

Ideas with

IMPACT

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

**Game On! Strategy
for Teaching
Literary Tools**

Recess Wars

Basketball

Game On! Strategy for Teaching Literary Tools

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Goals and Objectives		3
Florida Standards		4
Course Outline Overview		5
Lesson Plans		6-10
Resources /Materials List		11
Appendix		12-14

Goals and Objectives

Students Learn:

- **Identifying Literary Devices:** Students use visual clues to spot similes, metaphors, and other devices such as personification, hyperbole, and idioms.
- **Textual Evidence:** Students cite examples from the story to support their answers and interpretations.
- **Making Inferences:** Students "read between the lines" and infer character motivations and underlying themes.
- **Writing Skills:** Students write their own similes, metaphors, and reflections, reinforcing learning through practice.
- **Conflict Resolution:** The central "war" over the basketball court introduces themes of negotiation, fairness, and teamwork.

Teachers Learn:

- Gain ready-to-use strategies, adaptable lesson plans, and a deeper understanding of how to connect academic content with interests.
- How to guide students in identifying and analyzing literary devices as they naturally appear in a narrative, rather than in isolation.
- Educators will practice using annotation, questioning, and prediction strategies within a combined novel and workbook format supporting critical thinking and comprehension.
- Assess understanding of literary devices through written responses, workbook exercises, and group discussions.
- How to adapt the novel-workbook for various reading levels, learning styles, and classroom settings—including whole-class, small group, and individual learning.
- How to guide students in identifying and analyzing literary devices as they naturally appear in a narrative, rather than in isolation.
- Educators will practice using annotation, questioning, and prediction strategies within a combined novel and workbook format supporting critical thinking and comprehension.
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Florida Standards

ELA.3.R.3.1 – Identify and explain metaphors, personification, and hyperbole in text(s).

ELA.6.R.3.1 – Explain how figurative language contributes to tone and meaning in text(s).

ELA.6.C.1.2 – Write personal or fictional narratives using narrative techniques, precise words and phrases, and figurative language.

ELA.6.V.1.3 – Apply knowledge of context clues, figurative language, word relationships, reference materials, and/or background knowledge to determine the connotative and denotative meaning of words and phrases, appropriate to grade level.

ELA.6.R.2.1 – Explain how individual text sections and/or features convey meaning in texts.

Course Outline Overview

Recess Wars: Basketball is a compelling literary-STEAM workshop that blends an engaging chapter book with interactive workbook exercises. Through the story of third-graders navigating friendship, conflict, and teamwork on the court, students learn to identify and apply similes, metaphors, and other literary devices in context—ideal for visual learners and reluctant readers.

This low-prep, high-impact resource scaffolds complexity to build confidence and comprehension, while integrated assessments offer real-time insight into student progress. The format supports differentiation and fosters deeper literacy through self-paced, engaging activities aligned with higher-order thinking. Teachers will leave equipped with ready-to-implement lesson plans that make literary analysis feel more like play than work—transforming classroom engagement and boosting critical reading skills with vivid scenarios and beloved characters.

Lesson Plan for *Recess Wars: Basketball*

Grade Level: 3rd– 6th Grade

Duration: 2 – 3 Weeks (8 lessons)

Primary Focus: Understanding and identifying literary devices through reading and activities

Text Structure Overview: 5 Chapters

<i>Device</i>	<i>Color Code</i>
Alliteration	Hot Pink
Hyperbole	Purple
Metaphor	Red
Personification	Dark Gray
Allusion	Green
Idiom	Olive Green
Onomatopoeia	Blue
Simile	Orange

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify and define eight key literary devices.
 - Recognize these devices in context within *Recess Wars: Basketball*.
 - Analyze how authors use literary devices to enhance storytelling.
 - Apply these devices in their own writing.
-

Lesson 1: Book Launch & Chapter 1 – Guided Exploration

Goals:

- Introduce *Recess Wars: Basketball*
- Explore how literary devices appear in and contribute to storytelling

Activities:

1. Predict conflict using clues from book cover and title
2. Walk-through book design (explain novel-workbook fusion and color-coding of literary devices)
3. Explore the **Player Chart**: Identify each player's favorite literary device and example
4. Read Chapter 1 together
5. Examine **color-coded devices** and nearby **definitions**
 - Reiterate that the **definition is included next to each word**
 - **Discuss what the devices make the reader visualize, feel, and/or think**
6. Do Chapter 1 **activities** together

Lesson 2: Chapter 2 – Independent Device Identification

Goals:

- Practice labeling the color-coded literary devices in context
- Reflect on challenges associated with identifying literary devices in context

Activities:

1. Read Chapter 2 independently or with a partner
2. Use colored pencils/highlighters to identify:
 - Allusion (green), hyperbole (purple), etc.
 - Encourage checking the **definitions nearby**
3. Complete Chapter 2 activities (individual or small group)
4. Class Discussion:
 - Which devices were hardest to label? Why?
 - Which device do you like best so far and why?

Lesson 3: Chapter 3 – Conflict and Literary Devices

Goals:

- Critique how literary devices enhance conflict and emotion
- Compare and contrast the effectiveness of literary devices in enhancing the story

Activities:

1. Group reading of Chapter 3
2. Student-led color-coding
3. Stop & Jot:
 - Which device added the most drama or humor?
 - Which helped you picture the action best?
4. Complete Chapter 3 activities
5. Share responses to *Stop, Think, and Draw* activity
6. Share answers to the activity complete the idiom

Lesson 4: Chapter 4 – Reading & Labeling

Goals:

- Identify literary devices in context
- Analyze the effects of literary devices on reader's experience of the story

Activities:

1. Silent or partner reading
2. Students label as they read
3. Partner talk:
 - Where do these devices show emotion or exaggeration?
 - How do they affect the mood or rhythm of the scene?
 - Which device added the most excitement to this chapter?
4. Complete Chapter 4 activities

Lesson 5: Chapter 5 – Culminating Chapter Activity

Goals:

- Demonstrate level of mastery with identifying literary devices
- Reflect on the effect of literary devices on the reader's personal experience of the story
- Apply understanding of literary devices by including literary devices in an original piece of writing

Activities:

- Group reading or partner reading
- Students label all literary devices found in the chapter (Chapter 5 activity)
- Post reading reflection: Discuss feelings and thoughts about the characters and events in the novel
- Draft their own mini scene to the beginning of *Recess Wars: Kickball* using literary devices.
 - Optional: Use Kickball Planning Sheet (See Appendix)
 - Optional: Add narrative techniques previously taught to the requirement (example: direct and indirect characterization)

Lesson 6: Writing Workshop – Complete Your Own Recess Wars Scene

Goals:

- Apply understanding of literary devices by including literary devices in an original piece of writing
- Critique effectiveness and accuracy of peer-use of literary devices in an original piece of writing
- Revise draft using feedback from peer review
- Demonstrate mastery by designing an illustration to depict a literary device used in an original piece of writing

Activities:

- Peer Review: Check for at least 5 different devices (use peer review checklist)
- Create an original Illustration of one literary device used in mini scene
- Use peer review to revise original scene

Peer Review Checklist

Story Title: _____
Author: _____
Reviewer: _____

Requirement	 Yes	 Not Yet	Comments
Used 5 or more literary devices			
Devices are correctly color-coded			
Included at least 1 direct trait			
Included at least 1 indirect trait			
The opening is clear and interesting			
Characters are believable and distinct			

Lesson 7: Presentation Day – Author Read-Alouds

Goals:

- Demonstrate mastery by using original literary devices in own writing
- Apply understanding of literary devices to give feedback to peers about their writing

Activities:

- Students read their mini-scenes aloud.
- *Optional:* Advanced students use DOK chart at the end of novel to explain the level at which they are using the device
- Class listens for and calls out literary devices they hear
- Display illustrated scenes on a bulletin board or wall display

Lesson 8: Check Your Knowledge

Goal: Assess ability to identify literary devices in context.

Activities:

- Complete **10-question figurative language review**
- Peer/self-review: How many did you get correct?

Assessments

Task	Assessed Skills
Chapter color-coding	Identification and application
End-of-chapter activities	Comprehension and analysis
Final 10-question quiz	Mastery of definitions and recognition
Recess War writing	Original use of devices
DOK chart reflection	Metacognition and evaluation

Resources/ Materials List

Purchase

- Twenty-five (25) copies of *Recess Wars: Basketball*
 - \$375
 - <https://practical-learning.square.site/product/recess-wars-basketball/1?cs=true&cst=custom>
- Color pencils/highlighters (8 colors for devices)
 - \$23.28
 - <https://a.co/d/dg5QQbZ>
- *Optional:* Transparent sticky notes
 - \$5.39
 - <https://www.amazon.com/Transparent-Sticky-Notes-Self-Adhesive-Translucent/dp/B09XK8FCHC?th=1>

Print

- DOK Chart (from book)
- Peer Review Checklist (See Appendix)
- Kickball Story Planning Sheet (See Appendix)

Appendix

Peer Review Checklist

Story Title: _____

Author: _____

Reviewer: _____

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Used 5 or more literary devices			
Devices are correctly color-coded			
Included at least 1 direct trait			
Included at least 1 indirect trait			
The opening is clear and interesting			
Characters are believable and distinct			

Recess Wars: Kickball Planning Sheet

Title: *Recess Wars: Kickball*

1. Main Characters:

- Name: _____
-

2. Kickball Conflict:

- Who wants the field and why?
- What's the problem or rivalry?

3. Literary Devices Checklist

✓ I will use:

Purpose (**Advanced**)

- Simile (orange)
- Metaphor (red)
- Onomatopoeia (blue)
- Idiom (olive green)
- Alliteration (hot pink)
- Hyperbole (purple)
- Personification (dark gray)
- Allusion (green)

Color-code your draft as you write!

4. Create an original Illustration of one literary device used