
- Why does Liz feel there is no need to thank her father for not using his gun?

Asking Follow-Up Questions During the Discussion

The follow-up questions you ask during the discussion will help advance students’ critical thinking skills. Try using these questions when you want students to:

**CLARIFY IDEAS**

- What do you mean when you say that?
- Can you say a little more about that?
- Is there another way you can explain that to us?

**FIND EVIDENCE**

- Where does that happen in the story?
- What part of the story makes you think that?
- Can you find that part and read it aloud to us?

**RESPOND TO OTHERS**

- Have you heard an answer you agree with?
- Do you agree or disagree with Jason?
- Will you tell Marisol what you think of her idea?
Exploring Different Answers

During this discussion, students have been largely agreeing with a single answer to the focus question and the conversation has flagged. To help the class explore other ideas, the teacher actively solicits divergent answers and uses the cluster questions to get at new issues. For more strategies for troubleshooting discussion, see pages 308–309.

**TEACHER:** I've been hearing a lot of you say that Liz goes crow hunting because she wants to get to know her dad better. There might be some other answers we haven’t thought of yet. Can anyone think of a different reason Liz goes crow hunting with her father even though the word “hunter” makes her uneasy?

**HANNAH:** I wrote that she wanted to go hunting with her dad.

**TEACHER:** Why do you think Liz wanted to go hunting?

**HANNAH:** Because he's her dad. She feels like she should do things with him.

**TEACHER:** What part of the story makes you think that, Hannah?

**HANNAH:** The part where they’re in the car.

**TEACHER:** Sonja, can you read that part for us? (Sonja reads.) Hannah, why does that part make you think that Liz goes hunting because she feels like she should do things with her dad?

**HANNAH:** She says his name to herself because he seems like a stranger. But he’s still her dad. That’s why she says “Daddy” under her breath.

**TEACHER:** Thank you, Hannah. Can anyone think of a different reason why she might say his name under her breath like that?

**SONJA:** Maybe she’s afraid of him and she only goes hunting because he asked her to.

**TEACHER:** Can you say more about that, Sonja? What do you mean when you say she’s afraid of him?

**SONJA:** She’s shy about talking to him.

**TEACHER:** What Sonja is saying reminds me of another question I want to ask you. Maybe it will help us think of more answers to our focus question. Why does Liz feel “uneasy” about walking in front of her father in the woods?
Student Learning Spectrum

This student learning spectrum reflects student behavior in three key areas of critical thinking: idea, evidence, and response.

Look for students to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDEA</th>
<th>EVIDENCE</th>
<th>RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offer no answers or repeat others’ answers to the focus question</td>
<td>Have difficulty supporting ideas with evidence from the story</td>
<td>Have difficulty listening to other students’ ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer simple answers to the focus question</td>
<td>Refer in general to the story to support ideas</td>
<td>Agree or disagree with other students’ ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer developed answers to the focus question</td>
<td>Recall or locate relevant parts of the story to support ideas</td>
<td>Explain agreement or disagreement with other students’ ideas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differentiated Instruction

**SUPPORT** If the class as a whole is struggling, use the student learning spectrum (above) or the student and teacher reflection forms (pp. 350–354) to determine which area of critical thinking students need the most practice with (idea, evidence, or response). Then concentrate your follow-up questions in that area.

If some students are struggling, use the student learning spectrum (above) or the student and teacher reflection forms to determine which area of critical thinking they need to practice. Jot students’ names next to the corresponding follow-up questions on your Discussion Planner (p. 310) as a reminder to ask them those questions during the discussion.

**CHALLENGE** If your students show proficiency in one or more of the key critical thinking areas, try asking some of the advanced questions below to encourage them to:

- **Explain ideas in more detail**
  - Can you explain what you mean by [word or phrase]?
  - How does that idea help answer our focus question?

- **Explain how evidence supports an idea**
  - How does this part of the story support your answer?
  - What does the character do or say in this part of the story to make you think that?

- **Consider other responses**
  - Why do you agree with Jasmine’s answer?
  - How is your idea different from Salvador’s idea?
Choose from among the following suggested activities to help students deepen their understanding of the story while honing other language arts skills and concepts.

**Written Response**

**Essay Practice**

Use your students’ questions and areas of interest as topics for essays. Alternatively, try one of the questions below. Students can use the essay organizer in the Reader’s Journal (pp. 16–17) to plan the structure of their essays.

**Interpretive question:** Have students turn their answer to the focus question into an essay, using the completed Shared Inquiry page of the Reader’s Journal as a starting point.

**Evaluative question:** Did Liz’s father make a good decision or a bad decision when he spared the crows?

**Creative Writing**

Have students turn their speculative questions into short stories, using the story organizer in the Reader’s Journal (p. 18) as a starting point. Alternatively, try the activity below.

**Dear Diary** Ask students: *What do you think Liz learned about her father from going crow hunting with him?* Have the class brainstorm a list of story events and the things Liz learns about her father during each event. Then have each student choose a few events from the list and write a diary entry as Liz, describing the events in detail and explaining what she learned about her father.

**Crow Call Mementos** Brainstorm with students what Liz will remember about the day spent with her father, and the kind of objects she might keep to help her remember it (photos, feathers, etc.). Give students small boxes and have each student draw or make 3–5 items to put in a memory box for Liz. Ask students to write a tag for each memento detailing the specific event or feeling it reminds Liz of. Display the boxes and invite volunteers to explain why they chose each item in their boxes.
Curriculum Connections (times vary)

Choose from among the following suggested activities to connect “Crow Call” to the rest of your curriculum.

**Related Projects**

Use students’ background questions as topics for extension projects. Alternatively, try one of the projects below.

**Junior Ornithologists** Help the class use print or online resources to compile a list of birds common to the area. Then have students work in groups to do simple research on a bird from the list, focusing on information such as appearance, call or song, diet, nesting patterns, habitat, and migratory patterns.

**Veterans’ Stories** Have students listen to one or more of the stories recorded by servicemen and servicewomen for the Library of Congress’s Veterans History Project. Go to “Experiencing War” and view all stories by theme. The themes of courage and family may have the strongest connection to this story.

**Related Readings**

- **Yolen, Jane. *Owl Moon*. 1987.**
  On a winter’s night, a father and daughter trek into the woods to see a great horned owl.

- **Say, Allen. *The Lost Lake*. 1989.**
  A boy and his father become closer during a camping trip in the mountains.

- **Lowry, Lois. *Gossamer*. 2006.**
  A “dream giver” tries to save a boy from the effects of his past and the nightmares inflicted upon him by fearsome creatures.

**Related Readings Key**

- **S** Appropriate for struggling readers who need **support**
- **O** Appropriate for **on-level** readers
- **C** Appropriate for readers who are ready for a **challenge** or for classroom read-alouds

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**THEME CONNECTIONS**

See the Theme Connections section (pp. 122–123) for a theme wrap-up activity, a story-to-story connection activity, and at-home projects.

**ASSESSMENT AND REFLECTION**

See the Assessment and Reflection section (pp. 316–354) for resources to track student learning and for teacher and student reflection forms.
It's morning, early, barely light, cold for November. At home, in the bed next to mine, Jessica, my older sister, still sleeps. But my bed is empty. I sit shyly in the front seat of the car next to the stranger who is my father, my legs pulled up under the too-large wool shirt I am wearing. I practice his name to myself, whispering it under my breath. Daddy. Saying it feels new. The war has lasted so long. He has been gone so long. Finally I look over at him timidly and speak aloud. “Daddy,” I say, “I've never gone hunting before. What if I don't know what to do?””Well, Liz,” he says, “I've been thinking about that, and I've decided to put you in charge of the crow call. Have you ever operated a crow call?” I shake my head. “No.” Tentatively I call again, more loudly.
CROW CALL

Lois Lowry

It’s morning, early, barely light, cold for November. At home, in the bed next to mine, Jessica, my older sister, still sleeps. But my bed is empty.

I sit shyly in the front seat of the car next to the stranger who is my father, my legs pulled up under the too-large wool shirt I am wearing.

I practice his name to myself, whispering it under my breath. Daddy. Daddy. Saying it feels new. The war has lasted so long. He has been gone so long.

Finally I look over at him timidly and speak aloud.

“Daddy,” I say, “I’ve never gone hunting before. What if I don’t know what to do?”

“Well, Liz,” he says, “I’ve been thinking about that, and I’ve decided to put you in charge of the crow call. Have you ever operated a crow call?”

I shake my head. “No.”

“Tentatively I call again, more loudly.”
“It’s an art,” he says. “No doubt about that. But I’m pretty sure you can handle it. Some people will blow and blow on a crow call and not a single crow will even wake up or bother to listen, much less answer. But I really think you can do it. Of course,” he adds, chuckling, “having that shirt will help.”

My father had bought the shirt for me. In town to buy groceries, he had noticed my hesitating in front of Kronenberg’s window. The plaid hunting shirts had been in the store window for a month—the popular red-and-black and green-and-black ones toward the front, clothing mannequins holding duck decoys; but my shirt, the rainbow plaid, hung separately on a wooden hanger toward the back of the display. I had lingered in front of Kronenberg’s window every chance I had since the hunting shirts had appeared.

My sister had rolled her eyes in disdain. “Daddy,” she pointed out to him as we entered Kronenberg’s, “that’s a man’s shirt.”

The salesman had smiled and said dubiously, “I don’t quite think . . .”

“You know, Lizzie,” my father had said to me as the salesman wrapped the shirt, “buying this shirt is probably a very practical thing to do. You will never ever outgrow this shirt.”

Now, as we go into a diner for breakfast, the shirt unfolds itself downward until the bottom of

lingered: stayed around or was slow to leave
it reaches my knees; from the bulky thickness of rolled-back cuffs, my hands are exposed. I feel totally surrounded by shirt.

My father orders coffee for himself. The waitress asks, “What about your boy? What does he want?”

My father winks at me, and I hope that my pigtails will stay hidden inside the plaid wool collar. Holding my head very still, I look at the menu. At home my usual breakfast is cereal with honey and milk. My mother keeps honey in a covered silver pitcher. There’s no honey on the diner’s menu.

“What’s your favorite thing to eat in the whole world?” asks my father.

I smile at him. “Cherry pie,” I admit. If he hadn’t been away for so long, he would have known. My mother had even put birthday candles on a cherry pie on my last birthday. It was a family joke in a family that hadn’t included Daddy.
My father hands back both menus to the waitress. “Three pieces of cherry pie,” he tells her.
“Three?” She looks at him sleepily, not writing the order down. “You mean two?”
“No,” he said, “I mean three. One for me, with black coffee, and two for my hunting companion, with a large glass of milk.”
She shrugs.

We eat quickly, watching the sun rise across the Pennsylvania farmlands. Back in the car, I flip my pigtails out from under my shirt collar and giggle.

“Hey, boy,” my father says to me in an imitation of the groggy waitress’s voice, “you sure you can eat all that cherry pie, boy?”

“Just you watch me, lady,” I answer in a deep voice, pulling my face into stern, serious lines. We laugh again, driving out into the gray-green hills of the early morning.

It’s not far to the place he has chosen, not long until he pulls the car to the side of the empty road and stops.

Grass, frozen after its summer softness, crunches under our feet; the air is sharp and supremely clear, free from the floating pollens of summer, and our words seem etched and breakable on the brittle stillness. I feel the smooth wood of the crow call in my pocket, moving my fingers against it for warmth,

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memorizing its ridges and shape. I stamp my feet hard against the ground now and then as my father does. I want to scamper ahead of him like a puppy, kicking the dead leaves and reaching the unknown places first, but there is an uneasy feeling along the edge of my back at the thought of walking in front of someone who is a hunter. The word makes me uneasy. Carefully I stay by his side.

It is quieter than summer. There are no animal sounds, no bird-waking noises; even the occasional leaf that falls within our vision does so in silence, spiraling slowly down to blend in with the others.
But most leaves are already gone from the trees; those that remain catch there by accident, waiting for the wind that will free them. Our breath is steam.

“Daddy,” I ask shyly, “were you scared in the war?”

He looks ahead, up the hill, and after a moment he says, “Yes. I was scared.”

“Of what?”


“Are you still?”

He glances down. “I don’t think so. Those kinds of scares go away.”

“I’m scared sometimes,” I confide.

He nods, unsurprised. “I know,” he said. “Are you scared now?”

I start to say no. Then I remember the word that scares me.

Hunter.

I answer, “Maybe a little.”

I look at his gun, his polished, waxed prize, and then at him. He nods, not saying anything. we walk on.

“Daddy?”

“Mmmmmm?” He is watching the sky, the trees.

“I wish the crows didn’t eat the crops.”

“They don’t know any better,” he says. “Even people do bad things without meaning to.”

“Yes, but . . .” I pause and then say what I’d been thinking. “They might have babies to take care of. Baby crows.”

“Not now, Liz, not this time of year,” he says. “By now their babies are grown. It’s a strange thing, but by now they don’t even know who their babies are.” He puts his free arm over my shoulders for a moment.

“And their babies grow up and eat the crops, too,” I say, and sigh, knowing it to be true and unchangeable.

“It’s too bad,” he says. We begin to climb the hill.

“Can you call anything else, Daddy? or just crows?”

confide: to share something secret or private
He nods, unsurprised. “I know,” he said. “Are you scared now?”
I start to say no. Then I remember the word that scares me. Hunter.
I answer, “Maybe a little.”
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“It’s too bad,” he says. We begin to climb the hill.
“Can you call anything else, Daddy? Or just crows?”

“Guess the cows didn’t hear it,” I tease. “Well, of course, sometimes they choose not to answer. I can do tigers, too. Rrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr.”

“Ha. So can I. And bears. Better watch out, now. Bears might come out of the woods on this one. Grrrrrrrr.”

“You think you’re so smart, doing bears. Listen to this. Giraffe call.” He stands with his neck stretched out, soundless.

I try not to laugh, wanting to do rabbits next, but I can’t keep from it. He looks so funny, with his neck pulled away from his shirt collar and a condescending, poised, giraffe look on his face. I giggle at him and we keep walking to the top of the hill.

From where we stand, we can see almost back to town. We can look down on our car and follow the ribbon of road through the farmlands until it is lost in trees. Dark roofs of houses lay scattered, separated by pastures.

“Okay, Lizzie,” says my father, “this is a good place. You can do the crow call now.”

I see no crows. For a moment, the fear of disappointing him struggles with my desire to blow into the smooth, polished tip of the crow call. But I
see that he’s waiting, and I take it from my pocket, hold it against my lips, and blow softly.

The harsh, muted sound of a sleepy crow comes as a surprise to me, and I smile at it, at the delight of having made that sound myself. I do it again, softly.

From a grove of trees on another hill comes an answer from a waking bird. Just one, and then silence.

Tentatively I call again, more loudly. The branches of a nearby tree rustle, and crows answer, fluttering and calling crossly. They fly briefly into the air and then settle on a branch—three of them.
“Look, Daddy,” I whisper. “Do you see them? They think I’m a crow!”

He nods, watching them.

I move away from him and stand on a rock at the top of the hill and blow loudly several times. Crows rise from all the trees. They scream with harsh voices and I respond, blowing again and again as they fly from the hillside in circles, dipping and soaring, landing speculatively, lurching from the limbs in afterthought and then settling again with resolute and disgruntled shrieks.

“Listen, Daddy! Do you hear them? They think I’m their friend! Maybe their baby, all grown up!”

I run about the top of the hill and then down, through the frozen grass, blowing the crow call over and over. The crows call back at me, and from all the trees they rise, from all the hills. They circle and circle, and the morning is filled with the patterns of calling crows as I look back, still running. I can see my father sitting on a rock, and I can see he is smiling.

My crow calling comes in shorter and shorter spurts as I become breathless; finally I stop and stand laughing at the foot of the hill, and the noise from the crows subsides as they circle and settle back in the trees. They are waiting for me.

My father comes down the hill to meet me coming up. He carries his gun carefully; and though I am

**resolute:** firm and steady in purpose

**subsides:** to come down to a normal or less active level
grateful to him for not using it, I feel that there is no need to say thank you—Daddy knows this already. The crows will always be there and they will always eat the crops; and some other morning, on some other hill, a hunter, maybe not my daddy, will take aim.

I blow the crow call once more, to say good morning and goodbye and everything that goes in between. Then I put it into the pocket of my shirt and reach over, out of my enormous cuff, and take my father’s hand.
Theme Wrap-Up: Trust Walks  (25–35 minutes)

1. **Review** with the class the responses to the theme question: *How do you earn someone’s trust?* Solicit new responses that students have generated as a result of completing all three stories.

2. **Tell** students that they will be doing a simple trust activity with a partner, and that they should keep the theme question in mind as they do it.

3. **Pair** students up and have one partner in each pair put on a blindfold. Ask the non-blindfolded partner to guide the blindfolded one slowly and safely through a designated path in the classroom. How partners communicate in order to walk the path safely and successfully is up to them. If you wish, introduce simple obstacles such as chairs or desks.

4. **Ask** partners to switch roles so that everyone gets a chance to lead and be led.

5. **Follow up** by asking partners to share their experiences, explaining whether or not they trusted their partner when they were being led, and describing what they did to establish trust when they were asked to lead.

Story-to-Story Connection  (30–40 minutes)

1. **Post** the titles of stories your students have read in the Trust theme, along with the names of the characters from each story.

2. **Brainstorm** with students some traits that a trustworthy person might have. Then have them offer examples of story characters that have these traits, finding evidence to support their answers. (For example: If students identify “honesty” as a trait, someone might say that Roger, from “Thank You M’am,” is honest because he does not steal Mrs. Jones’s purse when he gets a second chance to do so.)

3. **Divide** students into small groups and have them turn to page 27 of the Reader’s Journal. Tell groups that they will be creating the “perfect trustworthy person” made up of the traits that each character possesses.
4. **Ask** students to decide on four traits a trustworthy person should have and decide which characters embody those traits. (If they struggle to find a character who has a certain trait, they can pick a new trait.) Have them write the traits, character names, and supporting evidence in the Reader’s Journal. Have groups present and explain their choices to the class.

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### At-Home Theme Connections  
*(times vary)*

These activities can be completed at home with a parent’s or guardian’s help.

#### A Promise Contract

1. **Tell** students that they will be creating promise contracts to carry out at home. Have students brainstorm some “I promise . . .” statements, encouraging them to come up with promises they can reasonably keep for a set amount of time (Examples: “For the month of May, I promise to clean my room without being asked”; “I promise to read three picture books to my brother in the next two weeks.”)

2. **Have** students choose their promises and then design promise contracts, including a deadline by which the promise must be fulfilled and signature lines for themselves and their parent(s) or guardian(s). You may wish to show students examples of contracts or certificates for inspiration.

3. **Send** the contracts home and remind students to bring them back to class once they have made good on their promises. Display completed contracts in the classroom.

4. **Follow up** by asking students to discuss what they learned about trust as a result of creating and fulfilling the contracts, and how the experience affected the trust in their households.

#### Borrow and Return

1. **Ask** each student to bring in a personal item (something that is important to them but not too valuable or breakable). Explain that they will be loaning their items to one another for a few days. It is up to the borrower to behave in a trustworthy manner and keep the items safe from harm.

2. **Pair** students together (or have them choose their own pairs) and have them explain to one another why the items are important. Then have students promise to their partners that they will take good care of the items, explaining how they will do so.

3. **Follow up** once the items are returned to their owners by asking pairs to talk about how they felt about lending and borrowing the items, and to explain what the experience helped them learn about trust.
Critical Thinking Rubric

The critical thinking rubric, which expands on the student learning spectrum for Shared Inquiry discussion, details the critical thinking skills developed through the use of Junior Great Books Series 4. The rubric shows three major critical thinking areas—idea, evidence, and response—at four performance levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERFORMANCE LEVEL</th>
<th>IDEA</th>
<th>EVIDENCE</th>
<th>RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>OFFERS A WELL-DEVELOPED ANSWER TO THE FOCUS QUESTION</td>
<td>EXPLAINS HOW EVIDENCE SUPPORTS IDEAS</td>
<td>CONSIDERS OTHER STUDENTS’ IDEAS WHEN DEVELOPING OWN ANSWER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Makes inferences about motives and causes</td>
<td>• Habitually looks back at whole story for evidence</td>
<td>• Understands that classmates’ ideas are valuable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• To clarify, specifies meaning of words or phrases</td>
<td>• Explains how specific words or phrases support an idea</td>
<td>• Responds directly to other students without prompting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Explores implications of an idea</td>
<td>• Sees when evidence works against own idea</td>
<td>• Agrees or disagrees with specific parts of other students’ ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>OFFERS A DETAILED ANSWER TO THE FOCUS QUESTION</td>
<td>LOCATES EVIDENCE FROM THE STORY TO SUPPORT IDEAS</td>
<td>EXPLAINS AGREEMENT OR DISAGREEMENT WITH OTHER STUDENTS’ IDEAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Thinks carefully before answering</td>
<td>• Often looks back at the story without prompting</td>
<td>• Acknowledges differing ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• To clarify, tells more about answer</td>
<td>• Recalls or locates relevant parts of the story</td>
<td>• Builds on or offers counterarguments to other students’ ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>OFFERS A SIMPLE ANSWER TO THE FOCUS QUESTION</td>
<td>REFERS TO THE STORY IN GENERAL TO SUPPORT IDEAS</td>
<td>AGREES OR DISAGREES SIMPLY WITH OTHER STUDENTS’ IDEAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Does not elaborate on answer, or offers a snap judgment</td>
<td>• Looks back at the story when asked to do so</td>
<td>• Allows classmates to speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• To clarify, repeats or paraphrases answer</td>
<td>• Recalls major story facts</td>
<td>• Reacts to other students’ ideas but does not give reasons for reactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>STRUGGLES TO ANSWER THE FOCUS QUESTION</td>
<td>HAS DIFFICULTY SUPPORTING ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE FROM THE STORY</td>
<td>HAS DIFFICULTY LISTENING TO OTHER STUDENTS’ IDEAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Does not answer when called on</td>
<td>• Talks about things other than the story</td>
<td>• Ignores or interrupts other students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Repeats other students’ answers</td>
<td>• Struggles to recall key story facts</td>
<td>• Struggles to understand that classmates have differing ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Considers answer self-explanatory</td>
<td>• Distracts other students or does not follow the discussion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Sharing Questions and Second Reading activities from the Reader’s Journal

Write about a part of the story that you understand better after the sharing questions activity.

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

Write the question someone else asked that interests you the most.

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

Write something new you learned from rereading or from doing an activity during the second reading.

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

Write a question you’d like to talk about more. It can be a question you thought of already or a new question. You can write more than one question if you wish.

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________
Choose one of the topics in the clouds and write or draw a picture about it.

A picture of a crow taking care of its babies

What Kronenberg’s window display looks like

A time you were afraid of something new

The character in the story you would choose to be, and why

Head in the Clouds

The focus question: ____________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

A piece of evidence from the story that supports your answer:

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Your answer before discussion: ______________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Your answer after discussion (explain how you changed or added to your original answer):

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Shared Inquiry Discussion
Write a question you had about the story that still hasn’t been answered. Use this page to take notes for a short story that answers your question.

**NOTES**

**BEGINNING:** Where and when does this story happen? Who are the characters?

**MIDDLE:** What problems or important events happen?

**END:** Are the problems solved? What happens to the characters?

Write your answer to the assigned essay question, and write three pieces of evidence from the story that support your answer.

**Your answer to the assigned essay question:**

**Evidence #1 from page _____:**

How this evidence supports your answer:

Your evidence can be a quote from the story or a summary of what happens in your own words.

Explain how this piece of evidence supports your answer to the essay question.
Junior Great Books Series 3–5

**Series 3**

**Book One**
- **Theme: Relationships**
  - Boundless Grace  Mary Hoffman
  - The Scarebird  Sid Fleischman
  - Chin Yu Min and the Ginger Cat  Jennifer Armstrong

- **Theme: Kindness**
  - The Gold Coin  Alma Flor Ada
  - The Magic Listening Cap  Japanese folktale as told by Yoshiko Uchida
  - The Mushroom Man  Ethel Pochocki

- **Theme: Confidence**
  - The Banza  Haitian folktale as told by Diane Wolkstein
  - The Upside-Down Boy  Juan Felipe Herrera
  - The Ugly Duckling  Hans Christian Andersen

**Book Two**
- **Theme: Gratitude**
  - White Wave  Chinese folktale as told by Diane Wolkstein
  - Luba and the Wren  Ukrainian folktale as told by Patricia Polacco
  - Basho and the River Stones  Tim Myers

- **Theme: Courage**
  - The Monster Who Grew Small  Joan Grant
  - The Buffalo Storm  Katherine Applegate
  - Pierre’s Dream  Jennifer Armstrong

- **Theme: Cleverness**
  - The Dream Weaver  Concha Castroviejo
  - The Man Whose Trade Was Tricks  Georgian folktale as told by George and Helen Papashvily
  - The Emperor’s New Clothes  Hans Christian Andersen

- **Theme: Resourcefulness**
  - Shrewd Todie and Lyzer the Miser  Ukrainian folktale as told by Isaac Bashevis Singer
  - On Sand Island  Jacqueline Briggs Martin
  - The Green Man  Gail E. Haley

- **Theme: Communication**
  - Song of Hope  Peggy Duffy
  - Jean Labadie’s Big Black Dog  French-Canadian folktale as told by Natalie Savage Carlson
  - Thunder, Elephant, and Dorobo  African folktale as told by Humphrey Harman

**Series 4**

**Book One**
- **Theme: Trust**
  - Thank You, M’am  Langston Hughes
  - Crow Call  Lois Lowry
  - Fresh  Philippa Pearce

- **Theme: Resourcefulness**
  - Shrewd Todie and Lyzer the Miser  Ukrainian folktale as told by Isaac Bashevis Singer
  - On Sand Island  Jacqueline Briggs Martin
  - The Green Man  Gail E. Haley

**Book Two**
- **Theme: Strength**
  - Tuesday of the Other June  Norma Fox Mazer
  - Doesn’t Fall Off His Horse  Virginia A. Stroud
  - The Cello of Mr. O  Jane Cutler

- **Theme: Integrity**
  - The No-Guitar Blues  Gary Soto
  - The Fire on the Mountain  Ethiopian folktale as told by Harold Courlander and Wolf Leslau
  - Ooka and the Honest Thief  Japanese folktale as told by I. G. Edmonds

- **Theme: Perspective**
  - The Old Woman and the Wave  Shelley Jackson
  - Letting Swift River Go  Jane Yolen
  - The Apple and the Envelope  Herbert Montgomery

**Series 5**

**Book One**
- **Theme: Honesty**
  - Charles  Shirley Jackson
  - The Special Powers of Blossom Culp  Richard Peck
  - The Peddler’s Gift  Maxine Rose Schur

- **Theme: Self-Respect**
  - In the Time of the Drums  Gullah folktale as told by Kim L. Siegelson
  - Learning the Game  Francisco Jiménez
  - The Invisible Child  Tove Janson

**Book Two**
- **Theme: Family**
  - Kamau’s Finish  Mathoni Muchemi
  - Ghost Cat  Donna Hill
  - The Hemulen Who Loved Silence  Tove Janson

- **Theme: Humility**
  - The Enchanted Sticks  Steven J. Myers
  - Kaddo’s Wall  West African folktale as told by Harold Courlander and George Herzog
  - The Prince and the Goose Girl  Elinor Mordaunt

- **Theme: Compassion**
  - A Bad Road for Cats  Cynthia Rylant
  - Lenny’s Red-Letter Day  Bernard Ashley
  - Through the Mickle Woods  Valiska Gregory

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