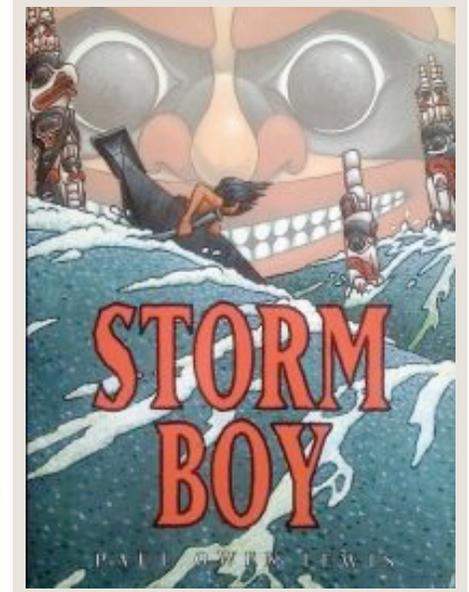




**Title:** Storm Boy  
**Author:** Paul Owen Lewis  
**Genre:** Picture Book (Fiction)  
**Cultural Connection:** Transformation, Dancing, Feasting, Cultural Artifacts



## PLOT SUMMARY

*A chief's son went fishing alone and a terrible storm arose. His canoe tipped and he finds himself washed ashore under a strange sky that he had never seen before. The boy explains his predicament to the very large inhabitants of a nearby village. The boy is welcomed into a large house full of finely dressed people enjoying a feast. He is given a blanket to wear and some raw fish to eat. The boy notices that the walls of the house are covered with what look like killer whales. When the meal is over the boy and his hosts celebrate for many hours by teaching each other some of their traditional dances. Although the boy was enjoying himself he began to miss his family and wondered if he would ever see them again. Suddenly the drumming and dancing stopped. The chief turned to him and said, "We are glad that the storm has brought you to our village but now you are thinking of your own." "When you wish to return," he continued, "grip my staff tightly and stand behind me. Close your eyes and think of your own home, wishing to be there only." The boy did as he was told. He took the staff and stepped behind the chief. The boy felt a movement beneath him. When the motion stopped he opened his eyes and found himself on the beach in front of his village. Speaking with his parents he realized that what had seemed like an absence of one day had actually been a whole year. A celebration was held to welcome him home.*

## LEARNING INTENTION

### Focus Reading Connection: #3 Making Inferences

Readers infer when they take what they know about a story and then fill in the information that was not included. When talking to students about inferring it is important to emphasize that:

1. Inferring helps the reader to better understand the story.
2. Readers need to look for clues in the pictures and the text as well as relying on their own background knowledge to fill in what is not written on the page.
3. Some authors deliberately write very little but leave the reader lots of clues to think about.

**This lesson uses structured partner talk as a learning strategy. To learn more about partner talk please refer to the Educator's page on our website.**

## MATERIALS REQUIRED

- 1 copy of Storm Boy



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## BEFORE

- Mark the following pictures in the book with sticky notes for easy reference:  
Picture #1: the boy falling out of the canoe (text: and a terrible storm arose)  
Picture #2: the boy washed ashore (text: He soon found himself....)  
Picture #3: the boy noticing the orca on the walls (text: Strange, too, on the walls...)  
Picture #4: the boy missing his family (text: But though the boy was enjoying...)
- Explain to the class what inferring is (something that good readers do to understand what the author is saying even if it is not written in the text).
- Explain that inferring requires the reader to do a lot of thinking about the clues that the author has left behind in the text and in the pictures.
- Explain that readers can also use their own background knowledge to help fill in the missing information.
- Inferring Practise: Use body language and your facial expression to display an emotion. Have the class guess what the emotion is. Have them justify their answers: *"I think that.....because...."*
- Inferring Practise: Repeat the above activity using students to model an emotion.
- Inferring Practise: Discuss, as a class, what clues the models gave you that helped you make the inferences.

## DURING

- Explain to the students that Paul Owen Lewis not only wrote Storm Boy but he also illustrated it. He created the pictures to help tell the story. The pictures often take the place of words and are full of clues to help the reader make inferences.
- Show Picture #1 to the class (enlarged on an overhead or an Elmo would work well).
- Model inferring for the students:
  1. Describe some of the details that you can see in the picture and infer from them.  
(the sky looks very gray... I think maybe there is a big storm coming)  
(the canoe has tipped over...I don't think that the boy will be able to climb back in because most of it is now under the water)  
(there are 2 large dorsal fins in behind the waves...I think that those must be killer whales....maybe they will be an important part of the story...)
  2. Continue modeling until all of the details have been discussed.
- Show Picture #2 to the class.
- Model inferring with the students:

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1. Describe one of the details you see in this picture.  
(the boy looks very small compared to the canoes and the other people in the picture...I think that is strange...maybe these people are giants)
  2. Have some of the students help you with the modelling by volunteering to tell you what they can see in the picture and what they can infer from that detail.
  3. Continue until all of the details are covered.
- Show Picture #3 to the class.
  - Model inferring with the students:
1. Describe one of the details that you see in this picture.  
(there are three drummers in the picture.....I think that someone is going to dance)
  2. Have each student talk with one partner. Have them discuss the details in the picture and make inferences from those details.
  3. Have the students report out to the larger group. Have them justify their thinking ( I think....because....).
- Show Picture #4 to the class.
  - Repeat the modelling and inferring lesson from Picture #3 with this last picture.

## AFTER

- Have each student talk to a partner and generate a list of facts that they now have about the story. Have them report out their facts to the larger group. Record the list on the chalkboard.
- Have each student talk to a partner and generate a list of questions that they have about the story. Have each student report one question out to the larger group. Record the questions on the chalkboard.
- Read the story to the class.
- Go through the list of questions to see if they have been answered. Ask: *“Was the answer to this question on the page or did you infer it?”*

### Suggested Supplemental Resources:

Click on the Kids tab of our website to find similar stories such as:

- Killer Whales by Melissa Kish
- Tom and the Blackfish by Donna Klockars and Brenda Boreham
- Whale Girl by Diane Silvey